

AT A MEETING of the Cabinet of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle on 9 December 2013.

Chairman:
p Councillor Roy Perry

Councillors:

p	Keith Chapman	p	Mel Kendal
p	Peter Edgar	p	Keith Mans
p	Liz Fairhurst	a	Stephen Reid
p	Andrew Joy	p	Seán Woodward

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillors R Bolton, C Carter, V Clarke, C Connor, M Cooper, A Dowden, A Gibson, J Glen, T Hooke, P Stallard and P West.

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Stephen Reid for medical reasons.

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore, all Members with a Non-Pecuniary Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5 Paragraph 2 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

36. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

37. DEPUTATIONS

The Chairman confirmed that nine deputations would be received at the meeting and therefore in accordance with the County Council's Standing Orders, the length of each deputation would be restricted to 6 minutes 40 seconds. He noted that two non-executive Members had made prior arrangement to speak at the meeting and furthermore that the Executive Procedures in the Constitution had been extended to allow a Member of another Authority to speak: these three Members would be heard at Item 7 on the agenda. The Chairman also

acknowledged a written statement that had been submitted by Mrs D. Lownsbrough, who was not able to attend in person to make a deputation. He confirmed that all Cabinet Members had received this and would give it due regard alongside the deputations.

All deputations related to Item 7 on the agenda (Minute 40 refers):

Frances Orchard, Val Hodgkyns and Mrs Christine Baker, whose joint deputation supported the recommendation that Cranleigh Paddock remained open highlighted the demographic shift towards an older population, explained features of dementia, the pressure it is placing on the health system and the high level international interest. The high level of specialist training amongst staff at the Home was cited, was the personal experience of the care provision, in the context of the ever rising demand for dementia care to make the case for Cranleigh Paddock to stay open.

Nigel Pierce made a deputation focused on the three elements of finance, the consultation and the process of closing the Homes. He questioned the lack of cost analysis and financial rational behind the proposals. Concern was expressed that more substantial demographic and demand related projections had not been supplied and it was suggested that even on the basis of the projections in the report, the number of additional beds at Oakridge was not sufficient to make up for those to be potentially lost from Deeside. Mr Pierce noted that Basingstoke and Deane Borough Councillors had opposed the proposals. He proposed that in light of the opposition and the incompleteness of the consultation, a new process be begun.

Les Wyatt made a deputation opposing the proposed closure of Deeside. He questioned the validity of the consultation, citing a lack of financial information and the changed proposals for £10 million of the spend. Mr Wyatt noted the opposition of the Borough Council in Basingstoke, alongside the 83 percent of local population who had rejected the proposals. In terms of the viability of the facilities at Deeside, the view was expressed that the corridors were wide enough for a bed and therefore adequate and furthermore that en suite facilities were not necessary for dementia sufferers. The stress and anxiety that the proposals were causing both residents and staff was cited and it was acknowledged that although Extra Care provision would suit many people, it was not the answer for dementia sufferers. The professionalism of both Councillors and officers was questioned with regards their approach to the process. Mr Wyatt urged Cabinet to make the right decision for the people of Hampshire.

Peter Rich made a deputation opposing the proposed closure of Deeside. He suggested that the consultation was flawed and only a desktop formality. A number of other elements were cited to support his opposition including: a lack of interest in the petitions by the County Council, Cllr McNair-Scott's potential conflict of interest, the relationship between the Council and Urban Retirement Villages, the lack of information supplied to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, the inconsistent message with regards to corridor width and the suitability of Extra Care for people with dementia. Mr Rich also noted that £10 million had been removed from the original proposals and suggested that this money would be best used to refurbish the facilities that were already in place.

Andrew Gannaway made a deputation opposing the proposed closure of Nightingale Lodge, noting that his partner's mother was a resident in the Home. Mr Gannaway highlighted differences between the original business case as the basis for consultation and the proposals now being made. He claimed that 1200 signatures on a petition opposing the closure had gone missing and he noted that over 80 percent of the general public were against the idea. The usage of the Home was referenced and it was noted that although it was no longer full, as recently as February it had been and was popular in the local area. Mr Gannaway asked Cabinet members to set aside pre-conceived ideas and base their decision on the information in front of them. He proposed that the best way forward would be to re-start the process, with an independent decision maker.

