

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health Decision Day
Date and Time	Tuesday, 3rd December, 2019 at 10.00 am
Place	Ashburton Hall - HCC
Enquiries to	members.services@hants.gov.uk

John Coughlan CBE
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting may be recorded and broadcast live on the County Council's website. The meeting may also be recorded and broadcast by the press and members of the public – please see the Filming Protocol available on the County Council's website.

AGENDA

- 1. THE FUTURE OF ORCHARD CLOSE RESPITE SERVICE-
CONSIDERATION OF ALL WIDER OPTIONS** (Pages 3 - 26)

To consider a report from the Director of Adults' Health and Care regarding the future of Orchard Close Respite Service and the consideration of all wider options.
- 2. APPOINTMENTS TO HEALTH ORGANISATIONS (OUTSIDE BODIES)**
(Pages 27 - 28)

To consider a report from the Director of Transformation and Governance regarding appointments to health organisations (outside bodies).

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS MEETING:

The press and public are welcome to attend the public sessions of the meeting. If you have any particular requirements, for example if you require wheelchair access, please contact members.services@hants.gov.uk for assistance.

County Councillors attending as appointed members of this Committee or by virtue of Standing Order 18.5; or with the concurrence of the Chairman in connection with their duties as members of the Council or as a local County Councillor qualify for travelling expenses.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Date:	3 December 2019
Title:	The Future of Orchard Close Respite Service - consideration of all wider options
Report From:	Director of Adults' Health and Care

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Purpose of this report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the further work that has been undertaken on the wider options since the 27 February 2019 and provide recommendations for the future of Orchard Close, Hayling Island respite service.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health:
 - a) Acknowledges and thanks staff at Orchard Close, Healthwatch, Carers Together, Hampshire Advocacy and Orchard Close carers and service users for their contributions to the engagement process and the Healthwatch engagement report (see Appendix 1).
 - b) Confirms there are no proposals relating to the closure of the Respite Service at Orchard Close within the Transformation to 2021 plans considered by Full Council on 7 November 2019 and that the County Council will continue to run a respite service at Orchard Close.
 - c) Gives permission to go out to consultation on the proposals contained in this report including the reduction in the number of respite beds offered at Orchard Close respite service from a total of 13 to 10 beds.
 - d) Notes that the proposals for other Hampshire County Council Learning Disabilities respite services to increase their income from other public bodies will be included in the consultation as set out in this report.
 - e) Notes that Officers will continue to support carers to explore further the possibility of a Friends of Orchard Close group.
 - f) Notes that an advisory group for the Orchard Close Charitable Trust will be formed following a request by the Leader of the County Council. Any proposals in relation to the Orchard Close Charitable Trust will be subject to agreement by the Executive Member for Policy and Resources.

Executive Summary

3. In autumn 2018, a public consultation was undertaken on the future of Orchard Close respite service for people with learning disabilities. This was in the context of the financial climate in which the County Council is operating and the associated need to make savings, across all Departments, including learning disability services within adult social care.
4. Since 2010/11 there has been an ongoing significant net reduction in the level of grant funding that central Government has provided to councils with further reductions confirmed for 2019/20. To mitigate this reduction in national funding, all councils, including the County Council, have been required to make unprecedented levels of savings.
5. The County Council is still required to make savings of £140million annually from the financial year 2019/20 to balance the budget, which translates to a net reduction in spend across service budgets of 19%. For the Adults' Health and Care Department this has meant a reduction of £55.9million, in addition to the £84million that the Department has had to save since 2013. The Department has planned for the Learning Disabilities service to contribute £11.4million.
6. Other factors leading to Orchard Close being identified for potential closure, included:
 - The lack of suitability of the building at Orchard Close to meet the needs of people with more complex needs and the number of unused beds there at certain times of the year
 - The requirement to ensure services are modern, viable, sustainable and person-centred
 - That there was sufficient capacity in the County Council's other respite services and alternatives to meet need whilst still providing the same amount of respite for carers;
 - That people with more complex needs would receive respite in Hampshire County Council purpose built modern services
 - That more able people would have a wide choice of person-centred respite alternatives that promote independence
7. A consultation was held from 28 September until 21 December 2018. Following this consultation, a recommendation was put forward to close the respite service at Orchard Close. This was presented to the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC) on 11 February. However, at the 11 February HASC, this recommendation was not supported, and the Committee asked that the Executive Member look to other ways to make the savings.
8. Following the outcome of the 11 February Committee, a revised report was presented to the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health on 27 February recommending that further work be undertaken prior to any decision being made, as to all possible wider options and that further reports

would be submitted not before Autumn 2019 to the relevant Executive Member for consideration.

9. This recommendation was approved. However, following this meeting, a Call in was requested and the meeting to consider the request for a Call in was held on 14 March. At this meeting the Committee agreed to refer the original decision (27 February) back to the Executive Member for reconsideration.
10. A further report was subsequently presented at the 29 March Executive Member Decision Day when the Executive Member confirmed the decision made on 27 February.
11. The HASC requested that a Member Task and Finish Group be established. In addition, officers established the Voluntary Sector, Carer and Officer Working Group (Voluntary Sector Group) to maximise engagement as wider options were explored. A piece of wider engagement also took place coordinated by Healthwatch (Appendix 1).
12. The conclusion of the groups and the key finding from engagement was that they wished Hampshire County Council to continue to run the service at Orchard Close in preference to another provider (see paragraph 35).
13. The County Council have responded to this feedback by recommending that Hampshire County Council should continue to run the service. However, the County Council need to consider affordability given the continued financial challenges and need to ensure equity of service across learning disability services and the wider Adults' Health and Care Department.
14. Therefore, additional proposals have been put forward including a consultation on a reduction in beds from 13 to 10 at Orchard Close, as well as a proposal to attract income from other public bodies at other Hampshire County Council respite units. These proposals aim to mitigate the saving gap from retaining Orchard Close and improve equity across services.
15. The proposed consultation would commence in December 2019 after the general election with an Executive Member decision in March 2020.
16. It is estimated a combination of the proposed reduction in beds at Orchard Close and the attraction of income from other public bodies could save a total of £284,932, leaving an additional £332,068 to be found from services for people with learning disability. This is a pressure in addition to current established savings targets.

Orchard Close and other Hampshire County Council Care respite – service details

17. Orchard Close respite service is a residential respite service on Hayling Island, for adults with learning disabilities. It is registered with Care Quality Commission to provide respite for up to 13 service users at any one time.
18. Hampshire County Council respite services are for people living at home with family carers and no one lives at Orchard Close respite service permanently.

19. At Orchard Close, in 2018/19 134 people with learning disabilities received a range of respite nights a year according to assessment of eligible need for them and their carers’.
20. The respite service operates from the Orchard Close building which is owned by a charity and the County Council is the sole trustee of the Charity.
21. The Charity is a separate legal entity distinct from the respite service. Decisions in respect of the Charity are made in the best interest of the Charity.
22. Orchard Close respite service is one of 4 Hampshire County Council learning disabilities residential respite services – the other 3 all being registered for 8 beds and are Newcroft (in Locks Heath) Hindson House (nr Basingstoke) and Jacobs Lodge (nr Totton). There is an additional learning disabilities Hampshire County Council residential service called West Street (in Havant) which is an emergency short stay service. Details of these services are found in Appendix 2.

Member Scrutiny Task and Finish Group (TAFG)

23. The Member TAFG consisted of 5 members of the County Council’s HASC and was attended by County Council officers as well as the Healthwatch manager. The TAFG was chaired by the chair of the HASC. The Group met 5 times between April and November 2019.
24. The Group was established to provide oversight, scrutiny and comment to progress with the review of alternatives to closure of Orchard Close. As stated in the terms of reference for this Group, “it is not possible for HASC to recommend a course of action which fetters the professional discretion of Officers to perform their professional roles, or which fetters the discretion of the County Council to take action in future”.
25. Members of the TAFG attended the Voluntary Sector Working Group to observe and report back to the wider TAFG. The Healthwatch Manager attended the TAFG to report back on progress in the Voluntary Sector Group.

The Voluntary Sector, Carer and Officer Working Group (Voluntary Sector Working Group) and service user and carer engagement

26. The Voluntary Sector, Carer and Officer Working Group (Voluntary Sector Group) membership included independent representatives from Carers Together, service users represented by Speakeasy Advocacy and carers who were members of the ‘Save Orchard Close’ campaign. The Group was chaired by an independent organisation (Healthwatch Hampshire) and attended by officers from Hampshire County Council Departments with representation from staff at Orchard Close. The Group was used as a forum to openly discuss the alternatives available other than closure and to establish a stakeholder engagement strategy. This Group met 7 times between June and October.
27. Alternatives considered were divided into three main areas:

- Hampshire County Council continuing to provide a service at Orchard Close
- Commissioning another organisation to run a respite service at Orchard Close.
- Potential for parent carers and / or service users to run the respite service.

The option of closing Orchard Close had already been considered and consulted on in Autumn 2018 so was not part of the work of the group.

28. The Voluntary Sector Group considered the three areas applying agreed principles of affordability, quality, equitability and sustainability.
29. The Voluntary Sector Group devised the service user, staff and carer engagement. The engagement, and the resulting report, was coordinated and delivered by Healthwatch Hampshire. Speakeasy Advocacy led work on engagement with service users and Carers Together led work on engagement with carers. The full findings can be found in the Healthwatch Hampshire Orchard Close Engagement report (Appendix 1).
30. Speakeasy Advocacy captured the views of 51 people who use Orchard Close respite service and the service user representatives from the learning disability partnership board. In summary, feedback was that stays at Orchard Close respite service provided people with valuable opportunities to “..[make] friends” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 6, Appendix 1) for some Orchard Close “is the only place I see them”. Participants reported that they “really enjoy[ed] the activities” with some saying that they would like more and “different activities offered” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 9, Appendix 1). People enjoyed the “great relationships with staff” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 7, Appendix 1), the location and the food which was described as “great” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 8, Appendix 1).
31. Carers Together captured the views of 71 parents and carers. In summary they felt safe leaving their relative at Orchard Close respite service and really trusted the service. Carers particularly appreciated the “continuity of staff” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 16, Appendix 1). Others said that respite there was “vital....as we care for her 24/7” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 18, Appendix 1) and was a key support in their caring role.
32. Healthwatch captured the views of 12 staff using a survey. In summary they were proud of the personalised approach to care that they provided at Orchard Close respite service (Healthwatch engagement report, page 29, Appendix 1).
33. The Voluntary Sector Group considered the option of commissioning another organisation to run a respite service at Orchard Close. The most important theme common across service users, carers and staff within the Healthwatch Hampshire Orchard Close Engagement report is the view that Hampshire County Council should continue to provide the service at Orchard Close, as opposed to another organisation and that the service should remain open.

