

By: Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services

To: Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee –
18 November 2008

Subject: **MODERNISATION OF EAST KENT INFORMAL MENTAL
HEALTH DAY SERVICES**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Proposals for the modernisation of East Kent Informal Mental
Health Day Services 2009/2012

FOR INFORMATION

Introduction

1. (1) The emerging vision for Mental Health Services in Kent is being jointly developed by Kent Adult Social Services Directorate (KASS), Primary Care Trusts and other stakeholders, led by the Social Care Commissioners for Mental Health. There is considerable support from stakeholders for the modernisation of services to improve outcomes both for adults with mental health problems, and the wider community.

(2) Opportunities for service users – to realise their full potential and recovery – will depend on the services being modernised. With the active support of service users, there can be greater engagement with local communities, more social inclusion, equality and diversity, less dependence on statutory services and more can lead increasingly fulfilled and active lives.

(3) The past standard model was a successor to long-stay mental hospitals, with a safe place to go, separate from the rest of the community, being paramount. The model for the future is still about safe spaces, but much more about developing networks of personal support, encouraging people to take advantage of the same facilities that others in society use, and about social inclusion in practice.

(4) KASS has managed the East Kent Mental Health Services, based in Braethorpe, Ashford; Ashentree House, Dover; and 10 London Road, Deal, for many years. They form part of the network of services across East Kent for people with mild to medium mental health needs. Operating from KCC-owned buildings, they support a total of 128 people (September 2008 totals) with mental health problems in those localities during various openings on weekdays, evenings, weekends and bank holidays when they would be most isolated. Within each house are activities to promote well-being, healthy living and personal growth. Their attraction lies in the informal way people can self-refer, call in and out as they wish, and socialise with others.

(5) The proposal is for these services, like all other such services in Kent before them, to be transferred to an independent sector provider, to continue their modernisation.

Consultation over changes

2. (1) From December 2007 until May 2008, Service Users, Staff, those not currently using the services, other organisations and agencies, and others with an interest, were consulted over the proposals for change which were mainly contained in the NHS Commissioning Guidance in February 2006, entitled "From Segregation to Inclusion". This Guidance itself was very squarely based on a 2004 report from the Government's Social Exclusion Unit, which recommended the refocusing of day services so that people would not remain socially isolated and excluded from the communities in which they live. The guidance describes four key functions of day services. They should:

- a) Provide opportunities for social contact and support
- b) Support people to retain existing social roles, relationships and existing social/leisure activities that they value
- c) Support people to access new roles, relationships and mainstream social/leisure opportunities of their choosing.
- d) Provide opportunities for people with mental health problems to run their own services.

(2) Both the 2004 Social Exclusion Report and the 2006 Commissioning Guidance recommended a move away from designated buildings to places in the community which local people use and value. By January of this year, according to NHS-commissioned national research, 22% of such services had moved out of being buildings-based.

Local Priorities

3. (1) The Vision for Kent is Kent's Community Strategy which cuts across all services and looks ahead 20 years. The Vision emphasises the importance of community facilities which promote healthy living and independence.

(2) The Kent Local Area Agreement (LAA) between KCC, our Partners and the Government Office of the South East on behalf of Government departments acknowledges the importance of developing modern social and health care services and promoting independent living. It sets specific outcomes for improving the health of Kent's residents, reducing health inequalities and promoting wellbeing. This proposal supports the following targets from Kent's Public Service Agreement 2 with Central Government, which are embedded within the LAA:

- To help Kent's most vulnerable adults, aged 18 to 64, to live independently
- Target 8 – To help long-term recipients of incapacity benefit into work, this sets a target of supporting 250 people known to Kent Adult Social Services into sustained employment (specifically targeting people with disabilities).
- Active Lives 2007-2016 – putting people first, giving people choice and control, and supporting people to join in with community life.

