

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Adult Social Care held at County Hall, Lewes on 16 January 2007

PRESENT - Councillor Mrs Tidy (Chairman)
Councillors Forster, Gubby, Lacey OBE, Taylor
(Vice-Chairman), Webb and Woodall

Chief Officer: Keith Hinkley, Director of Adult Social Care
Legal Adviser: Angela Reid, Head of Legal Services
Scrutiny Lead Officer: Gillian Mauger, Scrutiny Lead Officer

ALSO PRESENT - Councillor Livings spoke on item 37
Debbie Endersby, Head of Learning Disability
Commissioning

37. CALL-IN – REVIEW OF THE DAY SERVICES PROVIDED TO ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AT AVIS WAY, NEWHAVEN

37.1 Councillor Forster, with the support of two other committee members, had called-in a decision made by the Cabinet on 12 December 2006 in relation to day services provided to adults with learning disabilities at Avis Way, Newhaven.

37.2 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Law and Personnel on the call in process. The Committee's Legal Adviser explained that this call-in was in accordance with paragraph 20 (c) of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution and reminded the Committee that the debate must be confined to an examination of the financial issues surrounding the proposals in relation to Avis Way.

37.3 The Committee asked for clarification regarding the ability of Southdown Housing Association (Southdowns) to provide day care services for its clients who currently went to Avis Way, at no additional cost.

37.4 The Director of Adult Social Care circulated a letter from Southdown Housing Association, dated 12 January 2007. The letter confirmed that Southdown had agreed to provide day care services to relevant ESCC funded service users currently residing within their accommodation, within the current contract price. Southdown had also indicated that they would be able to continue with this provision within the current price on an ongoing basis.

37.5 The Director of Adult Social Care stated that Southdowns was an organisation with a national reputation for good practice that had considerable experience in providing day care services. In addition, the Director reassured the Committee that the quality of care provided would be monitored through the normal contract monitoring processes and that CSCI also fed into this process. The Director informed the Committee that he was confident about the service Southdowns could provide.

37.6 The Director of Social Care also reassured the Committee that if a decision was made to proceed with the closure of Avis Way, then discussions would move away from the broad strategic considerations and, together with Southdowns, the

focus would be on the individuals concerned and the personal programmes and timetables needed by those individuals.

37.7 The Committee agreed that if the decision to close Avis Way proceeded, it would wish to review how both Southdown Housing Association and St Nicholas were providing these services in a year's time. The Director of Adult Social Care supported this.

37.8 The Committee sought clarification with regard to the use of St Nicholas following the closure of Avis Way in terms of building adaptations and staffing issues.

37.9 The Director of Adult Social Care explained that there was already a programme in place to improve the general environments of all day centres. Through this programme many of the improvements had already been made to St Nicholas. The Director did acknowledge that there may be some increased staff costs due to the delay in implementing the decision. It was also accepted that there could be some redundancy costs, but although this would be funded corporately, a significant saving would still be made when these were taken into account.

37.10 The Director of Adult Social Care also informed the Committee that although there was a lease on the building at Avis Way until 2066 there was potential for disposal of the site.

37.11 The Director of Adult Social Care reassured the Committee about the possible transport costs and explained that the costs in the financial appraisal included a daily breakdown of people who currently needed transport. However, it was recognised that there would always be the potential need to take into account increasing dependency.

37.12 RESOLVED – by a vote of 4 members for, and 3 members against, to proceed with the original decision made by the Cabinet on 12 December 2006 to close the Day Centre at Avis Way, Newhaven.