34. All members of the Group felt that procurement of the respite service at Orchard Close from another provider would not necessarily deliver any identified benefits, although it was recognised that this may have provided some modest cost reduction.
35. The Group considered carefully the idea of a parent/carer led entity taking on the running of the respite service at Orchard Close. Officers facilitated meetings with organisations who had taken this approach. Although parent carers suggested that they would consider this, it would only be a contingency option, should Hampshire County Council not run the service and would not be a first choice. A number of parent carers highlighted the fact that their own caring responsibilities meant that taking on more responsibilities would be challenging with one respondent commenting “parent carers need support not more work” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 27, Appendix 1). A service user commented “I don’t think family would work, because they wouldn’t get a break because they’d be organising too much and worrying about it.” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 13, Appendix 1).

Hampshire County Council response to feedback

36. Officers have carefully considered feedback from the Members Group, the Voluntary Sector Group and the Healthwatch engagement report. The primary theme of the feedback was that Hampshire County Council continue to provide the service at Orchard Close.
37. Officers understand the importance of respite at Orchard Close for service users who remain at home with family carers. The County Council have co-produced a carers strategy and have carers actively involved in Local Implementation Groups and the Learning Disability Partnership Board.
38. The County Council provide significant funding for carers in addition to provision at Orchard Close. The overwhelming majority of people who attend Orchard Close, also receive other services from the County Council. The County Council spends approximately £3million on Hampshire County Council learning disability bed-based respite other than Orchard Close, £1million on learning disability commissioned bed-based respite and £15million in learning disability day opportunities per year with 1620 days per week provided.
39. Originally the County Council estimated that the proposal for the closure of Orchard Close respite service would have resulted in a recurrent budget saving of £0.6million. During the consultation tentative further work suggested a potential saving just under this amount (£570,000). A recurrent saving amount of £617,000 was allocated to the potential closure.
40. It is important to consider affordability of the decision to retain Orchard Close, given that £617,000 of recurring savings will need to be found from elsewhere within learning disability services. Hampshire County Council have therefore explored additional changes to the service that would make Hampshire County Council retaining the service there more affordable.

Income generation at Orchard Close

41. Feedback within the Healthwatch engagement report and from the Voluntary Sector Group has included attracting alternative income in order to improve the affordability of the service. Some ideas have been explored and have had to be discounted for example, in response to the suggestion that Direct Payments could be used to purchase extra nights at Orchard Close. As stated in the Care Act statutory Guidance, “as a general rule, direct payments should not be used to pay for local authority – provided services from the ‘home’ local authority”.
42. Another respondent suggested that “some carers are willing to pay more toward their respite care” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 19, Appendix 1). It is not possible to introduce inequitable charging arrangements where those who attend Orchard Close pay more. Under the Care Act 2014, a local authority has the power to charge for most care services. Where a local authority has decided to charge, then the amount paid by each individual is determined by a financial assessment in line with legislation.
43. An alternative suggestion was “for carers to be able to buy extra days if there is room available” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 19, Appendix 1). This is not within the core business of the Hampshire County Council respite service which is there to meet eligible needs for respite. It is also unlikely that the 3 bedrooms under discussion could be consistently full to justify the cost of the provision.
44. People throughout the engagement made suggestions about “allow[ing] people from outside the county to use Orchard Close” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 33, Appendix 1).
45. Initial enquiries have shown that interest from other public bodies has been in respite services for those who have challenging needs and/ or additional physical disabilities in addition to their learning disability. There are just 4 accessible rooms at Orchard Close of which 2 have ceiling track hoists and none have ensuite facilities. These rooms are in regular use by Hampshire residents, and are therefore not available to be used by other authorities.
46. Service users at Orchard Close said that one of things they valued was the “quiet, calm situation for someone with autism ..” (Healthwatch engagement Report, page 17, Appendix 1). Meeting a higher level of need at Orchard Close is likely to result in the service being busier and less calm. Hampshire’s modern and purpose built services are better placed to meet this need, and have sufficient capacity.

Income generation in other Hampshire County Council respite services

47. In the previous report analysis of the 3 other Hampshire County Council respite services showed that there was under occupancy across Newcroft, Hindson House and Jacobs Lodge. Changes at West Street (the County Council’s emergency respite unit in Havant), means that 4 additional

bedrooms will be used for emergencies; taking total available emergency beds to 15 and increasing the capacity of planned respite beds. The table below shows the level of capacity for 17/18 and 18/19 (assuming 85% occupancy);

Respite Home	2017-18 Actual Occupancy (bed nights)	2017-18 Spare bed nights available (85% occupancy)**	2018-19 Actual occupancy (bed nights)	2018-19 Spare bed nights available (85% occupancy)**
Croft House and Newcroft House	2,002	480	2,002*	480
Hindson House	1,631	851	1,727	755
Jacobs Lodge	1,842	640	1,465	1,017
TOTAL	5,475	1,971	5,194	2,252

*Actual occupancy 18/19 at Newcroft House was 1,403. However, last year's figure substituted as the unit was closed for some months whilst relocated

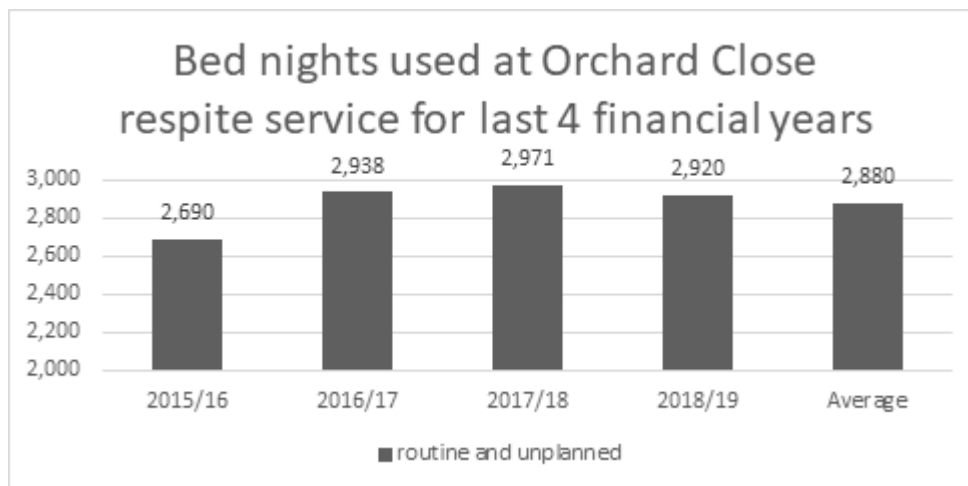
**85% is the lower end of the ideal capacity for these services which is between 85% and 90%.

48. Members in the Task and Finish Group suggested that some of the spare capacity in Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft may be more successful in attracting income from a wider pool of local authorities and or the NHS. Initial exploratory enquiries with some of these public bodies have shown potential.
49. It is therefore proposed that Hampshire County Council consult upon marketing some of the additional capacity to other public bodies. The target would be that we could attract income for 466 bed nights per year (the equivalent of approximately block booking 1.5 beds per annum at 85% capacity). This could attract an income of approximately £125,820 per annum, based on a nightly fee per bed of £270 per night.
50. A public consultation would run from December 2019 with an Executive Member decision day in March 2020. The proposal to consult upon using 466 bed nights per year (equivalent of approximately 1.5 beds per annum at 85% capacity) out of the current spare capacity is intentionally cautious to have minimal impact on Hampshire respite users.
51. In addition, as described in the last report, demographic data on people with learning disabilities, collected by Adults' Health and Care, shows that the

number of people in Hampshire who will require respite in the coming years is likely to remain static or slightly reduce. However, the various factors influencing demand for respite are complex and hard to predict precisely beyond the next few years. Should the marketing of beds go ahead, Hampshire County Council would wish to monitor and adjust the use of beds by other public bodies dependent upon this demand.

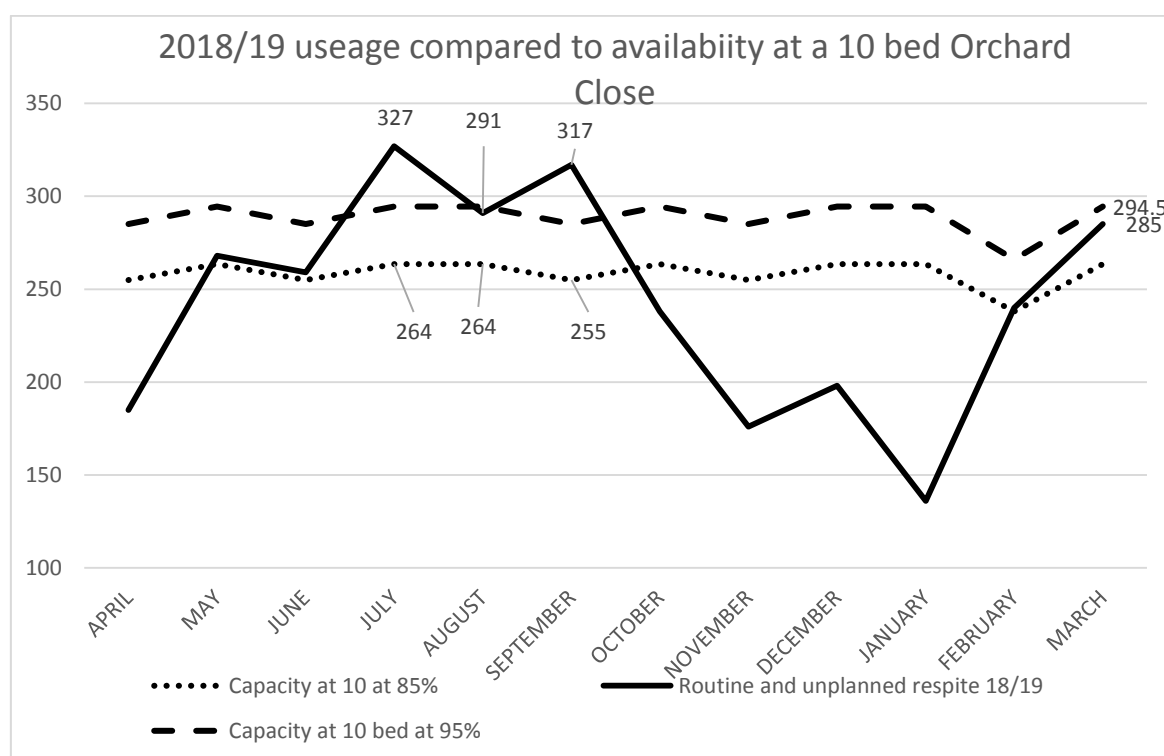
Occupancy and potential reduction in beds at Orchard Close

52. The continuation of a Hampshire County Council service at Orchard Close, would result in a shortfall of savings against the original amount of £617,000. This could be partially offset should the income generation in other units go ahead, but there would continue to be an estimated shortfall of £491,180 per annum which would disproportionately increase the savings pressure in other areas. It is therefore necessary to consider other alternative options to achieve further efficiencies beyond income generation.
53. One of the options explored for further savings has been a reduction in the number of beds, and therefore the staffing costs at Orchard Close. This is because the previous report highlighted that there are significant levels of under occupancy in Orchard Close during the year. The number of nights available at Orchard Close currently is 4,033 bed nights with the service running at 85%.
54. The below chart shows how many nights were used in each year since 2015/16. On average there are 2,880 bed nights used leaving 1,153 bed nights available per year.



