

Consultation on the future of Woodside Lodge residential care home

Summary of responses received

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1 Consultation approach

- 1.1 Relatives and carers of Woodside Lodge residents were invited to a meeting that took place at Woodside Lodge on Sunday 6 July 2014. At the meeting, they were advised that Cabinet would be considering a proposal to hold a public consultation on the future of Woodside Lodge, in advance of the publication of the paper detailing the consultation proposal on Monday 7 July. A staff briefing was held on the same day at Woodside Lodge and the council's other residential care homes, Glen Lee and Holcroft House. A copy of the presentation was posted to relatives after the meeting.
- 1.2 Cabinet considered this proposal and approved a public consultation on the future of Woodside Lodge on 15 July 2014 and this ran from 24 July 2014 to 23 October 2014. The consultation was covered by local media, including the local newspaper (Daily Echo) and local radio (BBC Radio Solent).
- 1.3 The schedule of meetings was published on the council's website and relatives and carers of Woodside Lodge residents were sent this by post with an invitation to attend. Details of the meetings were also posted up on the relatives' notice board at Woodside Lodge and staff were briefed so that they could give information about the proposals and the ways in which to respond. The schedule of meetings is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.4 A consultation document including a questionnaire was published on the council's website, where it could be downloaded, and was made available at all of the consultation meetings and from staff at Woodside Lodge. The consultation document is attached at Appendix B.
- 1.5 Two clear options for Woodside Lodge were presented during the consultation: either (a) for it to remain open or (b) for it to be closed and for its residents to be supported to move to suitable alternative care settings and, in the future, for care to be purchased for individuals requiring residential care in private or voluntary sector homes.
- 1.6 Six meetings for relatives and carers were held at Woodside Lodge on 5 August 2014, 2 and 30 September 2014. Meetings were held on these days at 4pm and 6.30pm, to enable as many people as possible to attend. Individual appointments were also offered to people between 5pm and 6.30pm on these days, for people who preferred to feedback their views and ask questions on an individual basis. Representatives from Choices Advocacy and, or, Carers in Southampton attended each of these meetings and were able to support relatives, as required. The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care attended some of the meetings. It was not possible to hold meetings before 4pm, as the room is in use by the day service based at Woodside Lodge.
- 1.7 The format of the group meetings consisted of a presentation given by the Interim Head of Adult Services followed by a question and answer session. Other council staff attended these meetings, including a senior social work practitioner, members of the project team and Woodside Lodge managers. Notes of these meetings were taken and these are attached at Appendix C.

- 1.8 In addition to the six meetings held at Woodside Lodge, two public meetings were held at the Civic Centre at 6pm on 8 August 2014 and 22 October 2014. These meetings covered the proposals regarding Woodside Lodge along with separate proposals for the future of day services and the respite service at Kentish Road. A verbatim record of these meetings, chaired by the Director of People, was made and this is attached at Appendix D. The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care also attended these meetings, along with representatives from Choices Advocacy (both meetings) and Carers in Southampton (the second meeting).
- 1.9 In addition to the above, a meeting for carers was hosted by Southampton Mencap (carers' lunch); two meetings were held with the council's partners and care providers; and meetings in public were held at Consult and Challenge (Spectrum Centre for Independent Living) and Southampton Healthwatch. These meetings included the proposals for Woodside Lodge along with those for day services and the respite service at Kentish Road. Notes from these meetings have been placed in Members' rooms and are available on request.
- 1.10 Several briefings were also held for Members of the council and the consultation and proposals were considered at a meeting of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) on 11 September 2014. The minutes of this meeting are available online at <http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=2852&Ver=4>
- 1.11 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care were given a tour of Woodside Lodge by a resident's wife, at her request.
- 1.12 A dedicated email address was publicised on the council's website and at all of the meetings outlined above. Everyone who attended the meetings was invited to respond to the consultation in the way that best suited them, including a direct invitation to phone or write to the Interim Head of Adult Services or a member of the project team, whose contact details were included in the presentations.
- 1.13 Independent advocates from Choices Advocacy worked separately with the residents of Woodside Lodge and were able to record the views of ten of its current residents, where appropriate.

2 Questionnaire responses

- 2.1 Four questionnaire responses were received, all from individuals with a friend or relative living at Woodside Lodge. Three of these strongly disagreed with the proposal to close Woodside Lodge and one strongly agreed with the proposal.