Progress so far in Kent Informal Mental Health Day Services

4. (1) Throughout Kent, the process of finding suitable providers from the independent sector to manage KCC-run day services began in the early 1990s. A range of similar services in other parts of the county have been subject to external tenders in the past, and now operate effectively in the voluntary sector under contract with KCC. This process will be concluded with the transfer of these three remaining day services to the independent sector. In many ways, such providers are in a better position to offer additional value for the people of Kent who require these services, and are better able to support national and local priorities. They can:

- Be more responsive to changing demands and guidance
- Be creative and flexible, and thereby be in a better position to meet commissioning outcomes and specification requirements.
- Generate additional income
- Link in more freely with other services in the support of people moving into training, volunteering or employment and away from statutory services and benefits

Benefits to Service Users

5. (1) Those using the services provided by the three current establishments are already finding that their horizons are being widened, and their recovery enhanced, by the much more outgoing approach of the services.

(2) One significant impact already is that service users are increasingly making their own arrangements, where possible, to use local services without need for staff support, to run their own groups either in places elsewhere, or at times the services are not open, and to take part in activities which promote health and wellbeing to a much better extent than happened before.

(3) The plans for 2009/2012 seek to extend those benefits, to locate the services in places where they can not only reach out to the population more easily, but also welcome the engagement of a more diverse group of service users, spanning a wider age range, more varied by race and ethnic minority, and catering better for those with physical disabilities as well as mental health needs, who are currently limited in their access to the three current services.

Buildings

6. (1) Transfer of the services from the current buildings by April 2010 will not only free up those buildings for other use or the realisation of capital receipts, but also reduce the sometimes expensive costs of running them, as well as reducing their current carbon footprint. The savings produced can be used to enhance the modernised services, at new locations which are more convenient and more fit for purpose.

(2) These changes are thus an invest to save option which will produce more efficient and appropriate services to meet the growing needs for this type of service.

Proposed transfer to new provider

7. (1) The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services in August of this year received the report of the formal consultation undertaken in respect of the modernisation of informal day services in East Kent for adults with mental health problems, currently provided in-house (Decision No. 08/01212). The decision gave approval for a suitable partner to be found, through a procurement process, the successful partner to then manage these services on behalf of KCC, employ the current staff via the TUPE process, and develop services away from the current buildings in line with the social inclusion agenda.

(2) Since that decision, the procurement process has continued, with vital evaluation input from service users drawn from the local panel, and the involvement of both staff and service users on the Project Board which has steered the project throughout. Rethink assisted with gathering views from those in the area covered but who do not use the current services at present. From 29 initial interested organisations, the number reduced to 6 during the tender process. Representatives from each of those organisations visited the current services and met staff and service users. Service users have recently visited services run by the remaining two organisations in the running, and their comments and feedback have been helpful throughout the procurement process.

(3) The modernisation of these services is necessary in any event, but KCC, as the current owner of the buildings and employer of the staff, needs to be confident that the interests of all affected parties – service users, staff and others are taken into account during this time of change ahead.

(4) The proposed modernisation of the services also enables Mental Health Grants to be accessed to assist the process of transition.

(5) It will be for the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services to make a key decision accepting a successful tender and awarding the contract for the provision of these services for the three years from April 2009 to March 2012.

Numbers of staff and service users currently affected

8. (1) In Ashford, Deal and Dover, a transfer to an independent provider would mean that 30 part-time posts, totalling 7.29 whole-time equivalents, will be transferred under TUPE regulations.

(2) Transfer of Responsibility: Numbers of People (not full-time equivalents for staff)

	Braethorpe, Ashford	AshenTree House, Dover	Deal Resource House
Service Users	70	32	26
Staff	12	9	9

Recommendation

9. (1) Members are asked to:
- a) Note the progress on modernising mental health services in the east of the county in line with national and local policy;
 - b) Support the principle of transfer of these services to an independent sector provider, subject to a key decision by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services as set out in Paragraph 7 above.

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Background documents:

Consultation Report - July 2008

Modernisation Board Reports - 14 September 2007, 20 June 2008

Decision No. 08/01212 – Outcome of formal consultation on the modernisation of East Kent Informal Mental Health Day Services - September 2008