55. Consideration was given to reducing the service at Orchard Close to 9 beds (a reduction of 4 beds). Running at 85% capacity would have resulted in 2,792 bed nights being available per year. However, after concerns expressed by carers in the working group and further consideration by officers, it is proposed that permission be given to consult on reducing the number of beds from 13 to 10 beds. This reduction would enable a reduction in staffing blueprint, equivalent to a further saving of £158,572.

56. Reducing beds from 13 to 10 beds would leave 3,102 bed nights available with a target of 85% occupancy, which is more than sufficient to meet the needs of all those currently using Orchard Close over a year.
57. The chart below demonstrates that currently Orchard Close is busier in certain months than in others. At current usage patterns there are 4 months when Orchard Close would not be able to meet demand if it was running at 85% capacity which are July, August, September and March. If Orchard Close became a 10-bed service, then there would be a need for a slight decrease in use during these months and an increase in other months.



58. To support equitable access, should the decision be made to reduce beds, changes to booking respite in busy months might be required. The consultation on the proposals relating to Orchard Close becoming a 10-bed unit would need to ask respondents to consider the impact of alternative booking methods and allocations over the summer months and whether it would be possible to make the quieter months more popular.
59. For example, to promote usage outside of the summer, some carers at the Orchard Close Voluntary Group have suggested developing theme weeks, especially in the quieter months which would make these times of years more attractive. In addition, Orchard Close could also deliver “friendship weeks” in line with service user’s comments about being able to “see friends and make new friends” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 8, Appendix 1). Some carers at the Orchard Close Voluntary Group also suggested encouraging people to take regular respite which not only has a beneficial

impact to them as carers but would also reduce the risk of people using the last of their allocation in March, the end of the financial year.

60. Respondents in the Healthwatch engagement report have asked for “more flexibility around booking..”(Healthwatch engagement report, page 18, Appendix 1). There were other requests around more flexibility around “drop off times,” and “overnight, or two nights stays” (Healthwatch engagement report, page 18, Appendix 1). Whilst It is acknowledged that the proposed reduction in beds could decrease some flexibility in busy months, these suggestions could be given further consideration and included in the consultation.
61. Depending upon the outcome of the consultation and decision by Executive Member in March 2020, implementation of a bed reduction would be introduced no earlier than the 1 October 2020.

Public consultation

62. It is proposed to carry out an eight-week consultation that would start after the general election and conclude in February 2020. This is judged to be an appropriate period for consultation given the number of people that may be affected by the proposals. It will also allow other stakeholders, service providers and other interested parties to participate.
63. It is proposed to carry out an online consultation via the County Council’s website www.hants.gov.uk. Paper copies of the proposals, in the form of a consultation document and response forms would be made available on request; these would include an easy-read version.
64. The consultation would be publicised on the Hampshire County Council website.
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations>
65. Three drop-in sessions will be provided across Hampshire. Details of the proposals, including how to take part in the consultation would be sent to the users of Orchard Close respite service and their parent carers, MPs, County Councillors and District and Borough Councillors. Local Members would be offered the opportunity to have written and personal briefings on the proposed plans.

Equalities impact assessment- service user and carer

66. The proposal to reduce bed numbers at Orchard Close from 13 to 10 at Orchard Close and the selling of 466 bed nights to other authorities would not affect the overall amount of respite received by any individual. Because Orchard Close, Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House are respite services for people primarily with a learning disability, acknowledging some may also have other conditions such as a physical disability or autism, these proposals would impact upon people with a disability. These proposals could mean that the distribution of respite for individuals may need to change (with the highest impact at Orchard Close) to ensure that everyone could access their service during the more popular summer period

and the booking of weekends in isolation would be reduced (with the highest impact at Orchard Close).

67. The recommendation to consult on marketing 466 bed nights out of the current spare capacity (equivalent to approximately 1.5 beds per annum at 85% capacity) only equates to approximately 25% of the total available capacity. This low estimation of potential bed nights would minimise the impact to Hampshire residents and their carers.
68. The potential implementation date of 1 October 2020 would also allow for proper planning and transition further mitigating risks.
69. The full equalities impact assessment can be found on pages 17-20.

Staffing Implications

70. The proposals only impact staff at Orchard Close where there are currently 23 (17.2 full-time equivalent) members of staff working at Orchard Close.
71. Changing Orchard Close from a 13 to a 10 beds service would require a 3.1 FTE reduction in Residential Service Officers, 2 FTE reduction in Senior Residential Service Officers, 0.3 FTE in Domestic Assistant staff and 0.2 FTE in Administration staff.
72. Should the proposal go ahead following the consultation, there would be a small reduction in staff blueprint at Orchard Close. It is envisaged that there would be alternative employment in other HCC Care (internal care home provision) services available for all staff and given the number of HCC Care services in the South East there would be local options available.
73. A staff consultation would be held that will conclude in February 2020 with Executive Member decision in March 2020. There would be HR drop ins and staff meetings during the consultation.

Equalities Impact Assessment- staff

74. A separate staff Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out focussing on the staff who currently work at Orchard Close respite service. A formal staff consultation would also run alongside the public consultation.
75. The key impacts would be around gender (medium) and age (medium). It was been identified that over 85% of the staff who work at Orchard Close are women, however there is a clear gender bias towards women being employed in such services across Adults' Health and Care. The key activity in terms of mitigating will be to ensure that all staff affected have as much opportunity as possible to be actively involved in the staff consultation, in order that they are as informed as possible about their future career options. Additionally, if the decision is taken to reduce the beds at Orchard Close, there would be time to transition to alternative employment.
76. An age profile analysis of the staff working in Orchard Close has been undertaken. The profile revealed that over 50% of the staff are aged 50 or above. All staff affected will have as much opportunity as possible to be actively involved in the staff consultation, in order that they are as informed as possible about their future career options.

77. A full staff equalities impact assessment can be found on pages 20-22.

Financial Implications

Impact of Income from other public bodies

78. If Hampshire County Council took forward the proposal to market some of the additional capacity to other authorities, the target would be that we would attract income for 466 bed nights per year or the equivalent of block booking 1.5 beds at 85% capacity. This could attract an income of £125,820 per annum, based on a nightly fee of £270 per night.

Impact of potential reduction in beds at Orchard Close

79. The proposed reduction from 13 to 10 beds would enable a reduction in staffing blueprint, saving a further £158,572 with staff moving to existing vacancies within existing Hampshire County Council services.

Financial impact of retaining Orchard Close

80. It was estimated the original proposals for the closure of Orchard Close respite service would have resulted in a recurring budget saving of £617,000 saving. This forecast saving has been accounted for in learning disability revenue budgets for 2019/20 and for all subsequent years.
81. The proposals in this report to keep Orchard Close respite service open and run by HCC Care will result in a significantly lower savings total than initially anticipated. The forecast savings make a total recurring saving of £284,392. This would leave a shortfall in the original forecast of £332,068 per annum.
82. The £332,000 additional savings would be required alongside existing transformation to 2019 and Transformation to 2021 programmes. The combined requirements of these two programmes have been to make efficiencies of £21.6million against a learning disability revenue budget of circa £110million.
83. In total £5.548million of the £21.6million have already been achieved, just over a quarter of what is required by the end of Transformation to 2021.
84. The County Council mitigates the impact of savings on people with learning disabilities through use of innovative new models of care and preventative strategies to reduce and delay need. For example, the development of Younger Adults Extra Care accommodation and access to older person's accommodation where appropriate, increased use of technology, increased access to employment and specialist work to reduce challenging behaviour. Unfortunately, the scope for these more innovative programmes has already been maximised and there is no scope to add to these. It is therefore not possible to find the additional £332,000 through these means.
85. To give an indication of the scale of additional savings of £332,000 is equivalent to a further reduction of 353 hours per week of domiciliary care at £18 per hour or 115 fewer days of day service per week at an average of £55.15 per day.

86. It is important to note that the learning disability population is relatively static, and the scope to reduce services decreases over successive transformation programmes, as new people entering our services are limited. It is therefore likely that these levels of saving will be hard to achieve and may lead to an increased financial pressure in Adults' Health and Care in future years.

Building improvements and the Charitable Trust

87. As part of the Healthwatch engagement on Orchard Close, service users and carers were asked about any improvements that could be made. Feedback provided suggested a theme around the building: Whilst people enjoyed the location and grounds, several service users mentioned updating the decoration or facilities, such as "installing a lift, better Wi-Fi, a PlayStation and more pictures upstairs" (Healthwatch engagement report, page 9, Appendix 1).
88. Staff said, "the Wi-Fi is non-existent at best - although apparently its being updated shortly...A lift maybe, to make upstairs more accessible to all. A lick of paint" (Healthwatch engagement report, page 31, Appendix 1). Another staff member said, "adaptions to the building to make supporting service users with disabilities a bit easier e.g. widen downstairs corridor, add hoist facilities in other downstairs bedrooms Room 1 and 5.. the walls, doors, need to be painted, renew toilets, bathrooms, bedrooms. General refreshment will be great" (Healthwatch engagement report, page 31, Appendix 1).
89. There were mixed views from carers about the importance of accessibility with some saying "maybe put in a lift or stairlift" with other views such as "If wheelchair users are the problem don't offer Orchard Close, use one of the other respite centres" (Healthwatch engagement report, page 19, Appendix 1).
90. As already explained, no participants in the Healthwatch engagement report wanted carers/parents/family/staff to run Orchard Close. However, carers and family members did say that they would like to become more involved in the decision-making processes. Some members of the Voluntary Sector Group discussed forming a Friends of group in order to fundraise. Some carers suggested that "it would be beneficial if parent carers or family members had the opportunity to act as "extra trustees" or be involved in a Parent Carer Forum" (Healthwatch engagement report, page 19, Appendix 1).

Hampshire County Council response to feedback - building

91. Officers have carefully considered feedback from the Members Group, the Voluntary Sector Group and the Healthwatch engagement report on the theme of the building.
92. The County Council will continue to make minor building improvements to maintain the building at Orchard Close as they have done up until now. The wi-fi system was upgraded after the engagement exercise, as part of a planned programme of work across HCC Care. As result of feedback about

the décor at Orchard Close, Hampshire County Council will review the current decoration and provide a refresh where this is required.

93. The County Council will work with interested family members to explore carers setting up a “Friend of Orchard Close” group, should the carers and service users wish to do so. Similar fundraising groups exist for a number of Hampshire County Council care homes. This could provide opportunities to raise funds to further improve the quality of experience and environment at Orchard Close, although would be up to the group themselves to decide what they would like to fund-raise towards.
94. With regard to consideration of more major adaptations - it is important to note that the Orchard Close building is owned by a charity and the County Council is the sole trustee of the Charity. The Charity is a separate legal entity distinct from the respite service. Decisions in respect of the Charity are made in the best interests of the Charity.
95. It would be for the County Council as sole trustee of the Charitable Trust to make any decision in respect of the land and building in consultation if required with the Charity Commission. In response to feedback around the land and building, as well as the request for carers to have greater involvement in the Charitable Trust, the Leader, has asked that an advisory group is established for the Trust.
96. It is proposed that a report be presented to the Executive Member for Policy and Resources at a future Decision Day to this effect.

