

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 12TH DECEMBER, 2016

REFERENCE FROM HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 22ND NOVEMBER, 2016

RESHAPING SERVICES - REVIEW OF RESPITE CARE FOR ADULTS
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES (DSS) -

The Head of Adult Service, presented the report the purpose of which was to seek the views of the Committee on proposals to change the way in which respite care was delivered for adults with learning disabilities. For this item, the Committee also welcomed the Acting Operational Manager (Learning Disabilities).

On 25th July 2016, a report was considered by Cabinet and subsequently referred to the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, which endorsed the decision to undertake a review of the Council's residential care service for adults with learning disabilities, including a programme of consultation on the way services are delivered. That report can be found in the Background Papers to this report. Both Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee noted the proposals contained in that report. It was agreed that, following the programme of consultation, a business case evaluating the options would be prepared for initial pre-decision scrutiny by the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee. Those proposals and the views of the Committee would then be considered by Cabinet in reaching a decision.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council currently offers respite care to approximately 82 adults with learning disabilities in order to meet their needs and those of their carers. Respite care was provided in a variety of ways and from a number of facilities. On average, service users had approximately 28 days respite service each per year, which they used over a number of occasions.

The way in which this care was provided by the Council had changed in recent years. Formerly, the respite care needs of adults with learning disabilities in the Vale of Glamorgan were met primarily through use of the Council's Respite Residential Care facility (based at Rhoose Road, Rhoose) and spot purchasing residential home placements where required.

More recently, it had been recognised that service users and their families wanted increased flexibility in the way that respite care was provided. People had chosen to have this delivered through direct payments, the Council's Adult Placement Service or continued use of Rhoose Road. At the same time, spot purchasing residential home placements for respite use by clients had reduced to single figures. However, a small number of people with very high level needs would continue to require this type of provision.

For other people, their need for respite could be met in ways which helped to support their independence and provided them with greater levels of choice and control. Hence, use of alternative methods of respite provision such as direct payments and the Council's Adult Placement Service had increased over time, while use of the Council's service at Rhoose Road had diminished.

The comparable costs borne by the Council for use of a residential placement at Rhoose Road and respite with the Adult Placement Service were outlined in the table below. The continued reduction in the use made of Rhoose Road had the effect of increasing the unit cost of providing this service. An estimated cost of a placement with an external provider was also shown in the table. The costs would be subject to change following any subsequent procurement exercises that may be undertaken, in addition to the soft market testing that had been carried out recently.

Respite Provision	Cost per week
Rhoose Road	£2100 - £2700 (dependent on capacity)
Adult Placement Service	£517*
Private Sector Residential Provider	£1700 - £2200 (estimated)

** This figure contains an element of personal care, which not all clients require. It does not contain any client contributions which may apply and so it illustrates an estimated maximum cost of this type of placement.*

During September 2016, a consultation exercise was undertaken with current users of Rhoose Road and their families and those whose care pathway was likely to involve a move into the service. The consultation exercises were designed to offer opportunities to discuss the way in which respite was currently delivered and how it was proposed this may change in the future.

The Cabinet report of 25th July 2016 was referred to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee at a meeting on 12th September 2016 so that the views of this committee could be considered as part of the overall review of the service. The comments made at the meeting are reflected in this report and the minutes could be found at Appendix A.

As part of the service review, two options for the future of the service had been evaluated. The first of these options was to continue the service as it currently operated and the second was to make changes to the Council's existing service by ceasing to provide a service from Rhoose Road and use suitable respite alternatives to meet the assessed needs of people with learning disabilities and their carers. Members will be aware of their duty to pay due regard to the impact that any proposed changes may have had on protected characteristic groups when reaching a decision. An equality impact assessment had been developed and was attached at Appendix B.

The two options had been appraised against a series of criteria which was detailed in paragraph 14 of the report.

Option 1 - Maintain Rhoose Road as a respite facility -

The first option for consideration is to continue operating Rhoose Road as a respite facility at its current capacity.

The facility could accommodate three service users at any one time and offered one downstairs bedroom (for use by those with complex health and social care needs) and two upstairs bedrooms. People who attended the service and their carers had been assessed as requiring a period of respite to meet their needs.

There were 36 current users of the service, 12 of whom were users of the downstairs bedroom and 24 who used the two rooms located upstairs in the building. Of the 24 service users who used the upstairs bedrooms, 8 of them were currently known to the Council's Adult Placement Service and the remaining 16 could be eligible to use the service.

