

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Graham Gibbens
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

DECISION NO:

16/00005

For publication**Key decision**

The need to modernise services and respond to changing demand.

Subject:

Proposal to work with the market to develop alternative services with a final outcome of closure of the registered care home, Blackburn Lodge, Sheerness.

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, I agree to

a) work with the market to develop alternative services with a final outcome of closure of the registered care home, Blackburn Lodge, Sheerness once alternative provision is provided on the Isle of Sheppey and

b) delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision

Reason(s) for decision:

The key drivers behind the proposal to close this service are:

- People are living longer with more complex conditions and they rightly expect more choice in care.
- People wish to remain in their own homes with dignity and expect high quality care.
- Residential care should be in high quality buildings. Our older buildings have reached the end of their useful life.
- Good quality care can be commissioned for less money in the independent sector. Unit costs for in-house services are substantially higher.

Financial Implications:

The ongoing commitment to maintain the operating service through staffing, supplies and building maintenance for up to three years.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposed decision was discussed at the Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee Meeting on 14 January 2016.

Officers introduced the report and responded to comments and questions from Members, as follows:-

- a) the County Council owned the Blackburn Lodge care home, however a covenant on the site from the Ministry of Defence stated that the site should be used for health and social care purposes only. The County Council had approached the MoD to have the covenant lifted, however this was not currently seen as a priority; and
- b) as part of the Equality Impact Assessment which the County Council had carried out, every service user likely to be affected by the proposed closure would have a

personalised review to assess the impact upon them.

The Cabinet Member, Mr Gibbens, thanked Members for their comments and said that he viewed the proposed changes as a positive move forward for social care provision on the Isle of Sheppey. He said he had long been concerned about the lack of nursing care facilities on the island and stated his commitment to addressing this issue.

RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, to:

- a) close Blackburn Lodge, once suitable alternative provision is established on the Isle of Sheppey; and
- b) delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision,

taking account of the comments made by this committee, be endorsed

Social Care Health and Wellbeing (SCHW) entered into formal consultation on the future of its registered care home at Blackburn Lodge, Sheerness on 28 September 2015. The consultation ran for twelve weeks to 20 December 2015 and followed the agreed protocol on proposals affecting its service provision. SCHW officers met with members of staff, service users and their relatives, trade unions and other key stakeholders to discuss the proposals.

A summary table by type of response and organisation is included below.

Consultation responses from	No. Emails	No. Letters	No. Phone calls	No online responses	No. complaints	No. petitions	No. alternative proposals
Relatives	4	1	5	12			
Staff				19			
Wider Public			2	35			
MPs							
Organisations	2	3	3	2			2
Total Number of Responses	6	4	10	68	0	0	2

No petitions were received against the proposal.

Two alternative proposals from independent sector organisations were received.

All public consultation documents were uploaded onto the KCC Consultations webpage and a dedicated email and freepost mailing address created to handle responses.

Any alternatives considered:

As part of this consultation there was initial interest from two providers in possibly purchasing the site and build or refurbish facilities to continue to deliver residential care services. KCC does not struggle to find residential care services in Swale. There is more need for dementia care or nursing provision, neither of which could be accommodated in the existing service at Blackburn Lodge

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None



signed

8 FEBRUARY 2016

date