Conclusions

97. The County Council have worked in partnership with the voluntary sector, carers, services users, staff at Orchard Close and HCC Care to explore all wider options. The conclusion of the Groups and the key finding from engagement are that the County Council should continue to run the service at Orchard Close.
98. The County Council have responded to this feedback by recommending that Hampshire County Council should continue to run the service in preference to another provider.
99. In response to feedback around the land and building, as well as the request for carers to have greater involvement in the Trust, the Leader has requested that the County Council form an advisory group on behalf of the Charitable Trust.
100. Additional proposals have been put forward including a consultation on a reduction in beds from 13 to 10 at Orchard Close, as well as a proposal to attract income from other public bodies at other Hampshire County Council respite units.
101. The proposed consultation would run until February 2020 with an Executive Member decision in March 2020.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Findings from the Consultation and recommendations on respite services at Orchard Close, Hayling Island Recommendation to reconsider the decision of 27 February 2019	<u>Date</u> 27 February 2019 29 March 2019
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u> Care Act	<u>Date</u> 2018

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Equalities impact assessment- service user and carer

Description of Service / Policy

Orchard Close respite service is a residential respite service on Hayling Island, for adults with learning disabilities. The service is run by Hampshire County Council. It is registered with Care Quality Commission to provide respite for up to 13 service users at any one time. At Orchard Close, in 2018/19 134 people with learning disabilities received a range of respite nights a year according to assessment of eligible need for them and their carers.

Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House are also run by Hampshire County Council and each are registered with Care Quality Commission to provide

respite for up to 8 service users at any one time. Between these three services, in 2018/19 they provided respite for 184 service users with learning disabilities each of whom received a range of respite nights a year according to assessment of eligible need for them and their carers. The County Council's respite services are for people living at home with family carers and no one lives at Orchard Close respite service permanently.

Geographical impact* All Hampshire

Description of proposed change

To open a public consultation on proposals to reduce the number of respite beds at Orchard Close respite service from 13 to 10 and sell to other authorities a total of 466 bed spaces per year across Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House. Under these proposals, all respite services could still meet current levels of respite received by those people currently using them. A reduction in bed numbers at Orchard Close from 13 to 10 would mean that the distribution of respite for individuals may need to change for some people to ensure everyone could have some access to the service during the more popular summer period. The selling of beds at the other respite units will not have a significant impact in terms of how respite is distributed. The proposals to reduce beds at Orchard Close and the selling of beds to other public bodies will not affect the overall amount of respite received by any individual.

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or consultation been carried out?

Planned

It is proposed to carry out an 8-week consultation for service users, family members and other stakeholders concluding in February 2020. This has been judged to be a realistic and proportionate timeframe to allow for consideration of, and response to, the proposals. This follows a previous consultation on proposals to close Orchard Close, which were not taken forward, and subsequent intensive engagement with service users and other stakeholders. Advocacy services would be made available to support service users to participate in the consultation if required.

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers service users and their parent carers.

Statutory considerations

Age – Medium

Impact – Although all these services are open to adults of all ages, approximately 40% of the people who use Orchard Close are under 30 and at Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House approximately 45% of the people who used them are under 30.

From looking at the age profile of the people that use Orchard Close, Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House we know that a significant number of their parent carers are older and therefore are likely to be impacted by any changes to the respite that their cared-for person receives.

Mitigation

Everyone who currently accesses Orchard Close, Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House would still be able to do so. During the consultation we would seek views as to the sort of additional activities that people would like to see offered at Orchard Close, including some that may be more age-appropriate. We are also seeking views on the proposal to sell 466 bed nights to other authorities.

Disability – High

Impact HCC respite provision at Orchard Close, Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House are primarily for people with a learning disability, although some may also have other disabilities such as autism or a physical disability. These proposals could mean that the distribution of respite for individuals may need to change (with the highest impact at Orchard Close) to ensure that everyone could access their service during the more popular summer period. It is also likely that the booking of weekends in isolation will be reduced (with the highest impact at Orchard Close). Regarding the selling of beds at Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House as this is only 6.3% of available capacity (if these services were run at 85% occupancy) revisions to booking distribution may need to be considered but impact is deemed as minimal.

Mitigation - During the consultation period, it is proposed that the County Council explores options as to how to ensure equitable access to the respite service at Orchard Close during peak times.

It should also be noted that the proposal to sell 466 bed nights out of the current spare capacity (equivalent to approximately 1.5 beds per annum at 85% capacity) is intentionally cautious to have minimal impact on Hampshire County Council respite users. Ongoing, and in future years, Hampshire County Council will be able to monitor and adjust the use of beds by other public bodies dependent upon demand to further reduce potential impact.

Sexual Orientation Neutral

Race - Neutral

Religion and Belief - Neutral

Gender Reassignment - Neutral

Gender - Neutral

Marriage and civil partnership – Neutral

Pregnancy and Maternity – Neutral

Other policy considerations

Poverty – Neutral

Rurality - Neutral

Additional Information

A decision on these proposals will be taken in March 2020 by the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health. If the decision is taken to reduce the number of beds at Orchard Close and agreement to sell 466 bed nights then it is proposed this would not happen until after September 2020 (although some limited trial of other authorities using respite beds at Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House may take place before March 2020 to test viability and the market).

Equalities Impact Assessment- staff

Description of Service / Policy

Orchard Close respite service is a residential respite service on Hayling Island, for adults with learning disabilities. The service is run by Hampshire County Council. It is registered with Care Quality Commission to provide respite for up to 13 service users at any one time. At Orchard Close, in 2018/19 134 people with learning disabilities received a range of respite nights a year according to assessment of eligible need for them and their carers.

Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House are also run by Hampshire County Council and each are registered with Care Quality Commission to provide respite for up to 8 service users at any one time. Between these three services, in 2018/19 they provided respite for 184 service users with learning disabilities each of whom received a range of respite nights a year according to assessment of eligible need for them and their carers. The County Council's respite services are for people living at home with family carers and no one lives at Orchard Close respite service permanently.

Geographical impact* All Hampshire

Description of proposed change

To open a public consultation on proposals to reduce the number of respite beds at Orchard Close respite service from 13 to 10 and sell to other authorities a total of 466 bed spaces per year across Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House. Under these proposals, all respite services could still meet current levels of respite received by those people currently using them. A reduction in bed numbers at Orchard Close from 13 to 10 would mean that the distribution of respite for individuals may need to change for some people to ensure everyone could have some access to the service during the more popular summer period. The selling of beds at Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House will not have a significant impact in terms of how respite is distributed. The proposals to reduce beds at Orchard Close and the selling of beds to other public bodies will not affect the overall amount of respite received by any individual.

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or consultation been carried out?

Planned

The proposals will only impact staff working at Orchard Close so a 6 week formal HR consultation process on the proposals alongside the public consultation is planned for these staff members. Sensitive and timely support would be available for these staff during this period. Managers and designated HR support would ensure staff are given every opportunity to ask questions and offer feedback throughout the process. Given the small reduction in staff numbers required at Orchard Close, staff here would have the option of redeployment in local services.

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers Staff working at Orchard Close

Statutory considerations

Age – Medium

Impact – over 50% of the staff at Orchard Close are aged 50 or above.

Mitigation - An age profile analysis of the staff working in Orchard Close has been undertaken. The profile revealed that over 50% of the staff here are aged 50 or above. All staff affected will have as much opportunity as possible to be actively involved in the staff consultation, in order that they are as informed as possible about their future career options.

Disability – Neutral

Sexual Orientation Neutral

Race - Neutral

Religion and Belief - Neutral

Gender Reassignment - Neutral

Gender – Medium

Impact – Over 85% of the staff who work at Orchard Close are women.

Mitigation - It was been identified that over 85% of the staff who work at Orchard Close are women, however there is a clear gender bias towards women being employed in such services across Adults' Health and Care. The key activity in terms of mitigating will be to ensure that all staff affected have as much opportunity as possible to be actively involved in the staff consultation, in order that they are as informed as possible about their future career options.

Marriage and civil partnership – Neutral

Pregnancy and Maternity - Neutral

Other policy considerations

Poverty – Neutral

Rurality - Neutral

Additional Information

A decision on these proposals will be taken in March 2020 by the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health. If the decision is taken to reduce the number of beds at Orchard Close and agreement to sell 466 bed nights then it is proposed this would not happen until after September 2020 (although some limited trial of other authorities using respite beds at Jacobs Lodge, Hindson House and Newcroft House may take place before March 2020 to test viability and the market).

Appendix 2 – Information on Hampshire County Council Respite and Crisis Care (an extract from 11 February 2019 HASC Report)

The County Council operates three other respite units, in addition to Orchard Close, as well as a service focused on providing emergency/crisis care and emergency respite. The other units are Hindson House, Newcroft House, Jacob's Lodge and West Street, which is the emergency / crisis service. With the exception of Jacob's Lodge, these were all part of a capital improvement programme partly funded from the capital receipts from disposal of outdated learning disability accommodation agreed in 2011. These units provide modern yet homely environments which are able to accommodate people with wide range of needs, including complex needs. Both Hindson House and the Newcroft House were designed with input from people with learning disabilities. All of the County Council units offer a full range of activities to guests, including access to local community facilities, day trips and skills development. Staff receive the same training as staff at Orchard Close with intensive core and induction training supplemented with additional specialist training as required.

Hindson House - Hindson House is a purpose built 8-bedded unit in Winklebury, Basingstoke, providing respite and short breaks for adults with learning and physical disabilities. Communal facilities at Hindson House include a lounge, sensory room, dining room, kitchen, toilet/bathroom/shower room and a toilet /changing room. The guest rooms are linked via tracking to the 'Jack n Jill' style en-suite bathrooms. This is where two bedrooms are separated by an en-suite bathroom which they share, but which has lockable doors. All the bathrooms are adapted for use to meet a range of needs. Hindson House also has several landscaped garden areas for guests to enjoy. Hindson House was last inspected by the Care Quality Commission on 10 May 2018. It was rated good in all categories.

Jacob's Lodge - Jacobs Lodge is a purpose built 8-bedded unit in Totton, providing Respite and Short Breaks for adults with learning and physical disabilities. Communal facilities at Jacobs Lodge include a number of shared lounges and sitting areas as well as a sensory room. There are high specification bath and toilet facilities, which can accommodate people who are wheelchair users. Jacobs Lodge also has a spacious garden and external summer house. Jacobs Lodge was last inspected on 7 September 2017. It was rated good in all categories with the exception of one, where improvement is required. An improvement plan is in place.

