

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
ADULT SOCIAL CARE



DEPUTATION ON BEHALF OF
PRIMROSE HILL CARE HOME
TO
LEEDS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
1 JULY 2013

RESPONSE

July 2013

INTRODUCTION

A deputation was presented to the Full Council meeting of 1 July 2013 by the Save Primrose Hill Care Home Campaign from Boston Spa. The Deputation was led by Mr David Morton, accompanied by Angela Morton, Simon Ambrose and Karlis Obrams. At the conclusion of the Deputation, Council resolved that it be referred to a future meeting of Executive Board for response. This response is duly appended to the report entitled 'Better Lives for Older People in Leeds: residential care for older people', for consideration by Executive Board on 4 September 2013.

The Campaign Group had previously presented a detailed 'Submission' to Adult Social Care, to which a response was returned to the Group in June 2013. A copy of that response is attached. The Deputation to Full Council made a number of further, more general points and Adult Social Care offers the following response.

1 Our campaign has received good publicity through newspaper, television and radio and social media. We have gathered support totalling 6,185 people.

Response: The Council has been left in no doubt of the strength of feeling among residents, families, friends and a wide variety of interested parties and supporters of Primrose Hill. In total, up until the closure of the consultation, Adult Social Care received 317 telephone contacts, letters and emails; three petitions (total 5,025 signatures); 37 questionnaires from relatives/carers; and held numerous meetings with members of the public, Parish Councils and Elected Members. Adult Social Care acknowledges the near-100% support in favour of keeping the home open.

2 To date, residents and families have not been given any indication of what and where will be the alternative accommodation. Many families and friends live on the doorstep and are able to visit daily.

Response: The Campaign Group was provided with a list of alternative care homes in the Leeds, Harrogate, York and North Yorkshire areas, as part of the Council's response to the earlier 'Submission'. This can be found at Table 7 of the attached response. However, the Council acknowledges the local perception of Boston Spa as a geographically distinct community and the reluctance to relocate beyond its boundaries.

3 There is evidence supported by the medical profession to show that moving older people, of great ages is not just health threatening but life threatening.

Response: The Council's code of practice to be used when arranging for a person to move from a home undergoing closure was published in 2010. This included a 'Care Guarantee' and an 'Assessment and Closure Protocol' to be overseen by an 'Assurance Group' to ensure the procedures were carried out accordingly. Leeds Adult Social Care has taken learning and best practice published by Birmingham University¹ and other local authorities' experience of closing services and has built these into the Leeds Assessment and Closure Protocol. The Birmingham research suggests that if the closure process is conducted well, with high levels of respect, clear communication and empathy, then life after resettlement can be a positive experience. They conclude that 'the most important ingredient seems to be time to conduct the closures well ...'

Follow-up reviews of people moved from four homes affected in phase 1 of the Better Lives programme showed that after three months, 83% were happy and settled in their new placement, 3% had returned home, 2% had transferred to another, more suitable home, 1% was in hospital, and 1% had moved to a CIC bed. Eight people (10%) had sadly passed away, a proportion not

¹ (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/news/BirminghamBrief/AchievingClosureReport.pdf>)

unexpected in a population of this age and frailty. There has been no suggestion that any of the deaths were premature or attributable to the move.

4 Financially, the case for closing Primrose seems not to add up.

Response: A financial analysis was set out in detail in the response to the Submission in June 2013 (see pp 7-12 of the attached response). This also presents a corrected version and explanation of the original table presented in the February 2013 Executive Board report, which contained an error.

5 Private care homes east of Leeds charge from £650 through £800.

Response: Leeds City Council and the independent sector care home providers have negotiated a Quality Framework, under which an agreed fee is paid at a core rate (£429 per week). The care homes contracted under the Quality Framework have to evidence their compliance with the Council's quality standards and agree not to seek to impose third party supplements for the care they provide. Under the Council's published Care Guarantee, people moving to another home as a result of the closure of a Council-run home will not have to pay more than they do now.

6 Leeds is closing its own care homes and putting elderly folks' futures at risk by relinquishing its responsibility to an underfunded private sector.

Response: Leeds is in the unusual position of having, jointly with the city's independent care home proprietors, carried out an in-depth research project to discover the true and fair cost of providing good quality care for our elderly citizens in safe and comfortable homes.

As a result, the city now has a funding framework that is fair to proprietors, at a level they feel is sustainable for their businesses. At the same time it delivers best value as we spend public money at a time of greatly reduced funding available to local authorities. The fees we pay for residential and nursing home care have not only been agreed with the home owners, but set at a level they themselves helped us to determine.

7 Why close the Jewel in the Crown of care homes?

Response: The Council acknowledges and the high esteem in which Primrose Hill is held within the local area. The arguments and rationale for the Better Lives programme are set out in detail in the present Executive Board report. The Council respectfully draws the attention of the Save Primrose Hill Care Home Campaign to the recommendations set out in that report.