

## OUTER WEST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 18TH JANUARY, 2021

**PRESENT:** Councillor Amanda Carter in the Chair

Councillors A Blackburn, D Blackburn,  
P Carlill, A Carter, M Harrison, S Seary and  
T Smith

### **CHAIRS COMMENT**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the remote meeting of the Outer West Community Committee to discuss the proposed closure of Richmond House.

The Chair explained that internet connectivity may be an issue for some participants and suggested it may be appropriate to appoint a Vice Chair who could assume the Chair should the Chair lose connectivity. The Chair proposed that Councillor David Blackburn be nominated as the Vice Chair, the proposal was seconded, upon being put to the vote the motion was passed.

There had been a number of technical issues prior to the start of the meeting it was noted that Cllr David Blackburn was having connectivity issues. Therefore, the Chair proposed that if she and Cllr David Blackburn both lost connectivity that it would be appropriate to propose a third person to assume the Chair. The Chair proposed Cllr Trish Smith, this proposal was seconded and on being put to the vote the motion was passed.

It was noted that there were a number of technical issues. Unfortunately, the meeting was delayed and did not commence until 13:15.

#### **23 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

#### **24 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion Of The Press And Public**

There were no exempt items.

#### **25 Late Items**

There were no late items.

#### **26 Declaration Of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

#### **27 Apologies For Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr. Forsaith.

#### **28 Open Forum / Community Forum**

In order to facilitate the Open Forum item whilst Community Committee meetings are being held remotely, the process has been adapted slightly, so that members of the public are invited to make written submissions in advance of the meeting on any matter which falls within the Committee's terms of reference.

On this occasion two submissions had been received from:

- Ms Sylvia Landells on behalf of Leeds Hospital Alert;
- Ms Stella Smales on behalf of UNISON trade union.

The following submissions were read out at the meeting:

Sylvia Landells

"Richmond House has a reputation second to none for supportive, person-centred and effective rehab care for older people.

Successful rehab for older people coming out of hospital is extremely cost-effective for both the NHS and Social Care.

The "market" in Care Home/Respite/Rehab accommodation is extremely unstable (and likely to be more so after the pandemic). If Richmond House closes, private provision is unlikely to meet these needs in future.

When you break up a good staff team in a care home they are gone forever. "

Stella Smales

"Leeds UNISON believes it is because of Covid that the last 11 months Richmond House has been under used. LCC upgraded Richmond House extensively in 2018 to ensure it was fit for purpose to accommodate residents comfortably. By closing Richmond house the money that was spent will be wasted. Richmond House was awarded a CQC rating of good.

Leeds UNISON believes there may be an alternative to closing Richmond House. The alternative would be to turn it into a residential dementia care unit. The Green in Seacroft provided long term care for dementia patients, but this was closed by the Council. The closure of the Green was strongly opposed by Leeds UNISON at the time.

LCC has only 10 specific beds for service users with Dementia care across the City.

Caring for people who are suffering from dementia is a specialised job that requires skills, understanding, patience, and commitment.

Leeds UNISON believe if Richmond House was opened as a Residential Care home specialising in dementia care this would give people who have family members suffering from dementia the reassurance that their loved ones were being cared for in a safe environment.

If LCC go ahead with closing Richmond House this will be another important resource that will be gone from Farsley and the west of Leeds."

## 29 Minutes - 1st December 2020

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020, be approved as a correct record.

## 30 Adults & Health Care Delivery Consultation

The Chair informed the Members that Ms Landells had posed a number of questions as part of her submission to the Open Forum. However, there was not enough time to go through the questions, therefore she read out the questions and requested that the officers answered them as part of the presentation to the Committee.

The questions were as follows:

1. Has a full impact assessment been done on the implications of the closure of Richmond House on current and possible future residents' physical and mental health and rehabilitation potential?
2. What evidence is there that the proposed future placements for people who would have gone to Richmond House will be anymore effective and safe?
3. The Council-employed hospital social workers are working with people in the 4 wards in Beckett Wing at St.James Hospital and Wharfedale General Hospital, outsourced to Villacare, which all "need improvement" according to the latest Care Quality Commission reports. Why not transfer directly to Richmond House, a "good" care home?

The report of the Director Adults & Health provided information about the consultation on the proposed closure of Home Lea House Long Stay Residential Care Home and Richmond House Short Stay Residential Care Home. This included; timescales, options for participation, how to seek support to participate where needed and next steps following the consultation period.

In attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Charlwood - Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults;
- Cath Roff – Director of Adults & Health;
- Sarah Buncall – Project Manager for Adults & Health;
- Steve Hume, Chief Officer Resources & Strategy, Adults & Health;
- Shona MacFarlane, Deputy Director Social Care & SC Service , Adults & Health;
- Debbie Ramskill, Head of Service, Care Delivery.

Cllr Charlwood said that this was a difficult time for local council finances and there were some difficult decisions being made. She referred to the closure of the Green, explaining that difficult negotiations had taken place with the NHS in relation to its closure, as they ceased to provide residential care and moved to a more sustainable model funding wise, to provide intermediate care.

During these negotiations Richmond House was not commissioned by the NHS for the purpose of intermediate care. Cllr Charlwood said that Covid had

caused issues with a 20% reduction in spend. She explained that where possible the council would commission services with the NHS.

Cath Roff, the Director of Adults and Health provided a brief overview of the issues. Members were informed that Richmond House was a 20 bed residential home which is quite small in comparison to the capacity required by the NHS of residential care. This has an impact on unit cost and how staffed.

It was noted that in 2017 funding had ceased for Richmond House. The council had looked at alternative uses and settled on short term support in the way of short breaks, and convalescence.

Members were advised that occupancy had been low pre Covid, with only 54% occupancy. Rehab capacity which was commissioned by CCG had also been under occupied with people choosing alternative provision elsewhere in the city. It was the view that people chose homes which were either close to their home or close to family members.

The Committee was informed that in relation to dementia care, there was sufficient provision across the city, with 10 ring-fenced beds providing complex dementia care. The view of the Director of Adults and Health was that Richmond House was an old building and dementia care was better provided for in purpose built facilities.

Members were advised that at the end of the consultation period an impact assessment would be carried out and the conclusion would be presented to the Executive Board in June 2021.

It was noted that Villacare provide nursing care which Richmond House does not provide. Therefore, the council would not legally be permitted to support nursing provision at Richmond House.

The Committee were advised that the preference was to get people back to their own homes from hospital.

The Committee were informed that the proposal for closing Richmond House had been reported to the Executive Board in October 2020, but it had been the view that it not would be the right time leading up to Christmas to start the consultation period. Therefore, the consultation had commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> January and would be ongoing for 12 weeks, with the results of the consultation being taken to the Executive Board.

Some Members were able to provide personal experience of using Richmond House, which in all cases had proved to be positive.

Member's discussions included:

- Concerns in the lack of care provision for West Leeds, with people having to travel across the city to use care facilities;

- The number of positive comments received from those who had used Richmond House all citing that the care had been excellent, and that respite care was welcomed by families who appreciated the provision supplied by Richmond House;
- Care provision needed to be focused on the residents of Leeds;
- Concerns in relation to the cost of residential care;
- How the site would be used if the proposal to close was agreed. Members suggested that the use of the site should be in consultation with the residents;
- Concerns about bed blocking;
- Future provision for residential care;
- It was the view of the Committee that Richmond House had not been promoted as much as it could be as a care facility;
- Timescales of the consultation, Members were of the view that the decision had already been taken.

In response to Members discussions the Committee were informed of the following:

- Richmond House was not fit for purpose anymore, as the minimum requirement was for a 40 bed capacity, it was an old building and was not suitable for those with mobility issues;
- When the funding had been removed by the NHS the council had continued to fund Richmond House, but efficiencies were required for a move to a more sustainable model which would be through intermediate care facilities. It was noted that staff would not lose their jobs;
- Charges for care are means tested which is the same whether funded by the Council or private provision;
- Leeds performs well in relation to issues on bed blocking. Members were advised that patients first choice was to go home and receive support at home;
- Members advised that there is an over-supply of residential care with a surplus of 304 beds. There is a mixture of care housing with the exception of dementia. Many older people prefer to have their own front door and it was noted that home care had increased;
- The council do promote step up, step down facilities with partner organisations;
- There is provision in the area for short stay respite care.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their input.

**RESOLVED** – To note the content of the report.

### **31 Any other business**

Members requested an informal meeting to discuss funding in relation to projects such as CCTV and the Christmas lights. It was noted that at the next formal meeting of the Community Committee, information would be provided in relation to the rolling projects supported by the Committee.

The Localities Officer agreed that he would contact the organisations to provide them with information with regards to funding submissions.

Cllr Seary advised the Members that the computers which had been donated to schools would be added to the schools network, and it would be for the schools to decide who the devices should go to.

**32 Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Outer West Community Committee will be on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021, at 1:00pm.

*The meeting concluded at 14:30*