Newcroft House (formerly Southern respite) - This is a new respite service at Locks Heath which replaces Croft House, a former respite unit based in Fareham. It has been developed on the same model as Hindson House, although lessons learnt from Hindson House have been factored into its design. It is a purpose built eight-bed unit, providing respite and short breaks for adults with learning and physical disabilities. Communal facilities include a lounge, sensory room, dining room, kitchen, toilet / bathroom / shower room and a toilet / changing room. The guest rooms are linked via tracking to the 'Jack n Jill' style en-suite bathrooms. All the bathrooms are adapted for use to meet a range of needs. The respite service is located next to the County Council's learning disability day service at

Locks Heath, where facilities can be made use of at weekends and in the evenings. People can also access a small community centre and shopping centre. Croft House, where this service was previously based, was inspected by the Care Quality Commission on 8th November 2016 and was rated good in all categories.

Hampshire County Council crisis service - West Street Havant West Street is a unique 14 bed service conveniently located within two minutes walking distance of Havant town centre, meaning people using the service can access the town's facilities. West Street provides emergency, crisis and assessment accommodation to adults with a learning disability, who may be in crisis or have experienced a breakdown in their long-term placement. The crisis service can currently accommodate up to ten individuals in two settings. It currently has a five bed house and five self-contained flats where individuals can live on their own, receiving the support they require. It was inspected by the Care Quality Commission in March 2017 and was rated overall outstanding with outstanding ratings for effective, caring and responsive.



Orchard Close Engagement

October 2019



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Introduction

Orchard Close is a residential respite service, run by Hampshire County Council, on Hayling Island for adults with learning disabilities.

In autumn 2018 a public consultation was undertaken by Hampshire County Council on the future of Orchard Close respite service. Following this consultation, a recommendation was put forward to close the respite service at Orchard Close. The primary reason why Hampshire County Council Adults' Health and Care were recommending closure were that they have enough capacity in their existing services to close orchard close and still meet the demands of all of those in Hampshire who require a bed-based respite service. This has been made possible following significant investment in its other respite services as well reduced demand. It was also noted that the building on Orchard Close does not meet the need well for those with complex needs

However, at the Hampshire County Council's Adult Social Care Select Committee this recommendation was not supported, and the Committee asked that the Executive Member look to other ways to make the savings. Healthwatch Hampshire were approached by Hampshire County Council's Adults' Health and Care to independently plan, deliver and summarise feedback from service users, parents/carers and staff using Orchard Close. The following report highlights key findings presented throughout the engagement activity and will inform a final decision relating to Orchard Close.



Service User Engagement

Speakeasy Advocacy were commissioned by Hampshire County Council to deliver the service user part of this engagement. Speakeasy Advocacy are an independent, community-based organisation that provide advocacy services in Hampshire.

Through informal sessions Speakeasy captured the views and experiences of 51 service users and have provided a methodology for the engagement.

Methodology

Questions were developed by the Voluntary Sector/Carer/Service User/ Officer Working Group using examples from similar engagement exercises that Speakeasy Advocacy and Carers Together had completed. The same questions were used for service users and carers, using positive language throughout.

Service User Engagement Sessions

Sessions were held at Orchard Close to avoid it becoming a theoretical exercise for service users, and so staff that know them well can support them to give feedback. Views were recorded anonymously, and everyone was given a copy of their completed questions in a sealed envelope. Two advocates were allocated to every session.

The engagement took a person-centred approach, with sessions differing to meet individual service user needs. To meet these needs the sessions involved;

- Advocates working with individuals on their own or in small groups
- Advocates being available in the entrance area or in the lounges or dining room to meet people
- Orchard Close staff supporting people who have limited communication with pictures or sharing views on their behalf

Views were recorded in 'real time' using people's exact words or participants sharing thoughts then agreeing on the words that would be recorded.

Who we spoke to:

51 service users took part in ten sessions at Orchard Close. The participants have a combination of learning disabilities, autism, and mental or physical health issues

Speakeasy also involved the Learning Disability Partnership Board service users representatives for feedback on the engagement questions



Mental Capacity Act and Consent

Speakeasy considered whether people had capacity to decide to take part in these sessions, following the Mental Capacity Act guidance on **assuming people do have capacity** unless advocates could see service users had difficulties understanding, weighing up, communicating or retaining the information.

Consent was broken into two separate issues:

- I agree to give my views about Orchard Close
- I agree my views can be used in a report for the Hampshire County Councillors to help them make decisions about what happens to Orchard Close.

Guidance was sought from Orchard Close staff, and if the service user lacked capacity, staff were consulted on making a best interest decision for the service user to take part in the engagement session.

Findings

What is important to service users about Orchard Close?

Service users spoke about what was important to them, and this highlighted three key areas; they enjoyed activities and trips out, they valued friendships and socialising, and they liked the staff, with whom they had good relationships.

Many service users also said that they liked the house and garden, the meals on offer and the seaside location.

Activities and trips

Activities and trips was mentioned by nearly all the service users when asked what was important to them about Orchard Close. They spoke about the variety of activities they enjoyed during their stay and said they got to choose what activities they took part in.

“I do archery, go bowling, have a disco, go to the car boot sale, nice cafes”

“Arts and crafts in the dining room. Trips like bowling, seeing the Lion King at the cinema, walks by the sea, car boot sales, Sealife Centre. Go out a lot when I'm here.”

“I really enjoy the activities like walking to the village. Going to the Portsmouth ships and dockyard. Going to the pub, going walking on Butser Hill, shopping.”

“They take me all over the place, depends on what people want to do.”



Orchard Close Engagement

It is evident that service users enjoy these activities as they provide opportunities for them to socialise and spend time with their friends. Several service users also expressed that being able to do these activities with friends and peers (rather than family or carers) was a unique part of their experience at Orchard Close. Service users also said:

“I can go to the cinema here with my friends but at home it’s with carers”

“I like going on trips with my friends.”

“Meet my friends here and I like going out with them”

Socialising and friendships

Service users value the friendships they have made at Orchard Close. Many focused on established friendships, highlighting that they book their time at Orchard Close to coincide with their friends, so they can spend time with them, as it’s the only time they saw them.

“Love coming here - come a few times a year. Like having my friends around me - this is the only place I see them.”

“My friend is here - I see him here not at home. I like seeing him here. See people when I’m here not at home - that’s a good thing”

“It’s good to be here with my boyfriend.”

“I’ve made friends here and enjoy having BBQ’s in the garden.”

“Like mixing with people - making friends and joining in activities”

“The people who stay here are very nice. I get on with everybody. We have a good laugh”

A Non-verbal Service User pointed to photos of their friends on the Orchard Close photo tree and was very happy when one of them arrived.

Service users also said they liked having the opportunity not only to see old friends, but to also make new ones.



Positive relationships with staff

Service users felt their relationships with staff were important. They said that staff at Orchard Close are friendly, caring and understand their needs. The importance of staff continuity was a recurring theme highlighted by service users during this engagement.

“Like the staff a lot - no problems with them, they make me laugh and I joke with them. I talk to them.”

“Staff - happy in their care”

“Staff listen to me”

“I get to talk to the staff. The staff are nice, and they help me enjoy myself.”

“The polite helpful members of staff”

“Staff are friendly, they help me with what I want... Staff are amazing.”

“I can talk to staff about my mum and when I feel sad.”

“Great relationship with staff”

“I go with staff to activities and they support me. I love the staff and they support me to take stuff to my bedroom.”

The Seafront location

Service users said they liked the seaside location and some of the activities mentioned are situated on the seafront; such as the funfair and the arcade.



Orchard Close Engagement



“I like to look at the sea and boats and I like the train on the seafront.”

“I like going to the seafront in the minibus and they help me look at the boats”

“I love Orchard Close being by the sea, I like to walk by the sea and take photos.”



The House and gardens

The building and the gardens were mentioned positively by many service users. Some said it was a homely environment, that they liked their bedrooms and facilities, such as the sensory room.

Having access to a garden was also spoken about as a positive aspect of their stay at Orchard Close. Service users said they liked stroking the rabbits and having BBQs in the garden.

“It’s like a family home...it’s like being at home”, “I like the garden and the rabbits.”

“It’s like a second home...see friends and make new friends...I feel like I’m going to have a good time every time I come. Doing shows and discos most important...”

“Picked up picture of sensory room twice...looked for picture of Beryl the Bunny smiling and pointing.”

“I really like having BBQs...I can go to the massage room. I like to come out into the garden and play games.”

“The bedrooms are nice; we watch TV together.”

Meals

Commenting on the food was a popular response when asked about what was important at Orchard Close. All service users who mentioned the food were very complimentary about the meals provided.



“I’m Gluten Free - they get me gluten free food - they are clever!”

“The foods nice, they let you choose”

“The meals are great. I like it when we have Chinese”





What could be done differently?

The most popular answer from service users was that no changes needed to be made.



“I’m happy the way it is, nothing needs changing”

“I like it as it is. The food is delicious”

“No, it’s fun here”



Some service users mentioned having an interest in doing a specific activity or more activities.

**“Want to go to the zoo.
Don’t want to change
anything else”**

**“I would like to see different
activities and trips being
offered. They don’t do enough
trips. I like to go out. There’s
nothing to do here and I get
bored.”**

Others asked for a slight alteration to their routine to allow them to do more activities



**“Leave it exactly as it is. Be more involved in the
program whatever day you arrive on”**

“We don’t go out in the mornings as the staff are busy.”



Several mentioned updating the decoration or facilities, such as; installing a lift, better Wi-Fi, a PlayStation and more pictures upstairs. Two service users said changes to the garden but did not specify what changes they would like to see.

**“Building could do with a bit more colour - more pictures. Umbrella in
the garden, more cushions. New stereo.”**

“Wi-Fi isn’t fast enough”, “Have a PlayStation”

**“More cupboards in the bedrooms with stronger key. More repair
work - cracks everywhere.”**

Some service users left this question unanswered and others said that they did not know.



What difference has Orchard Close made to you?

Lots of service users focused on their enjoyment of the activities on offer, being with friends and socialising. In addition, an important theme emerged around independence and confidence building, with many service users taking pride in the level of responsibility they have for themselves while at Orchard Close. Some spoke about their stay as being like a “holiday”, while others said that it enabled their parents to have a break or go on holiday.

Activities and trips with friends

Service users focused on seeing friends and doing activities that they enjoyed, with some saying they only did these activities while at Orchard Close.



“I like going to laser quest - I don't do it at home I do it here”

“Only do shows when at Orchard Close”

“I go to different places that I wouldn't see at home.”

“[Name redacted] is my special friend - I see him here. This is my holiday - my mum can't walk far. I like coming here. I came here for my birthday treat - I like seeing the same people”



Independence, confidence and learning new skills

Many service users spoke about their time at Orchard Close as an opportunity to learn new skills, take on a level of responsibility and show independence. Staff said that some service users had been very anxious when they started attending, but over time had grown in confidence and settled in well.



“I've become a lot more confident in myself since coming here as the staff are helpful. I feel uncomfortable meeting new people because of my anxiety, but I can meet people safely here. No one gets treated differently here and I like that.”



