

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET
MONDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2001 AT 10.00 AM**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MONDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2001 AT 2.15 PM**

Agenda Item No.

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SUBJECT: LEARNING DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

Report of the Director of Adult Care Services

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Executive Member: Jane Pitman

1. Purpose of report

To seek approval to an extension of the learning disability accommodation review and agreement to plans for analysing and monitoring need and the methods of procuring care and accommodation and communication and consultation.

2. Summary

There is a continuing need for 40 places per year of additional accommodation for adults with a learning disability to meet demographic growth. Detailed information is now known about the nature of additional services which will be required and the geographical requirements for each type of provision.

The accommodation review identified four hostels to be replaced and work is progressing to achieve this. Two further hostels now require review.

Partnerships with housing departments and housing providers are essential for the cost-effective development of appropriate accommodation. This will require the County Council to continue to contribute land and/or capital resources. Our detailed knowledge of the needs for specialist learning disability accommodation has assisted in attracting alternative and additional funding.

“Valuing People”, the learning disability white paper requires the County Council to develop a strategy for housing people with learning disabilities in partnership with the relevant other agencies. The proposed strategy provides the basis for further development work with district housing authorities and providers of care and accommodation.

3. Conclusion

The Cabinet and Executive Committee are invited to consider:

- Noting the needs analysis appended to this report and accepting the need to plan to provide 40 additional places per year for the foreseeable future.
- Adopting the Service Model and Care Procurement Strategy as appended to this report.
- Adopting the Consultation and Communication Plan appended to this report.
- Adopting the appended Property Strategy and thereby aiming to procure additional places by working in partnership and minimising the investment required by the County Council.
- Noting the development plan and the value achieved to date relative to investment and expecting future capital bids to take the programme forward, which will be largely self-financing, but may require a capital contribution from the County Council.
- Considering the need to fund additional placements as part of the revenue budget process.

4. **Background**

The learning disability accommodation policy statement was approved by the Social services committee in January 1999 and the Learning Disability Accommodation Members Topic Group has overseen implementation of the policy and development plans approved at that committee and the following one.

The accommodation review identified the need for growth of 40 places per year and replacement of 4 hostels which do not comply with registration standards. In the first two years, 79 new places (net) were created, mostly in supported housing. A similar level of growth will be achieved in the current year.

The strategy contained in this report will form the basis of the local housing strategy for people with learning disabilities which will be a requirement arising from the learning disability white paper¹. This strategy will require the support of other agencies including housing departments, local housing associations, health and the voluntary sector, all of whom have been actively involved in the development of learning disability accommodation in Hertfordshire. The white paper promises further joint Department of Health / DETR guidance on housing for people with learning disabilities later this year.

5. **Hostel Replacement Programme**

The accommodation review identified the need to replace The Orchards in Letchworth, Lintons in Hoddesdon, Spring House in Welwyn Garden City and Roe Hill House in Hatfield.

Replacement of Spring House and Roe Hill House hostels has started and a development partner has been selected for replacement of The Orchards. Lintons will be tendered shortly.

¹ "Valuing People": A new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century, March 2001

As a result of the asset planning survey for the DTLR and publication of the draft National Minimum Care Standards two further hostels have been identified where it may be beneficial to consider reprovision. These are 3 Little Bushey Lane (Bushey) and 150 Jupiter Drive (Hemel Hempstead) which both occupy large plots. Further investigation of the options for these services is required and members are not asked to decide on their future at this stage.

6. **Needs Analysis**

Further details of the Needs Analysis are contained in the appended detailed strategy.

The accommodation review research was based upon the assessment of 2500 adults known to the services. This concluded that demographic growth of 40 places per year would be required for about 10 – 15 years after which it would plateau.

These findings are consistent with more recently published research on behalf of the Local Government Association² which concluded that “a reasonable target to bridge the gap between needs and services would be 50 places for a population of 100,000.” In Hertfordshire, this would amount to a little over 500 places.

Further research into the position in Hertfordshire was undertaken in the latter part of 2000 and considered by the Members Topic Group in January 2001. This research was based upon the accommodation review database, analysis of placements made during the last two years and those known to panel and consultation with district learning disability teams about the clients known to them.

This research confirmed the need for continuing growth of about 40 places per year and identified 9 groups for which there is greatest demand and the areas of the county where new developments will be required.

Demand for new placements in the first half of 2001/2 has been a little above this level.