The table below showed how occupancy levels of Rhoose Road had changed in recent years. The number of available respite nights differed between years, dependent on whether or not the facility closed over the Christmas period. Between 2013/14 and 2015/16, occupancy levels of the facility had reduced by 16.96%. There was a slight increase in Rhoose Road occupancy in 2013/14. This related to requests from families for additional respite care, due to individual family circumstances and Rhoose Road being able to accommodate these requests.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
No. of available respite nights	1,095	1,059	1,062	1,065
No. of occupied nights	920	996	968	821
Occupancy %	84.02%	94.05%	91.15	77.09%

The decrease in occupancy was mainly related to issues about the ability of the premises to meet the needs of service users when compared with alternative provision. There was only limited capacity for people with complex health and social care needs as they could be accommodated only in the one downstairs room. The floor space downstairs was extremely limited, particularly for those who were wheelchair users. The internal structure and general nature of the building also limited the ability of staff to support appropriately people who presented with challenging behaviour. As such, the physical environment was not conducive to implementing strategies which facilitated positive behavioural management. The limited space and lack of available rooms also constrained the staff's ability to provide person-centred emotional support and care for people.

The demand for Rhoose Road had decreased in recent years, which had an adverse impact on the unit cost per occupied night. In 2015/16, the average unit cost per occupied night was approximately £391 (gross) and £343 (net of income). If the facility had been full to capacity the average unit cost per night would have been reduced to £301 (gross) and £265 (net of income).

Rhose Road was currently staffed as follows:

Position Name	Headcount	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
Short-Term Care Manager	1	1
Care Assistant/Driver	2	1.30
Community Support Worker	6	4.78
Domestic Assistant	1	0.43
Relief Care Assistant/Driver	2	0
Relief Community Support Workers	3	0
Total	15	7.51

The consultation exercises demonstrated that the respite provided from Rhose Road is currently well received by service users and their families. For parents and carers, the stability and security of the service were seen as benefits. It supported them by offering a welcome break, an opportunity for them to recharge their batteries and an element of free time. They recognised that Rhose Road was small in size and, although the majority of those consulted were happy with the current service, comments were made to the effect that a bigger version of a facility like Rhose Road would be beneficial.

Option 2 - Close Rhose Road and use suitable respite alternatives to meet assessed needs -

The other proposal within the consultation exercise was to offer an alternative to the respite care provision that was currently provided at Rhose Road in order to better meet assessed needs. This option had two elements:

- Consultation Element 1: Where an assessment showed that respite care services should be provided and service users chose not to receive direct payments, the Vale of Glamorgan's Adult Placement Service would be offered to people and their carers as the default option. The service currently had capacity to host additional placements and offered greater flexibility and opportunities to people and their carers. 24 of the 36 current users of Rhose Road could have all of their respite care needs met by the Adult Placement Service. Eight of these people currently access the Adult Placement service and the other 16 could access the Adult Placement service. The service had the capacity to accommodate this level of growth.
- Consultation Element 2: For those who had particularly high level care needs who had been assessed as requiring residential respite provision (12 of the 36 current users of Rhose Road), the Council's Adult Placement Service would not be suitable. It was proposed, therefore, that the Council would look to provide the required 24 hour high level support to meet the needs of this client group through an external provider. As evidenced by the market sounding exercise described below, there is currently sufficient capacity in the market to meet the Council's requirement for support to be provided to this group of people. However, this was subject to change and a full procurement exercise would need to be undertaken.

Progressing this option would mean that Rhoose Road would no longer operate but all people with eligible needs would continue to receive an appropriate service, which would include 24/7 support for those who required it.

In parallel with the consultation work associated with this project, a market sounding exercise was undertaken in order to understand the availability and suitability of externally provided residential respite placements that could support those service users with a particularly high level of care needs. This exercise was undertaken with the aim of building upon the knowledge the Council already has about the care market because of its current commissioning arrangements. The exercise was undertaken via Sell2Wales and sought information from prospective suppliers as to the likely type and level of potential interest in providing these services. In addition, desk-based research had taken place alongside conversations involving providers with whom the Council already had a relationship.

The report advised that during September 2016, a consultation exercise was undertaken with current users of Rhoose Road and their families and those whose plans may involve using the service. Outcomes of this consultation were detailed within paragraphs 35 to 42 of the report.

Conclusion and preferred option -

The report advised that both options had been evaluated against the criteria as set out in paragraph 12 of the report. The following table provided an illustrative summary of the two options against the review criteria:

Review Criteria		
	Option 1 Continue Current Service	Option 2 Close Rhoose Rd and use suitable respite alternatives
Ensure that needs and personal outcomes continue to be met	✓	✓
Congruent with SS and Well-being Act	✗	✓
Financially viable and achieve required savings targets	✗	✓

The table above demonstrated that option 2 (i.e. close Rhoose Road and use suitable respite alternatives to meet presenting needs) best met the criteria of the review. It was, therefore, the preferred option. This option would ensure that service users continued to have their needs for respite met and their personal well-being outcomes achieved. The option had greater congruence with the Social Services

and Well-being Act as it promoted choice via the promotion of direct payments and Adult Placement Service or commissioning external placements where required. By ceasing to provide a service at Rhoose Road and using alternatives, the service would ensure financial viability and achieve the required savings targets.

The Chairman stated that from a financial point of view Option 2 was the sensible thing to do. He commented that what worried him was that these were vulnerable individuals who had expressed a wish for the service to remain as it was and who were concerned with the service that would be provided in the future.