“Coming here has given me more confidence. I meet new people - This is where I come for my holiday.”

“Staff - happy in their care”

“Staff listen to me”



“Learnt how to wash my hair here with staff.”

“I have some responsibility and I get on with the staff. I am grown up now”

“I get to go out on the bus on my own to old Portsmouth. I have made friends.”

“I’ve been on a diet since I’ve been here, being healthier. I know a bit more about sign language.”

One staff member commented: “She was very quiet when she first came and wouldn’t leave a staff members side. She is now more confident and will do her own thing and socialise.”

A Holiday

A recurring response from service users, when talking about their time at Orchard Close, was that they considered it their holiday.



“It’s a beautiful place at Orchard Close to come for a holiday”

“You get a holiday out of it as well”

“It’s a holiday for carers and a holiday for me”



A break for carers and service users

Many service users said their stay at Orchard Close gave their families a break from their caring responsibilities. In some cases, service users also said it gave them a break from their routine as well.

“Mum has a break when I am here. She knows where I am. I am happy to make new friends here. It is excellent to see old friends here too”

“Orchard Close is a place I can have a break and rest from my routine”

“Gives my family a break and me a break from my family.”

“I’m giving my family a break by coming here because they provide all my care and support. I don’t really want to be here; I would rather be at home. It is okay here, but not home.”



What would you want from Orchard Close in the future?

Service users found this question more difficult to answer, with some leaving this question as they did not know how to answer it. However, of those who did answer this question, the two key phrases used were that they wanted to 'keep coming' and for it to 'stay the same'.



"Stay as it is - nothing to change. I don't want the staff to leave, if they left, I would be really upset"



"Stay the same", "I want to keep on coming here"

"Keep it open. I love all the staff here - Keep them going. I'd like to keep it going"

Some service users did identify ways that the service could respond to their needs in the future, these were primarily centred on wanting to try a certain activity or do more activities. However, some service users did mention installing a lift and changes to the bathroom areas.



"A lift upstairs would help, then I could have a view."



"A lift to get upstairs. Wet room"

"Bars on wall - especially in bathroom upstairs"

How would you feel about another provider running Orchard Close, possibly including parents/family carers?

This question was challenging for service users with many leaving this question unanswered or saying that they did not know.

Staffing

The most important issue for service users when asked about other providers delivering the service, was that the staff stay the same. Service users showed concern about staff losing their jobs and spoke about the positive relationships they had with staff members.

"I want the staff to carry on, I don't want them out of a job"

"The staff are my friends and they know me really well."

"[Staff Name] must stay! All the staff to stay."



Other providers running the service

Some service users said that they would not mind if another provider delivered the service, but many clarified they would only be happy with this option if staff remained the same.

"I am fine about other people running Orchard Close. Thumbs up to different organisations or parents/ carers."

"If the staff are the same, I'm okay about change."

"So long as it stays open I don't mind who runs it - but I would like the staff to stay the same."

"All right, I suppose - I'd like them to keep the staff and keep the rabbits too."

Several service users showed concern about families and carers taking on the running of the service, they were worried about the extra pressure it would place on them and about their level of expertise.



"I don't want this place to close down - Think Hampshire County Council have done a good job running this place. Family carers would need training in looking after people, being on time, medication and they would need to have the skills"



"I don't think family would work, because they wouldn't get a break because they'd be organising too much and worrying about it."

Concern about change more generally

As well as concerns about changes in staffing, some service users said they found change challenging, whether this be new places, new people or changes in their routine.



"I don't like anything new - want the same staff - don't want change in my routine"



"Nervous about change"



Do you have any other comments you would like to add about carers breaks and carers support?

When answering this question service users focused on two themes; firstly, that they would like to keep coming to Orchard Close and secondly, that they wanted their carers to be able to have a break.

"Mum needs a break because she works hard"

"Dad needs a break. I need a break. Dad gets jobs done and I have fun."

"It gives my parents a break and my mum knows [that] I'm safe here, and I can talk to staff. Staff are here for me."

"I like it here - I don't want to leave here - I want to keep coming back"

"I want Orchard Close to stay open forever. Without this place I would be lost."

"Coming to Orchard Close gives my mum and dad a break 'they need it'..."



Parents, Carers and Families Engagement

Carers Together were commissioned by Hampshire County Council to deliver the parent/ carer and family part of this engagement. Carers Together is a carer led organisation, which provides support to carers across Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton.

Methodology

Questions were developed by the Voluntary Sector/Carer/Service User/ Officer Working Group using examples from similar engagement exercises that Speakeasy Advocacy and Carers Together had completed. The same questions were used for service users and carers, using positive language throughout.

Parent, carer and family member engagement activity

Carers Together reached out to parents, carers and family members who use Orchard Close. Information was made available by letter, on the Carers Together website, Facebook page and via existing networks.

The engagement activity took part over nine sessions which were attended by 39 people in total, these events were held on different days (including a Saturday), in different areas and at different times.

One-to-one interviews, in person or via telephone call, were also available and a questionnaire was sent to carers of relatives who use Orchard Close.

71 parents, carers and relatives of those who use Orchard Close gave feedback in the activity.

Ethical considerations

The briefing for session facilitators reflected the sensitivity of the process and the perceived anxieties of participants. It was felt important to clarify the impartiality of the process and the importance of taking part. Assurances were given that the process was to listen and record. This was reflected in the briefing for facilitators.



Briefing for session facilitators

We must ensure the people coming to the engagement sessions understand that we are here to listen and record - not to influence or instruct. The options currently for consideration are included in the questions. We will record responses to the questions and other options, or issues raised by participants.

Information shared with participants at the beginning of each session included:

- Carers Together is an Independent organisation run by carers, with carers, for carers. All our trustees are carers or former carers
- We are not here to tell you what to say but to listen to you
- We are using the questions that were sent out to you, only as a guide for the conversations
- You are free to say whatever you wish to say including any concerns you wish to raise
- We will record everything you would like us to record
- All your answers will be anonymous, when we send them in for the report
- It is important that you do say what you think, want or need to make sure it goes into the report
- We are not here to judge in anyway, we are only here to record what you say and then send it in to be included in a report
- It is your opportunity to influence what goes into the report
- The engagement process is to look at the options for Orchard Close going forward.to vote on the options on the table. During the last three sessions, the options increased to include a 'Friends of Orchard Close'.

Findings

What is most important to you about Orchard Close?

Parent/carer/family members said that what they most valued about using Orchard Close for respite was that was 'safe' and 'trusted'. They were able to "switch off" during their respite, as they knew that their loved-one was being cared for by knowledgeable and experienced staff, at a centre that was well run.



"We know our son is SAFE and enjoying his stay. This allows us to enjoy our respite", "Continuity of staff, who are lovely"



"As a family, everything. We know when our child is at Orchard Close she is happy plus we know she is safe with the caring and experienced staff"

"Very welcoming staff and continuity of staff. Staff are fantastic. Run very well as it is. Friendly and homely"



Orchard Close Engagement

Many participants commented on the positive experience that their family member had while staying at Orchard Close, saying this “gave them peace of mind” while they took a break. They said it was a “homely environment” which gave service users the opportunity to meet up with friends and participate in the activities on offer.

“Most important thing is the home from home atmosphere and the dedication of the staff. It has an almost family feel...”

“Our daughter loves staying there and looks forward to going. She enjoys being with the staff who are always so caring and enjoys meeting up with old friends.”

“So much to do funfair, friends, going out to different places, going to the pub, arcades. Staff make it like a holiday for the service users, as staff give service users a choice”

“Safety of my child, homely environment, experienced, caring staff who understand and know my child's needs. Unique, quiet, calm situation for someone with autism - suits my child's needs perfectly.”

Carers and family members also spoke about the facilities on offer at the centre.



“Respite homes in some other places don't have the same type of respite...Lovely sensory room and gardens...Orchard Close is like a hotel it is not institutionalised”



“My son always has room 14 they have put a double bed in it for him. Very accommodating he even has the room with a garden view”

Some participants pointed out that their family member had been attending Orchard Close for a long time, in some cases many years. They said that it had taken time for them to settle, which is why familiarity with their environment was important.



“Many of the staff have been there a long time and my son knows them very well. It is not too far from where we live so is in familiar surroundings for him and it feels very comfortable leaving my son there”

“[Name redacted] has taken many years to settle at Orchard Close, only just happy to stay a week, we finally feel happy to leave her there. The break is vital to us as we care for her 24/7 and it gives us precious time together”

“Having respite for myself as a fulltime carer to my daughter. My daughter looks forward to going and has been going for 30 years”

“Orchard Close has for many years (50) been the only respite my husband and I have had over the years, it has given excellent service and we have had peace of mind to know that our daughter is safe and well cared for with staff she loves and trusts.”

What could be better or done differently at Orchard Close, if anything?

The most frequent response to the question of what could be done differently at Orchard Close was that no changes needed to be made.

“Nothing could be done differently we are very happy with the service.”

“We do not believe that it could be better or done differently than what is being done now.”

“Nothing, Orchard Close is definitely the perfect place for us”

Some participants said more flexibility around the duration of stay and collection/ drop off times would be useful for them.

“More flexible booking system, more flexible arrival/departure times”

“The ability to have an overnight stay or a 2 night stay rather than a minimum of a 3-night stay. Some more flexibility with check in and check out times. i.e. being able to check them in during the mornings e.g between 10am and 12 and able to collect them during the afternoon between 2.30pm and 4.30pm”

“More flexibility around booking. More flexibility around drop off and pick up. More info back to home about what he has been up to whilst there.”

“We wish we could have more, and all 4 weeks there... he gets about 2 - then 2 where they have space, we accept this as we love it so much.”



Orchard Close Engagement

Wheelchair accessibility was also mentioned as a problem at Orchard Close and recent upgrades to the facilities had not addressed this issue. Some felt a lift or stair lift would be a beneficial modification to the premises. Others said not all respite centres needed to offer facilities suitable for people using wheelchairs.



“Maybe put in a lift or a stair lift”, “Sometimes it has problems due to people in wheelchairs”



“Adaptions - didn’t make it accessible, did not future proof it at last upgrade. Make changes to suit service users. Changes to Service Users 2001 - 2003 not suitable for wheelchair users. Not every building is accessible for everyone”

“If wheelchair users are the problem don't offer Orchard Close, use one of the other respite centres”

A few responses suggested asking people to contribute financially towards the cost of their respite, for example buying extra days or selling unused occupancy.

“Some carers are happy to contribute towards the cost of respite care.”

“Be able to pay for extra days if there is room available. Allow others to pay if rooms are available so extra income”

Participants said that they would like more information about how the service was run and how they could be involved. They suggested it would be beneficial if parent carers/family members had the opportunity to act as “extra trustees” or be involved in a Parent Carer Forum to assist with the governance of the service. They also highlighted that service users should be asked their views on ways to develop the service.

“Need parents/carers on Charitable Trust. A parent/carers forum to engage in future.”