- 2.2 The respondent who strongly agreed with the proposal indicated a general dissatisfaction with the building and facilities and the suggested that the home should be re-built or refurbished.
- 2.3 Two of the questionnaires included detailed responses. One of these was following up comments made in a letter, providing further comments on the consultation document and a presentation given at one of the meetings. These can be summarised, with the council's response, as follows:

Comment	Council's response
Woodside Lodge residents cannot benefit from measures to avoid a need for residential care.	The council agrees that this does not apply to current residents, who are likely to require continuing residential or nursing care. This was intended to apply to people in the future who could be supported to continue to live at home or in extra care housing.
Difficult to find a suitable care home for a comparable cost.	An analysis of the availability of residential care in Southampton suggests that suitable places are available at or below the cost of a place at Woodside Lodge.
Undue emphasis on council resources at the expense of self-funders.	It is no longer considered appropriate for self-funders to live in council-run homes, as there is considered to be sufficient availability of care of the same quality in private or voluntary sector homes.
No certainty that alternative accommodation will be suitable.	Social workers will work with families to identify suitable alternatives based on a thorough review of residents' needs.
Concern that residents' views should not be canvassed and that this may cause distress.	This was handled sensitively by independent advocates taking into account residents' abilities. Residents were not distressed by the exercise and some were able to feedback their views, which will help to inform the final decision.
Satisfaction with care and support provided.	The proposal to close Woodside Lodge is not related to the standard of care and support provided. Alternative care settings will be selected on their ability to provide the required levels of care and support to meet residents' needs.

Comment that this is a difficult time for residents, as their home is at risk.

The council acknowledges that this is a difficult time for residents and their families, but with the appropriate support does not consider that there will be any significant long term impact on residents' wellbeing.

2.4 The other questionnaire with detailed comments sets out a poignant description of the respondent's relative's experience prior to living at Woodside Lodge and the challenges of living independently with vascular dementia, including the significant impact that this can have on the lives of the individual and members of their family. The respondent commends the care and support given to their relative and the time taken to settle in. There is a concern that any move from Woodside Lodge would result in a rapid deterioration and, "I would imagine in some of the more frail residents in Woodside [Lodge] even death". The respondent describes another relative's poor experience of a move to a supported living environment and expresses concern that residents are unable to express their opinions on the proposed closure.

2.5 The respondent goes on to state that there is no suitable alternative to Woodside Lodge and describes several homes that were visited when looking for a suitable placement that fell a long way short of the standards of care and facilities expected. The respondent questions how closing Woodside Lodge will save money, as a suitable alternative will inevitably be more expensive and, in any case, a significant investment has been made in maintaining and improving Woodside Lodge. The respondent provides data supplied by the Alzheimer's Society, which predict a significant increase in the number of people in the UK with dementia and questions the ability of relatives to provide the required care and accommodation. The respondent questions the good availability of residential care for individuals with dementia and states that if this were the case, there would not be such strong demand for the three council-run homes. There is a suggestion that it would be more appropriate to close Holcroft House or Glen Lee because of their location and the types of individuals that they support.

2.6 The respondent raises some specific questions, which are summarised below:

Question

Why is the consultation not listed on the Woodside Lodge page of the council website and why has it not been publicised more widely in the media?

Council's response

The consultation was listed on a dedicated page on the council's website and was covered in the Daily Echo and by BBC Radio Solent. Social work and care home staff have advised relatives of the proposals and the Woodside Lodge has been closed to new permanent admissions pending a decision its future.

What private residential homes are

At the time of writing, there are 33

there in Southampton that provide specialist care for individuals with dementia that will accept the council's rates?

What steps would be taken to reduce the impact on the health and wellbeing of residents who have to move?

What arrangements are in place for monitoring the quality of private residential care homes?

How can 'care in the community' be a solution for people with advancing vascular dementia?

bed spaces in residential care homes.

A thorough review of each resident's needs would be carried out in conjunction with a Consultant Psychogeriatrician. Residents would also be reviewed in their new home to ensure that it continues to meet their needs. There is no evidence that any resident will be placed at serious risk if they were to move and the five residents whose relatives have chosen to move them in advance of the decision have been reviewed and appear happy in their new homes. Social workers will work with the remaining residents and their families, carers and independent advocates to support their moves to suitable alternative care settings, paying particular attention to any additional needs arising because of their cognitive impairments.

Private homes are subject to the same regulatory regime as council-run homes and are also inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), which rates inspections as 'outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'. In addition to checks carried out by the CQC, the council's Integrated Commissioning Unit has a dedicated provider quality unit, which carried out separate checks and responds to complaints about homes in Southampton. Both CQC and the internal team can set expectations for improvements to services. CQC can act to withdraw the registration status of homes that consistently fail to achieve standards.

A range of options are available to enable individuals with a dementia to live in the community, for example, through use of tele care, living with carers and extra care housing. It is unlikely that these will be appropriate

How much money has been spent to refurbish Woodside Lodge over the past three years?
What is the value of the land and buildings and what plans are there if the land is sold?

