



Report of the Director of Adult Services

Executive Board

Date: 18th October 2006

Subject: Outline plan for The Breece, Scarborough, to comply with the Short Breaks Policy

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **“The Breece” is a holiday home in Scarborough owned and run by Leeds City Council.**
- **It is not part of the Council’s core business and it does not fit with the council’s agreed policy on short breaks.**
- **The decreasing occupancy rate at The Breece, coupled with the increasing financial subsidy paid by Leeds Social Services, mean that it is no longer operationally or economically viable.**
- **It is proposed that alternative arrangements are made for people needing a short break and that The Breece is deemed surplus to requirements**
- **Approval is sought for the outline plan**

1.0 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To seek agreement for the outline plan for The Breece - as detailed in Section 3.5 of this report

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The Breece is a holiday home for people with care needs and as such it is registered as a residential care home. It has 33 rooms (17 singles, 16 doubles), and following an earlier refurbishment it was made compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act access requirements in 2004. However less than 50% of the rooms have level access and only two of the rooms offer access to wheelchair users. These two rooms are the only ones that provide full en suite facilities.
- 2.2. There are 30 staff employed at The Breece – all of whom live locally.
- 2.3 The property is owned by Leeds City Council and has been used as a holiday home for 27 years. The property is valued at a range of between £500K and £700K (range reflects the property values in the area)
- 2.4 A Best Value review in 2000 stated that The Breece was not core business and should be self financing. However despite various attempts it still requires a subsidy from the Social Services Department. For the financial year 2006 /07 the subsidy is estimated to be £348,000
- 2.5 Attendance at The Breece has decreased over the years and recent attempts to market it have had no impact on arresting this decline in usage. (see table below)

2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07(est)
83%	64%	60%	54%	50%

- 2.6 A policy statement on “short-term breaks for adults with care needs and / or their carers” was agreed by the Executive Board on 6/7/05. The policy concluded that short term breaks would be given in response to assessed and eligible needs as identified in the user or carer’s care plan. Furthermore it was agreed that assessed and eligible needs should be responded to by giving a choice of service provision including Direct Payments.
- 2.7 The Breece is not compliant with the policy statement as service users are not assessed and for those who may be eligible for a short break, choice is restricted by the Department’s investment into a holiday home in Scarborough. In addition 19% of visitors (for the period January 2006 to September 2006) are not Leeds residents.
- 2.8 The Breece has a low take up of visitors from the black and minority ethnic communities in Leeds. The cultural and religious needs of people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities are more likely to be met through the approach, advocated in this paper, which is focused on individual need.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 Options that have been considered for the future of The Breece include:

3.2 *Making it self- financing.*

3.2.1 Following the Best Value review, in 2000, the subsidy to The Breece was reduced with the intention of removing it completely. The consequence of this action was an immediate fall in occupancy resulting in higher unit costs. The subsidy was re-introduced and additional incentives have been introduced in the form of lower rates in the off season.

3.3 *Disposing of The Breece as a going concern and to make arrangements for the current visitors to continue having holidays there.*

3.3.1 A holiday / care home is not considered commercially viable. The majority of other holiday homes in the area (including those run by charities and benevolent societies) have closed down.

3.4 *Disposal of The Breece for future use as a care home with the option for Leeds Social Services to purchase respite beds*

3.4.1 There is no shortage of capacity or choice regarding residential care provision for older people in Scarborough. In fact the North Yorkshire County Council's policy is to reduce the residential care provision and re-invest into extra care housing for older people. These factors, combined with the homes location and its layout, mean that it has little appeal to either the local authority or the independent sector.

3.5 *To dispose of The Breece and develop alternative arrangements for service users – the “outline plan”*

3.5.1 Commitments made to current visitors would be fulfilled up to the end of the calendar year. This would allow for the Christmas holiday period to be covered with the intention that the unit would not re-open after its annual closure in January.

3.5.2 In keeping with the agreed policy on short breaks Leeds residents with eligible needs would be able to choose from a number of options:

- A direct payment
- A short break in an independent sector care home
- A respite placement in a local authority facility

3.5.3 Carers would be given support through the existing “Time For Carers” scheme which is administered by the Leeds Carers Centre and funded from the Carers Grant. This scheme, which gives carers the opportunity to apply for grants to be used for respite, would be extended and the existing nomination process could be revised to make it more democratic and accessible to local communities.

- 3.6 Consultation and Communication
 - 3.6.1 Consultation will take place with people from Leeds who use The Breece regularly and those who are booked in for future visits. Guests will be given the opportunity to be assessed for alternative provision as described in 3.5 (above)
 - 3.6.2 Consultation with the staff at The Breece and their Unions will be conducted under the employment legislation which requires a statutory 3 month consultation period.
 - 3.6.3 Consultation with Elected Members will be maintained throughout the period of transition.

3.7 Dealing with the disposal and future use of The Breece

- 3.7.1 The Breece building would be subject to disposal at full market value

4. Implications for Council Policy and Governance

- 4.1 The plan to dispose of The Breece, and to offer instead access to short breaks for eligible service users that provide greater choice, is in keeping with the Council's policy on short breaks

5. Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.2 Staff working at The Breece would be subject to employment legislation that requires a statutory period of notice and negotiations with regard to their severance. Leeds Social Services Human Resource section would liaise with North Yorkshire Social Services to identify alternative employment opportunities, within the care sector, in and around the Scarborough area.
- 5.3 Disposal of the building will be in accordance with Asset Management guidelines and in compliance with legal requirements. The Deeds of the property do not contain any impediment to disposal.
- 5.4 Financial deficit (subsidy)

2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07 (est)
£194,995	£292,435	£271,899 ¹	£238,083 ²	£348,000

Subsidy (incl. transport) per resident, per week³

Leeds resident	Non-Leeds resident	Average
£232	£130	£219

Notes ^{1,2} Transport costs (O/E £15,000) were not re-charged to The Breece
³ Based on figures supplied by the Corporate Efficiency Review Team for 05/06

5.5 The estimated capital costs for 2007/08 if The Breece was to continue operating as a registered holiday / care home are:

Replacement windows	£52,500
Floor coverings	£35,000
Remedial work on Fire escapes	£20,000
Roofing repairs	£10,000
Decorating	£10,000
Total	£127,500

5.6 One-off costs associated with the disposal of The Breece:

Staff severance costs	£76,222
Making the building safe and secure	1,000
Total	£77,222

5.7 Ongoing cost (until the ownership of the property is transferred)

Security (via mobile alarm/radio link)	£100 per week
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5.8 Recurring costs

The future options available to service user and carers (as described in sections 3.5.2 and 3.5.3) would be met from the Social Services Community Care budget and the Carer's grant. The estimated additional annual expenditure from these budgets is £50,000

6. Conclusions

6.1 The Breece is not part of the Council's core business and it does not fit with the Council's agreed policy on short breaks.

6.2 The Breece is no longer operationally or economically viable

6.3 A number of options, relating to the future of The Breece, have been considered

6.4 The recommended option has been developed as the "outline plan" which addresses the main issues..

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 To approve the outline plan for the disposal of The Breece and the development of alternative arrangements as detailed in this report
- 7.2 To agree the immediate commencement of the statutory consultation process with a view to fully implementing the plan by January 2007