“Parent carer and family carer as extra trustees. Used to get newsletter and would like that to come back”



“Parents could have a little more say in some things at Orchard Close. To send out questionnaires to parents, to see if anything could be done differently and for the service users. Would like some feedback.”





The service users may need a say in what happens at Orchard Close.”

What difference has Orchard Close made to you?

Every parent carer/family member who took part in this engagement felt that respite at Orchard Close had made a big difference to them and the person they cared for. They said that it gave them the opportunity to have a break from the pressures of their caring responsibilities, to have a holiday, go to appointments, do tasks at home, spend time with their partners and other family members, whilst knowing the person they cared for was safe and happy.

“I can have a break knowing our young people are safe. Catch up with the decorating at home. Just have a rest with no stress”

“Gives me a chance to focus on other family members/siblings. Allows us to relax have family holidays without worrying - knowing they are in a safe environment... Gives us time to catch up on things around the home. Recharges your batteries for when they come home.”

“I can have a break and know that I won’t get a phone call to bring them home early and can go away for the first time ever.”

“A great deal of difference, I can trust he is being looked after in good faith and do not worry about him at all. As my son is 55 years old it is getting harder, as I am now a widow and have all the responsibility of looking after him.”

Being able to go on holiday abroad with my husband, knowing my daughter is being well cared for while we are in another country. “

“We know he will have a wonderful time going out and enjoying himself in the community and that he is safe and much valued. We can therefore relax and enjoy the limited time we have to be a normal couple doing what other people take so much for granted!”

Having access to good quality respite was essential for emotional well-being and parent carer/family members questioned whether they would be able to continue with their caring responsibilities without the respite they received.



“We could not survive without it. We would undoubtedly be in crisis and in all likelihood unable to continue caring full time”



“I could not survive without Orchard Close. We all need respite - the impact of this on parent/carers mental health and wellbeing. We struggled to get a place at Orchard Close. When we were given nights, we went to Orchard Close”



Orchard Close Engagement

“It enables us to look after our son at home. Without it we couldn’t do it. He would have to move to supported living or residential care with associated stress and worry for us and our son, and huge financial implications for HCC”

“I honestly don’t know what I would do without it, there is literally nowhere else like it. My 21 year old son, absolutely loves going there especially because it is like being home with his friends. This means I can leave him and even go on holiday myself without worrying how he is.”

What would you want from Orchard Close or other respite in the future?

Participants were unanimous in saying that they wanted Orchard Close to be kept open and to offer the same level of service.

The same "Gold star" and unique service it provides. Trained staff, good food, good location for Hayling Island Seafront and other attractions on the island and further afield, providing opportunities for my brother to go out and socialise with others and interact with them and the staff.”

“We are very happy with Orchard Close and just want it to stay open in the future without the threat of closure all the time “

“Secure, safe respite - same carers - no reduction in nights, local to us. With peers in an area he knows - trips out - able to be social- not be mucked about or worried that it will be closed anyway a year down the line.”

“We would want exactly what Orchard Close provides and had provided in the past.”

Some participants said in the future Orchard Close should be more accessible to carers by expanding the types of services it offered. Their suggestions included, introducing day services, allowing the purchase of extra days and opening the service to Shared Lives users and carers from a wider geographical area.

**“Look at day services.
Saturday clubs”**

**“May be open it up to group
homes again, contribute
towards the cost for extra
respite.”**



“Block booking - to sell to other authorities remaining amount for Hampshire”

“Change of language from ‘holiday home’ to ‘Parent Carer respite’ to be used. To raise extra funds, offer extra nights to carers for a contribution”



“To be able to pay for extra days if needed and availability. Open up to more Family Carers, extend across to include Portsmouth and Southampton. Open it up to carers of Shared Lives (some continually live with them came for 3 weeks has been with me for 16 years)”



“Better use of Trust Deed - says covers all of Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton”

“We have gone over to Direct Payments, thinking of my daughters future, but it would be lovely knowing that my daughter could still use Orchard Close and pay from the direct payments, so myself and my husband could still go away for 7 days”

“Direct Payments could be used to pay costs towards Orchard Close. Carers willing to pay towards the cost of extra care when needed”

Several participants also spoke about ways of generating income by carers contributing additional payments towards the cost of using Orchard Close.

“Allow people to contribute towards the cost. Take Shared Lives. If not, all rooms are booked out put a notice up on the website so people can have the space, but charge for it”

“The majority of parent carers would happily contribute towards the cost or pay for extra respite”

“I don’t understand why no charge is made for Orchard Close. Future viability - users to contribute towards running costs”

In one of the group sessions participants focused on adding to the facilities and activities on offer at Orchard Close. They said that they would like to see a “swimming pool... a gardening club... life skill lessons... TVs with DVD players in every room” and “better WIFI”.



How do you feel about the different options being explored as an alternative to closure?

HCC Adult's Health and Care continue to run a service at Orchard Close in its current format

The preferred option for all participants was that HCC Adults Health and Care continue to run the service in its current format, with all those who stated a preference choosing this option.

They said that;



“Orchard Close needs to be run by professionals. It needs continuity of staff. This is best achieved through HCC.”



“HCC to continue to run would be best and provide continuity for current Service Users.”

“My son feels safe and happy at Orchard Close. The staff understand him, he trusts them and so do I... This is the only option that we want, we are happy with how it is run, why change it? Orchard Close to be run by HCC and continue to be the jewel in HCC's crown”

One response said:

“We would be happy if Orchard Close continued to be run in its current format, as it works. We would also be happy if Orchard Close was run by a charitable trust. But do not want it to be run by a private company.”

Somebody else runs a service at Orchard Close e.g. private or voluntary organisation

No-one said that another organisation delivering the service was their preferred option. Many felt strongly that a private provider or voluntary organisation would impact on the quality of the service.



“A private organisation/business would be “in it for the money” and would always be looking to make a profit for the business at the expense of the vulnerable. I feel a voluntary organisation would not have the expertise or knowledge to run such a place, with its challenges of Service Users etc.”

“If any private company were to run Orchard Close it would be for the benefit of profit, which no doubt would result in job losses and incurred costs.”

“No, as private people would place profit first”

“Private would only be in it to make money, the care might not be as good, may be a high turnover of staff”

Carers/parents/family/staff have control over the running of Orchard Close through a charitable trust or community interest company

When discussing Orchard Close being run by carers/parents, many said that they did not have the time or expertise to make this option effective. Some highlighted that they already have fulltime caring responsibilities, employment, and in some cases, felt their age and health issues would make such a commitment impractical. Others were concerned that they lacked the expertise to operate the service effectively. As one respondent explained we are *“not able to do a lot due to age - both myself and my family have enough to do...This option doesn’t give carers the respite!!”*



“Very dubious about this. Few have the necessary skills or knowledge of the legal implications involved”



“Becoming a “trustee” would be too onerous for us - we are both in our 70s”

“Being a carer severely restricts the amount of time available to do other things. This is why respite is so important to us! We are balancing work and caring and do not have the time.”

“Parent Carers don’t have time to do this. Not sure how this would work. Parent Carers need support not more work”

Although no participants said they would *prefer* carers/parents/family/staff to run Orchard Close as a charitable trust or CIC, this engagement does show that carers/family members would like to become more involved in the decision-making processes. A recurring comment was that they would like more representation and say in how the service is run. Their suggestions included; having carer representatives on the charitable trust and a Parent Carer Forum that gives service users and their carers the opportunity to help shape the service.



“If Orchard close continues as HCC led, it needs carers on the charitable trust and needs some sort of forum of parent carers to represent our views”

“Some parent carers involvement would be good, but carers don’t have capacity to do it by ourselves”

“Can carers assist through trust or CIC rather than run it in its entirety? HCC should still support this...Carers should already be on the current charitable trust rather than just HCC. Current set up lacks integrity”

“Carers may have a role in terms of governance but would not have the time or expertise to run the organisation.”

“It should not be given to a private company to run under any circumstance - carers/parents could be more involved using the charitable trust as support and should be involved in that way.”

How do you feel about becoming involved in assisting any model that includes carers/parents/family/staff through a charitable trust/entity?

When asked how they would feel about becoming involved in assisting this model, many participants said that for the reasons set out above, they did not have the capacity to become involved.

“Would not like to be involved as could have far reaching legal repercussions if things went wrong.”

“Because I have a long-term illness, I’m unable to physically be involved but I’m willing to assist in any other way.”

“Being a carer severely restricts the amount of time available to do other things. This is why respite is so important to us.”

“We are both too old to even consider this option”

However, participants who attended the group sessions said they “would be interested in looking at this option”, with some individuals indicating in written responses that they would be interested in becoming more involved to keep it open.

Orchard Close Engagement

“I would be happy to be part of a community interest company if it would keep Orchard Close open. Parent carers should be on the board of trustees. It would add extra stress to some people, some parent carers are older themselves and would struggle to do this”.

“I already feel bogged down, but we would do this to save it. A community interest company would be better.”

“I would definitely want to become involved if this was an option other than Orchard Close still being run by HCC. Having spoken to someone who went to visit a similar facility which is run this way and has become a success.”

Several said they needed more information about what this option would look like to make their decision.

“With the relevant information I would give it due consideration”

“Yes, would be willing to explore that, but we would need a lot more detail to start considering this. We would prefer HCC to continue funding though and have a model that is co-produced”

Do you have any other comment you would like to add about carers breaks and carers support?

The importance of being able to get good quality respite.

“These breaks are essential and so is carers support. It is an extremely stressful life, caring for someone, so knowing there is trustworthy help by professional empathetic people is a must. Sometimes it’s difficult to get the strength to carry on!!”

“Respite saved me from suicide, sadly only received respite when having a breakdown. Need the break at the end of every 4 months to recuperate from 24-hour caring”

“As we get older, we need more respite because sometimes we find it a real struggle and just want some of the weight lifted off our shoulders, and the responsibility for a short while. Going for respite at Orchard Close is ideal. Please keep it open for us and all the other carers who use it. We need this support.”



A lack of support for carers

A recurring issue was parent carers felt they did not have enough support and were not listened to regarding their support needs.



“As carers we don’t feel we get supported, why do we have to fight for everything”



“Severe lack of carers support. Already on our knees - we need supporting not constantly fighting - please support us.”

“We feel we are not being listened too”

Cost savings in respite care could lead to rising costs in the longer term if families are unable to cope

Participants said that cuts in respite services could cause families to be unable to continue being carers, leading to service users having to move into fulltime residential care.

“We as parents/carers have to fight for everything that our adults need and most of what they need we shouldn’t have to constantly battle for. All we need is some support for us to be able to care for our adults at home with the help of respite. The alternative would end up costing HCC the millions we save them every year with them not being in full time residential care.”

“Despite the need for councils to balance their books and make cutbacks if they continue to do so e.g closing Orchard Close then this means carers have even less support. This inevitably means in a lot of cases a crisis occurs when carers can't cope because of a lack of respite and those they are looking after end up being placed in residential care or some other care. There needs to be more support and availability for respite for carers to sustain looking after people with learning disabilities who live with family/parents.”



