

ITEM 15 OF AGENDA

15. QUEEN ELIZABETH HOUSE DAY CENTRE (DHCS)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- i) update the Committee on the action taken in relation to the review of Queen Elizabeth House Day Centre**
- ii) approve further action in relation to pursuing the potential use of the whole building as a residential home for older people**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 At its meeting on the 21 July 2004 this Committee considered a comprehensive Best Value Report for the Council's Community Services. The report highlighted a number of issues including factors and trends that are naturally occurring within the community.
- 2.2 Amongst the factors considered were census output which demonstrated that the population in Runnymede between retirement age and 75 had declined by 3% (around 2000 people) over the last 10 years. The details also demonstrated that Englefield Green East was the area with the lowest number of older people.
- 2.3 For the Best Value Report a number of benchmarking exercises were also undertaken and it became clear from the information received that, when compared against other Boroughs in Surrey, Runnymede provides a substantially higher level of Community Services for older people, relative to its population.
- 2.4 The report noted that there was above average provision for many of the Council's Community Services but in particular the Council had a much higher provision of Day Centre services and had the highest ratio of Day Centres to older people amongst the eleven Surrey authorities.
- 2.5 The Council has 5 Day Centres including Queen Elizabeth House (QEH) at Englefield Green and the newly built Manor Farm Day centre in Egham.
- 2.6 Surveys undertaken for the Best Value Review have shown a gradual decline in the use of Day Centres. A study of Day Centre capacity undertaken for the Best Value Review demonstrated that Manor Farm Day Centre in Egham had a seated meals capacity for 100 people but only had 67 visitors a day. A more recent count of meals taken at the Centre has shown that the number of meals provided has slightly reduced again and is now between 26 - 51 per day. The number of meals provided at QEH currently ranges from 32 - 52 per day.
- 2.7 The Best Value Report concluded that the Council should consider the level of provision of Day Centres and in particular should work in partnership with the PCT and the County Council to develop options for the future community use of the ground floor of Queen Elizabeth House Day Centre in Englefield Green. The options to be considered as part of the Review were to include:
 - i) Extension of the current nursing/residential home facility on the first floor to the ground floor;
 - ii) The use of the ground floor for day care services for people with special needs;

iii) The use of the ground floor for primary health care services.

3. Existing use of Queen Elizabeth House

3.1 In considering options for QEH it is important to understand the method and purpose of its original provision. The property at QEH was constructed in 1989. It was part of a joint venture with the Health Authority and it was designed to replace the adjacent Cottage Hospital with a dual facility for older people that would provide both Day Care facilities and a hospital/rehabilitation centre for those recovering from extensive hospital treatment. At the time it was built there were very limited Day Care facilities within Egham and Englefield Green. The new Manor Farm Centre had not been built and, although there was a centre in Egham, this was very small by comparison to the new Egham centre.

3.2 A brief summary of the current use of the building is set out below;

Ground floor

3.3 The ground floor is operated as a Day Centre throughout the week and on Saturdays and Sundays. The services provided are similar to those provided at the Council's other Day Centres within the Borough and include a hot meals service, visiting community nurse, chiropody, hairdressing, tea bar/shop etc. Events and activities are also held in the Centre and these include whist, bingo, parties, new age curling, craft activities, fetes and bazaars.

3.4 There are 13 staff employed at the Centre and a number of volunteers assist the staff with daily activities.

3.5 The Centre has a fully equipped kitchen and staff within the kitchen provide a meals service to residents on the first floor. A charge is made to the Primary Care Trust (PCT) for this service.

First floor

3.6 The first floor of the building is leased by the Borough Council to the North Surrey Primary Care Trust (NSPCT). Although the original purpose was to use the facility for rehabilitation from hospital the building is now predominantly used as a registered nursing home for older people. The NSPCT have arranged for the unit to be managed on their behalf by Welmede Housing Association. However, the staff in the facility are directly employed by the NSPCT.

3.7 The first floor provides residential accommodation for 19 people, 7 of whom are patients nominated by the PCT for continuing care following their discharge from hospital. The remaining 12 beds within the facility are allocated to residents by Welmede Housing Association. Surrey County Council's Adult & Community Services Division nominate a substantial number of people to these beds.

4. Options

4.1 The following action has been taken in relation to the original Best Value Review recommendations:

Use of Ground Floor Facility for Primary Care Health Services

4.2 Windsor & Maidenhead PCT were asked to outline their needs in the area and to consider whether or not they could utilise the ground floor facility within Queen Elizabeth House as a facility for primary health care services. (e.g. health centre/doctors' surgery) The Trust have indicated that they do not feel that the ground floor, or the building as a whole, would be appropriate and have provided a report setting out the reasons for this.

Use of Ground Floor for Day Care Services for People with Special Needs

4.3 Surrey County Council's Adult and Community Services were asked if they could utilise the ground floor of the building for Day Care services. County Council Officers have indicated that there may be interest in utilising limited areas of the building for Day Care facilities for people with learning disabilities. However they have not provided any detailed proposals.