What is the date of the next local authority elections?

for any of the current residents at Woodside Lodge, who will most likely move to suitable alternative residential care or nursing homes. £278,000 has been spent to maintain and improve Woodside Lodge over the past three years.
If the decision is made to close Woodside Lodge, a full appraisal of the buildings and site will be commissioned to inform options for their future use or disposal.
The next local election in Southampton will take place on 7 May 2015.

- 2.7 Finally, the respondent complained that she did not know about the consultation until another relative was advised by a member of staff when visiting and she felt that the consultation document was flawed.
- 2.8 Another questionnaire, completed by an independent advocate on behalf of the respondent, expressed the view that the council was prioritising investment in other buildings at the expense of those for vulnerable and older people and was concerned that the site would “fall into the hands of developers to build new homes”. The respondent considers there to be a “desperate need for homes like Woodside [Lodge] and it is common knowledge that there is an increase in people suffering with dementia.”
- 2.9 However, the respondent urges the council to provide alternative homes or care for the current residents to move to and should consider introducing and implementing new types of care.

3 Written responses

- 3.1 In addition to the questionnaire responses, four letters from three relatives were received, all objecting to the proposal to close Woodside Lodge.
- 3.2 One respondent wrote:
- Relative had experienced a traumatic move from previous home where the resident was unhappy
 - Caring staff at Woodside Lodge willing to engage with residents
 - Relative is very happy at Woodside Lodge
- 3.3 Another respondent:
- Criticised the timing of the meeting on 6 July, one day in advance of proposals being published prior to the Cabinet meeting on 14 July 2014
 - Questioned why Woodside Lodge was chosen for closure over Glen Lee and Holcroft House

- Speculates that this is because of the development potential of the site
 - Considers it inappropriate to seek the views of Woodside Lodge residents
 - Commends standards of care and considers Woodside Lodge to be a place of safety
 - Described in detail how difficult a move would be based on previous experiences
- 3.4 This respondent included a letter sent to the Editor of the Daily Echo, enclosing copies of two other letters that had been published on their letters page.
- 3.5 Another respondent:
- Objects to the proposal to close Woodside Lodge on the basis of their being too few residential care homes provided by the council to meet the need both for long term care and short term respite care
 - Suggests making better use of Woodside Lodge to support carers by providing residential respite care
 - Considers the council to have more control over standards in its own homes than in private homes
 - Asserts that there will always be a need for residential care for individuals with dementia and expresses concern that relying on private sector resources will result in inappropriate care being given in hospital

4 Responses from residents at Woodside Lodge

- 4.1 Independent advocates from Choices Advocacy worked separately with the residents of Woodside Lodge and were able to record the views of ten residents, where appropriate and where they agreed to meet. It was not considered appropriate to meet with six residents, because they were unwell, sleeping, too confused or were unable to communicate.
- 4.2 The views expressed were generally very positive about Woodside Lodge and each considered it to be a good place to live. One person responded that they thought it was nice to be there, but not to live in as a home. One stated, "It's not my home but it's a good place to live" and another, "It is my home now. It's quite good." Another said, "It's very good. It's my home."
- 4.3 When asked what they like to do in their home, residents' responses included:
- I take things a day at a time
 - I like to talk to other people and to find out about them
 - I like to help people to do something they haven't done before
 - I like to walk in the garden and to be in the sun
 - Dusting and all that, I do the hovering every day
 - I like my own company and sometimes prefer to sit in my own room, rather than to be with others
 - I do a lot of singing
 - I like the company of the ladies and like to see a smile on their faces

- (Thinking about the past) I used to enjoy the outdoors and do the gardening and maintenance
- I like being with others
- I like the whole place, referring to the garden space, wildlife and nests

4.4 When asked why residents decided to live at Woodside Lodge, their responses included:

- I think I was more or less sent here ... but I don't mind being here
- Can't remember, but I suppose it's OK
- [It was] a family decision made on my behalf due to the state I was in. They made the right decision.
- Don't really recall
- I didn't decide. I didn't know the place existed. Someone else made the decision.
- Other people decided for me. I was sent here.
- I'd heard about its [good] reputation
- Other people made me come here because I was getting naughty – messing about and making my place dirty
- I liked the place

4.5 When asked if they would like to live somewhere else, six residents replied that they would not, one replied that she felt unable to answer the question, one replied that she would like to move if something went wrong, one wanted to live with a family member and one wanted to move to live in the New Forest.

5 Meetings held at Woodside Lodge

5.1 Notes from the meetings are appended to this document.

6 Public meetings held at Civic Centre

6.1 Notes from the meetings are appended to this document.

7 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

7.1 The minutes of this meeting are available online at <http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=2852&Ver=4>