7. **Property Strategy**

The appended detailed strategy includes a more detailed Property Strategy.

Affordable housing in Hertfordshire generally requires the provision of free land and additional grant and specialist housing is invariably more expensive. The provision of this growth in accommodation cannot be financed by the capital programme alone and is dependant upon partnership working and the recycling of sites in current service use and others identified for disposal. However, the replacement of four hostels has freed larger amounts of land than required for their replacement.

Experience of implementing the accommodation review has shown that by having a clear idea of what types of accommodation are required and the areas they are needed has enabled the County to take advantage of development opportunities as they arise.

² “An Ordinary Home : housing and support for people with learning disabilities” November 1999.

The county council does not need to own property in order to deliver its accommodation based care. This strategy proposes a relationship with housing departments and housing providers to ensure an adequate provision of appropriate accommodation from a variety of sources.

The development of purpose built new units is an expensive and lengthy exercise, but will always be required for some of the new provision. However, some needs can be met from existing void accommodation or conversion of outdated premises. Other potential sources of accommodation include:

- Land identified by County or district councils, especially land which is suitable for special needs housing but unsuitable for other purposes
- HCC land disposals, especially where there is an affordable housing obligation
- Developments which can be included in section 106 agreements (planning gain)
- Developments which can attract additional or alternative sources of funding including local authority social housing grant or housing corporation grants.

8. **Service Model and Care Procurement Strategy**

The appended detailed strategy includes more details of the proposed Service Model and care procurement strategy.

A key factor in procuring satisfactory new residential services is the location of the accommodation and the nature of the relationship between housing and care provider. Both provisions are generally long term relationships, but the two need not and should not be linked. The proposed strategy separates the procurement of care from the procurement of buildings whilst allowing for the two services to be provided by the same organisation under separate (and separable) agreements which allow continued access to the synergy between the two functions.

All new placements in residential care and supported housing which require County Council funding are subject to approval by an officer panel which is tasked with matching the demand for accommodation-based care with supply and identifying and addressing trends and unmet needs. New placements in shared accommodation will have regard for the needs and mix of existing residents as well as proposed new residents.

Through the development programme, the County Council seeks to provide a range of accommodation which increases the range of housing options and provides choice for service users.

In future respite care will exclusively be provided in separate living units from long term care although the provision of both services in separate living units on the same site will continue.

9. **Consultation and Communication**

A Consultation and Communication Plan is included in the appended detailed strategy.

The learning disability accommodation review established a user focus group which meets regularly to receive information and comment upon the development of new accommodation for people with learning disabilities. The work of this group is now being extended to cover other learning disability issues.

A similar group for carers is now proposed.

Throughout the hospital resettlement programme a strong communication policy helped to reduce public anxieties and promote the successful integration of learning disabled people into community housing. The same principles are being followed with the current development programme.

10. **Respite Care**

This report does not seek to address the future needs for respite care which are being addressed by a separate piece of work alongside the accommodation review and for which a consultation exercise is currently being undertaken.

11. **Financial Implications**

The revenue costs of growth to date have been funded through provision to meet demographic pressures. Consideration will need to be given to funding the expected continued expansion in demand for placements in the revenue budget. For 2002/03 the estimated requirement is for £1 million for new placements and £600,000 for the full year effect of current year placements. Growth at this level will be an ongoing requirement if we are to provide to meet rising demand at the estimated level of 40 extra placements per year, whether through the accommodation strategy or through spot purchase in the market.

The capital costs of the first four year plan were estimated at £12 million and have been funded largely externally, as demonstrated in the development plan appended to this report. The Capital Programme currently provides for £1.635m over 4 years and £800,000 self-financed projects. Of this, £535,000 and £350,000 respectively relate to 2002/03. The current assessment is that we will be able to deliver the formal programme for 2002/03 with less resources than previously anticipated and the Capital Panel will be asked to make available £360,000 in total for this purpose in 2002/03 and £154,000 in 2003/04, thereby reducing the previous requirement by £375,000. As further options are considered for future years, there may be a need for some additional capital provision, but every attempt will be made to obtain external funding or to self-finance from the use of existing assets. Some of the possible schemes are listed at the end of the Capital Contributions Table in the Development Plan.

There are some properties which are surplus to requirements in delivering the programme and will provide net capital receipts for the County Council amounting to approximately £400,000.