Extension of the Current Nursing/Residential Home Facility on the First Floor

- 4.4 The extension of the current residential facility on the first floor to the ground floor has been the preferred option amongst those agencies involved in the review. Welmede Housing Association have confirmed that there is a high demand for the existing residential care units and they anticipate that there would be a demand for extended provision. This view is supported by Adult and Community Services. It is also supported by the census data and the research undertaken by both the County Council (the Laing and Buisson report). The latter confirms that Care Homes will be operating at maximum capacity by 2007 and highlights a pressing need to increase care home places for very frail older people.
- 4.5 Arrangements were therefore made to consider whether the use of the ground floor for residential care was possible. Welmede commissioned a firm of surveyors to undertake an outline study. They also undertook a review of current operating costs. The outline study concluded that the extension to the ground floor alone would only increase provision by 9 units. This is because additional communal areas would need to be created to meet national care home standards. However, it also concluded that the unit could be financially viable if the facility were extended to provide a minimum of 36 units.
- 4.6 The core business of Welmede Housing Association is to provide accommodation and support to people with learning disabilities. Queen Elizabeth House is the only residential care unit that the Association has for older people and, although they are willing to work with other agencies to develop options for the future of Queen Elizabeth House, they do not wish to become more involved in this type of specialist provision.
- 4.7 A number of residential care homes are now provided by the private sector. It was therefore felt appropriate to seek a view from a specialist working in this field as to whether or not the private sector would be interested in providing an extended residential care facility, on the ground floor, principally meeting the needs of Englefield Green and the catchments beyond. Savills were approached and asked to evaluate the existing scheme and to comment on potential options. They concluded that the existing unit would not be attractive either with the current 19 beds or if extended to the ground floor as it would not be financially viable as a nursing care facility. However they did feel that it had some potential for use as residential care if the building was extended.

5. Review of the current first floor provision

- 5.1 It should be noted that the NSPCT are currently reviewing the way in which they provide continuing care to older people following hospital discharge. This review includes a review of the arrangements for the first floor of QEH. They are considering the potential relocation of the 7 continuing care beds; however the removal of these beds will impact on the longer term viability of the remaining residential care facility. They are also considering any scope for alternative NHS use. The NSPCT wish to avoid creating a potential problem and wish to work with the Council, and Welmede H.A, to agree an option for the building that is sustainable in the longer term.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 The initial stages of this review have shown that the various activities performed within Queen Elizabeth House are interlinked and that changes to one service area will impact on other functions. In view of this, and the fact that the NSPCT are also evaluating service provision on the first floor, it seems inevitable that the current review must be extended to an appraisal of the future use of the whole building.
- 6.2 From the work undertaken to date there would seem to be some merit in investigating further the potential extension of the facility to provide an enhanced residential care unit for older people. It is therefore proposed that a market testing exercise should be undertaken in which private sector providers are invited to submit proposals. At this stage this would be an exploratory exercise. A full report of the outcome of this process will be brought back to this Committee.

- 6.3 Making alternative arrangements for existing users of key services will be an extremely important element of any changes that are eventually proposed. Some work has already begun on various reprovion options and this work will continue. Options for the reprovion of key services will be presented with any proposals for change that emerge.
- 6.4 A comprehensive consultation process will need to take place if it is proposed to make significant changes to the current use of the building. A consultation strategy that establishes arrangements for consulting services users, staff, volunteers and any other stakeholders, will therefore be submitted with any options that come forward.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The current review of this facility has not been driven by a financial imperative. However there will clearly be financial implications arising from any changes that may emerge. Costed proposals will therefore be reported when the joint review is completed and a firm option is available to consider.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 The Best Value Review of Community Services highlighted a need to consider the current level of provision of Day Centres in the Borough. A review of service options for the ground floor of Queen Elizabeth House has commenced. The PCT are also undertaking a review of their arrangements for the services that they provide.
- 8.2 The service provision within QEH is complex and any changes made by one party have the potential to impact on the viability of other services within the building. It is therefore felt appropriate to undertake a joint review of options for the whole building.
- 8.3 There is evidence to support a demand for additional residential care units and it is felt that the building could become a viable residential care facility if extended. However more work is required to fully establish if this is a workable option. Market testing would assist in determining this and this is recommended as the next step.
- 8.4 It is very important to ensure that options for reprovion of existing services are developed and that all stakeholders are kept informed and consulted on any proposed changes. A consultation strategy will therefore be developed.
- 8.5 This report has concentrated upon the original Best Value Review recommendations. Members may wish to indicate if there are any other substantive proposals that also require consideration.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) a marketing exercise be undertaken in which private sector providers are asked to put forward proposals for use of the whole building as a residential care facility for older people; and**
- ii) a Consultation Strategy be drawn up by the multi agency working group that ensures that all stakeholders are consulted on any significant proposals for future use of the building.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Best Value Review of County Services