The Committee asked for more information in relation to the Adult Placement Service. The Head of Adult Services advised that the best way to describe this was that it would be like fostering arrangements but for adults, on a permanent or short-term basis. The advantage of this service was that a person would live in a family environment, which was something that the Welsh Government was championing. Also, the Vale Council had a good track record in providing this service. Further to the comments, the Acting Operational Manager (Learning Disabilities) stated that some service users of Rhoose Road would have already used the Adult Placement Service. She added that during the consultation process a key aspect raised was the need to sustain friendships which was something that the Adult Placement Service could assist with because it allowed up to three individuals to be placed at the same time.

A Committee Member indicated that he had strong concerns with the proposals and he queried a determination that the fall in occupancy rates was an actual trend. The Member stated that he felt that the process was moving very quickly and that for several years there had been a lot of talk about consultation in regard to how services were delivered and he felt that Option 2 was not in keeping with the requirements outlined in the Social Services and Wellbeing Act about a person's voice being heard. He also considered that the case for Option 2 had not been made because the consultation had shown that the service users were happy with how services were currently provided.

In reply to the Member's comments, the Head of Adult Services outlined that there were risks if the decision making process was delayed, which could potentially result in no service being available. He stated that the purpose of the consultation was not to make the case for one option over another but to understand service users views before any decisions were made. He added that there was a difficult balance in that service users had expressed how much they valued the current service against the need to develop a wider range of options for new service users and those with higher levels of need.

The Acting Operational Manager (Learning Disabilities) also advised that 11 out of 36 service users or their carers had attended consultation meetings with two further discussions being received via telephone, so it was important to be clear about the number of responses. In terms of the number of respite nights provided at Rhoose Road, she stated that the allocation process had changed and that in the past staff at Rhoose Road would attempt to fill cancelled stays. This had meant that some service users were provided with a larger number of nights that was greater than their assessed needs.

A Member indicated that it was a difficult situation. He understood the financial arguments and that, as a building and physical environment, Rhoose Road would not be able to cater for the needs of many service users.

A Committee Member expressed the view that, although he understood the need to find savings, he would support a call to put the decision on hold because he had concerns that there was insufficient evidence or well set out plans for the clients in the future. He stated that this matter should be deferred in order that the plans for Rhoose Road could be considered in a further and more detailed report.

Following this, a Member stated that this was an emotive issue and he referred to previous decisions which had not resulted in a reduction in the quality of services such as the closures of Bryneithin and Gardenhurst. He commented that both of these buildings were also not fit for purpose, despite the very best efforts of the Council to provide a good service. It was important to recognise that there would be more opportunities for service users and that Rhoose Road was not an ideal facility. The Member also commented that if you asked a service user whether they liked the way services were provided, the usual answer would be 'yes' because individuals were not sure of the alternatives.

The Chairman commented that the options of direct payments, the Adult Placement Service and spot purchasing were already available to service users at Rhoose Road and he queried whether any had used these as an alternative. In reply, the Acting Operational Manager (Learning Disabilities) advised that there had been some, although others had expressed a concern around changes to the way that services were delivered.

In regard to the length of time to implement the preferred option, the Head of Adult Services referred the Committee to paragraph 46 of the report, which highlighted the transition activity, that indicated that the current plan was for this to be concluded sometime during May 2017. He also stated that all service users going into respite would be undertaking some form of transition and that this would be a piece of work that Social Services would have to undertake with service users.

The Committee were then asked to consider a Member's recommendation for the Cabinet to note the results of the consultation, which indicated that service users and their carers did not wish to see the closure of Rhoose Road. The Member also asked the Committee to consider a further recommendation for Cabinet not to make any decisions on this issue until a further report was brought to this Committee identifying in detail how the personal wellbeing outcomes of the service users would be improved as a result of the closure of Rhoose Road. The Committee agreed that the Member's recommendations should be forwarded to Cabinet.

Subsequently, the Committee

RECOMMENDED -

(1) T H A T the contents of the report be noted.

(2) T H A T the report and the views of the Committee as detailed in the minutes, be referred to Cabinet for its consideration.

(3) T H A T Cabinet note the results of the consultation which indicated that service users and their carers do not wish to see the closure of Rhoose Road.

(4) T H A T Cabinet should not make any decisions on this issue until a further report is brought to this Committee identifying in greater detail how the personal wellbeing outcomes of service users would be improved as a result of the closure of Rhoose Road.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) In order for the Committee to consider proposals for changes to service as part of the consultation process and accountability process.

(2) To ensure that the process of taking forward any changes to the service is undertaken effectively in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures and that the views of the Scrutiny Committee are taken into account when reaching a decision about how to progress.

(3) To highlight the views of service users in relation to the use of the Rhoose Road respite facility.

(4) To allow the Committee to consider how the Council will meet the wellbeing outcomes of service users.

Attached as Appendix - [Report to Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee - 22nd November, 2016](#)