Barbara King made a deputation on behalf of her mother June King (who had been taken ill) opposing the proposed closure of Deeside. The capacity for care provision in the area around Deeside, including the expansion of Oakridge was highlighted and Ms King questioned whether this would be sufficient, especially in light of on going demographic shift. With reference to the consultation process, it was questioned whether closure was a foregone conclusion and it was suggested that this was part of a plan to drive more people into private care provision. Ms King asked that a full investigation into the process be launched.

David Buck made a deputation opposing the proposals for the Homes. He claimed that the Cabinet meeting was a formality and that the decision was already made, noting in particular that the decision would not take account of the majority of residents who were in opposition to it. Mr Buck questioned the basis of the proposals, citing the lack of cost assessment, the inconsistent health and safety arguments and the unsuitability of Extra Care for the residents of Nightingale Lodge. It was claimed that demand in the area was high and therefore capacity shouldn't be lost. The rights of residents to remain in their home was also highlighted and the stress that the proposals were placing on vulnerable people was noted. Cabinet were urged to use the opportunity to take the right decision for the residents of the Homes.

Teresa Kerr made a deputation opposing the proposals for the Homes. She argued that Extra Care was not suitable for dementia sufferers and neither were the private Homes in the vicinity of Deeside. Ms Kerr expressed her confidence in the standard of care at County Council Homes and proposed that there should be an increase, rather than a decrease, in capacity. She also questioned claims of underuse and was aware of high levels of demand in the area. This demand for specialist dementia care was in addition to the demand for Extra Care and Ms Kerr implored Cabinet to vote against the proposals and to use the staff, money and land that the Council has available to provide the facilities that were needed.

Wendy Eling made a deputation in opposition to the proposals for the Homes. She cited her negative experiences of private sector Homes and argued that safety and good quality care were more important than wide corridors or ensuite bathrooms. The question was raised as to how the proposals fitted with national Government policy. Ms Eling suggested that pushing people towards private sector homes was a form of privatisation and not in the interests of the people of Hampshire.

All of the deputies were thanked by the Chairman.

The Chairman addressed the issue of the petitions that a deputy had claimed were missing and Councillor Tony Hooke declared from the public gallery that he had handed these in to the Leader's office.

38. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made

39. FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Corporate Resources (Item 6 in the Minute Book) regarding a number of financial issues in respect of the current financial year and the process and framework for the development of the 2014/15 budget.

The Financial Update was introduced and key elements of the report highlighted. It was noted that the Chancellor's Autumn Statement had brought positive news for the County Council, but ongoing demographic pressure, including the £1 million per day cost of adult care and rising costs of children in care, meant that the situation remained difficult. It was confirmed that pending the decision of the County Council in February 2014, calculations were based on no changes to the Council Tax precept.

Cabinet welcomed the report, in particular the additional resource that had been allocated to Adult Social Care. The recommendations in the report were agreed.

The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 1.

40. OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF FOUR RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES AND ONE DAY CENTRE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXTRA CARE ASSISTED LIVING

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Adult Services (Item 7 in the Minute Book) regarding the outcomes of the Consultation on the proposed closure of four Residential Care Homes and one Day Centre and the development of Extra Care Assisted Living.

Through prior arrangement with the Chairman, two non-executive Members and one Member from another Authority spoke on this item:

Councillor Tony Hooke recounted the concerns about the proposals that he had heard from an elderly resident in one of the Homes and he commended the work of the Trade Union in opposing the closure of the Homes. Councillor Hooke suggested that the consultation process had been a mess, that the decision was inevitable and that the process had not been open or fair. He highlighted a number of missing petitions, the resignation of the former Executive Member for

Adult Social Care and the lack of consultation on the changed proposals for £10 million of the original budget as reasons to reject the proposals. Tribute was also paid to the residents of the Homes.