Orchard Close Staff Engagement

Healthwatch Hampshire were asked by the Voluntary Sector/Carer/Service User/Officer Working Group to consult Orchard Close staff for this engagement.

Methodology

Healthwatch Hampshire adapted the questions set by the working group in order to capture the views and experiences of Orchard Close staff. The questions in the survey focused on what they were most proud of about the service, their perception of its impact on service users and carers/family members and their preferred option for future delivery. It also asked staff to consider possible improvements to the service and avenues for income generation.

The survey was delivered via an online portal (www.smartsurvey.com) which allowed staff to comment anonymously, with the results being sent directly to Healthwatch staff. Healthwatch also offered to send out written surveys to any staff members who would prefer to complete it in paper format. Healthwatch received responses from 12 staff members in total.

Findings

What aspects of the service at Orchard Close are you most proud of?

Staff identified many aspects of the service which they felt proud of; these included, helping service users grow in confidence, delivering personalised care, providing an exciting holiday, building trusting relationships with service users and giving carers “peace of mind” while they had a break.

Helping service users grow in confidence

Staff said that they were proud that the care they provided at Orchard Close helped service users grow in confidence, socialise and learn new skills. This was echoed in responses received by service users, many of whom said that their time at Orchard Close had helped them be more independent.



“I walk into Orchard Close and instantly feel proud of everything we do, it’s hard to separate but I think our proudest moments are when a new service user joins us and how it can sometimes change their life, as in they come out of their shell and gain confidence and become able to approach us, to socialise with other service users and even make long term friends.”





Orchard Close Engagement



“I’m proud of the fact that most of the service users we have staying at Orchard Close absolutely adore coming here, they look forward to it and are so pleased when they walk through the door. I’m proud of the fact the service users feel safe, happy and looked after whilst staying at Orchard Close. It’s also lovely to know that they get the opportunity to try new things, have different experiences and make new friends.”



Personalised care

Staff said one of the service’s strengths was that it offered a personalised approach to care. They said by focusing on the needs and choices of service users and their families, they were able to ensure that service users got the most out of their time away, and carers felt secure that their loved ones were well cared for.



“Service users come here to have a holiday. Everyone is treated as individuals and their break is tailored to what they want from their holiday.”



“I am incredibly proud of the team and the way they are able to adapt their approach to any individual who uses the service.”

“With regards to special requests, bookings, activities etc, if there is any possibility something can be done - then Orchard Close will leave no stone unturned to try and get it done for our service users”

“100% person centred orientated”

Activities, Location and Community Links

Staff said service users enjoyed trips and activities with their friends. They also felt that the seaside location, the house, grounds and the links with+ the local community meant that Orchard Close offered something unique.



“Beautiful, large garden, suitable for people with autism, perfect location, very near the beach”



“The totally unique environment with amazing grounds, orchards and space for our most challenging service users to be able to explore in a very safe environment. The fact that WE CARE”

“We make excellent use of the local Hayling beach train which runs along the beach front and it is a weekly activity. The local vendors are very welcoming, and the local community is often supporting us.”



Trusting and supportive relationships with service users

Staff were proud that they had built strong trusting relationships with service users, in some cases over many years.

“The staff team care, it's not just a job, and have built up a strong rapport of mutual trust and respect!”

“The longevity of the staff team ensures we have a very clear insight into our service users’ needs and requirements and how to give them the best stay possible.”

“Some of the staff team have been working there a number of years and are very familiar with our guys, whilst also enjoying meeting new users and introducing them to our service. This is a process that can take several years of building up routines and trust among our guys e.g. it is wonderful to see how a service user with high support needs would scream for hours in the car park and refuse to get out of the car several years ago, will now run into the building chatting to all the staff by name and relaxing immediately into his routine.”

“Peace of mind” for carers so they can take a break

Staff felt proud that parents, carers and family members trusted them to look after their loved ones. They said that this enabled them to take a break without worrying.

“We provide a safe happy environment where parents/carers feel confident about leaving their loved ones and are able to re-charge their batteries...”

“Parents/carers feel totally at ease to leave the country and go on their own breaks without a backwards glance as they’re so confident in Orchard Close staff team to look after them”



What could be done, if anything, to make Orchard Close better for service users and parent carers?

More allocation

Staff said they felt that carers/parents/family would like the opportunity to use the service more.



“I’m not sure parents/carers want anything, except maybe more allocation.”



“Service users/parent carers have the opportunity to pay for additional nights of respite”

Updating some of the facilities

Staff spoke about upgrading the building and facilities, to make Orchard Close more accessible, improve service user privacy, and facilitate the use of technology.



“The building could do with being updated - the Wi-Fi is non-existent at best - extremely challenging for service users who rely very much on that technology - although apparently its being updated shortly.”



“A lift maybe, to make upstairs more accessible to all. A lick of paint.”

“Some adaptations to the building to make supporting service users with disabilities a bit easier e.g. widen downstairs corridor, add hoist facilities in other downstairs bedrooms Room 1 and 5”

“Interior of building needs to be upgraded, for example; the walls, doors, need to be painted, renew toilets, bathrooms, bedrooms. General refreshment will be great”

Other comments



“Save money have set shut times i.e. Christmas do not open for one service user - waste of money. Have better in-house recruitment and deal with issues in house faster”



“For the service users, to be given more choice whilst here.”

“Give us more staff”



What do you feel is most important to service users and carers about Orchard Close?

Service Users

Staff identified that service users most valued socialising, taking part in activities and staying in a safe, familiar environment with staff they trusted.

“Meeting up with friends they've known, in some cases, for 30+ years. Going out on trips. Seeing their friends”

“That they are with their friends and do fun things together. That they arrange their breaks to come with their friends. Its relaxed and fun for them. Freedom from family i.e. stay up late, go out for meals and do more things in the evening and afternoons. It's fun here, and the fact they're with a group of their peers.”

“The `holiday` feel to Orchard Close has always appealed to families and service users. Many service users say Orchard Close is their holiday. The activities are very important to service users and families.”

Carers

Staff identified that for carers/family members the most important feature of their respite at Orchard Close was that they could take a break, knowing that their loved one was well looked after and happy. Staff felt that trust and safety were key concerns, which echoes the responses received from parent carers/family members.

“The care, and peace of mind... The well-trained staff - in all aspects of care. A safe and beautiful quiet setting”

“Parents and carers know that their family member will be safe, treated with respect and will have a lovely holiday while staying at Orchard Close. They trust the staff and management of Orchard Close.”

“I think the familiarity of the staff team is important to both service users and their families. I think knowing your son/daughter is being supported by people who know them well instils trust in parents/carers. This is also important to service users when supporting them with personal care, mealtimes and activities”



Given the options presented by Hampshire County Council (HCC), which could include:

- HCC Adults' Health and Care continues to run a service at Orchard Close in its current format.
- Somebody else runs a service at Orchard Close e.g. a private or voluntary organisation.
- Carers/Parents/family/staff have control over the running of Orchard Close through a charitable trust or Community Interest Company.

What do you want to see in the future for service provision at Orchard Close?

All staff who stated a preference, said they would like the service to remain being run by HCC Health and Care.

“HCC to continue to run the service- HCC is accountable to a much more rigorous standard than most private companies and that is what our service users need and expect.”

“HCC to carry on running it but to accept service users who pay privately as we use to do, removing these in the first place has seem to trigger a loss of incoming finance.”

Do you have any ideas or suggestions on efficiencies and possible income generation at Orchard Close?

Staff felt that income could be generated by making unused occupancy available to carers from other geographical areas, by allowing self-funding and permitting the purchase of extra nights.

“HCC could sell some beds outside of Hampshire which is what used to happen in the past. Dates could be offered to service users from other counties when occupancy isn't so high.”

“To take people from outside of county and direct payments as we used to take them... they would add finances to the service and fill the empty beds during quieter months”

“Allow for people out of county to pay for nights of respite. Allow for shared lives, residential to pay for nights of respite... advertise Orchard Close across the UK to anyone with a learning disability and allow them to pay for respite at Orchard Close”



Summary of findings

The over whelming response from service users, parents, carers and families and ultimately the option most favoured is for Hampshire County Council to continue to run the service at Orchard Close.

Service users said they enjoyed their time at Orchard Close as they took part in activities and trips, they were able to socialise with friends and had positive relationships with staff who understood and responded to their needs. Service users also commented that they liked the house and gardens, the meals on offer and the seaside location. A significant theme in the feedback was continuity and consistency of the Orchard Close staff team. Service Users felt this was a key factor in the future service delivery.

Parent, carers and family members valued the respite they received through Orchard Close. It provided them with a trusted and safe place, giving them peace of mind while they took a break knowing that their loved ones were happy and well-looked after. The preferred option throughout the feedback was that Hampshire County Council continue to run the service, with concerns around any external provider giving the same quality of service currently received.

Parents, carers and family members were mixed in their responses to being more involved in the running of Orchard Close, with a significant amount concerned that any level of responsibility would not be possible due to caring commitments, their current professional and personal commitments and age being highlighted.

Where respondents were interested, further work needs to be investigated to ensure that any commitments are clearly defined and sustainable. Some suggested they would like to be more involved in decision-making processes, these could include having carer representatives on a charitable trust and a forum that gives service users and their carers the opportunity to help shape the service.

Parents, carers and family members highlighted that having good quality, regular respite was important for their wellbeing, which enabled them to continue their caring responsibilities. There was a consensus throughout the engagement activity that Hampshire County Council needs to communicate more effectively with parents, carers and family members and by listening to them, can be more responsive to their support needs.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Hampshire would like to thank all the service users, parent carers, family members and staff who took the time to participate in this engagement activity.

With additional thanks to:

Carers Together

Hampshire County Council Adults' Health and Care Department

Speakeasy Advocacy

And all members of the Orchard Close Voluntary Sector, Carer, Service User & Officer Group

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Date:	3 December 2019
Title:	Appointments to Health Organisations (Outside Bodies)
Report From:	Director of Transformation and Governance - Corporate Services

Contact name: Sumaiya Hassan

Tel: 01962 845018

Email: sumaiya.hassan@hants.gov.uk

1. The Decision (PROPOSED):

- 1.1. That the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health makes appointments to the Hampshire Autism Partnership Board and the Hampshire Learning Disability Partnership Board. The term of office for new appointments to expire at the County Council elections in May 2021.

HEALTH ORGANISATION (OUTSIDE BODY)

Name of Body and Number of Representatives Required	Appointment until May 2021
Hampshire Autism Partnership Board (HAPB) 1 County Councillor Co-Chair	
Hampshire Learning Disability Partnership Board (HLDPB) 1 County Councillor Co-Chair	

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1. To maintain appropriate representation on committees and bodies within the community.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

3.1. Not to make appointments, which would cease representation as set out in the constitution for this council of governors.

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker: None

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted: None

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: None

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: Not Applicable

7. Statement from the decision maker:

Approved by:

Date:

**Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Councillor Liz Fairhurst**

3 December 2019