Councillor Tony Jones (Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, speaking by virtue of the one-off agreement of the Chairman to vary Executive Arrangements to allow Members of other Authorities to have their say) addressed the Cabinet. He felt that more questions than answers had emerged from the consultation process and that his conclusion was of something not being right. He highlighted the demographic shift and house building programme in the Basingstoke area and explained the ongoing need for dementia care, alongside Extra Care facilities. Councillor Jones proposed keeping the Homes open and carrying out further work to resolve issues that had arisen and ensure that the people of the area were listened to.

Councillor Patricia Stallard paid tribute to all of the people who had been involved in the process thus far. She explained that the Safe and Healthy People Select Committee, of which she was the Chairman, had taken the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the recommendations. The input of all of the deputies at the Select Committee meeting was recognised and it was explained that a separate, detailed consideration of each Home had been carried out. It was confirmed that there had been no limit on discussion and that each member of the Committee had been free to ask as many questions as they wished. It was noted that not all of the recommendations had been supported unanimously, however with one exception (relating to the future name of the Bulmer House site) there were no proposed amendments. Furthermore, each recommendation had been supported by a majority of the Committee with no need to use a Chairman's casting vote. Councillor Stallard concluded that she was confident that thorough, cross-party scrutiny had been carried out and highlighted the letter from herself to the Chairman of Cabinet summarising the outcome of this, which was appended to the report.

The non-executive Members who had spoken were thanked for their input.

The report was introduced and the context, process and proposals were outlined. In particular the consultation, the welfare of residents, the role and position of the staff, the concerns raised by the public and the future needs of older people in Hampshire were highlighted. Ongoing demographic change, the pressure on the County Council's budget and the importance of meeting market need was recognised. Attention was also drawn to the two equality impact assessments that had been carried out in relation to the recommendations.

Further detail was provided about the consultation process and the public events that ran alongside it. It was noted that a copy of the response to the consultation was provided in the report to Cabinet and a number of the key concerns raised were highlighted, including moving and the relocation of elderly people, the provision of dementia care and the suitability of Extra Care. The approach of the department to address these concerns was outlined, in particular the ways in which residents and their families would be part of the process and it was confirmed that all residents were under the care of a GP.

The proposals for each Home in turn were introduced, specifically this involved the closure of Bulmer House, Deeside and Nightingale Lodge and that Cranleigh Paddock remain open and the dementia facilities being further developed. The current accommodation available, the alternatives available in the area and the options that had been considered and rejected as part of the process for each were set out. With regards to Bulmer House, the recommendation of the Select Committee that any future developer be required to retain the name Bulmer House or similar was noted.

Cabinet welcomed the proposals and raised questions on a number of points. The timetable for residents to leave Homes, should the decision to close be taken, was discussed. It was confirmed that the department would work with residents and their families to find the best individual solution in each case. It was also noted that a very small number, or a single resident remaining in a Home would likely not be in the best interests of that resident and would jeopardise suitable care provision, therefore it would be necessary in this instance for a timescale for remaining residents to leave the Home to be drawn up.

The suitability of potential first floor accommodation at Cranleigh Paddock was discussed and it was confirmed that whilst not appropriate for all, it was suitable in a number of cases.

Concerns regarding the potential for partners to be split up were raised, as well as opportunities to maintain bonds between staff and residents. It was confirmed that the relationships between staff and residents were recognised and taken into account and that ongoing support would be provided to sustain these where possible. It was also noted that in many cases Extra Care provision would enable partners to stay together rather than seeing them forced apart due to differing care needs. The individual responsibility of the department to all residents was emphasised and welcomed by Cabinet.

In response to a number of questions raised about petitions, the Chairman confirmed that all of those received by the County Council had been taken in to account. He noted that some were clearly intended to be in support of a particular Home, however many were on a generic form that covered all four Homes. It was acknowledged that some of those uncategorised petitions that had been received had been allocated to being in support of Deeside, however it was clear that all of those received had been in favour of keeping at least one of the four homes open, if not all four, and that these were accounted for in the report.

Each of the recommendations set out in the report were voted upon and unanimously approved by Cabinet. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2.