

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	17 July 2017
Title:	Permission to consult on proposal to close two overnight respite residential homes for children with disabilities as the Council moves towards a wider range of overnight respite services.
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. The decision:

- a) That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services gives approval to go out to public consultation on the proposal to close two residential respite homes for children with disabilities; Merrydale in Kings Worthy, Winchester and Sunbeams in Aldershot, with a further report setting out the findings of the consultation to be brought by the end of the year.
- b) That officers provide the Executive Lead Member with ongoing feedback on the progress of consultation with affected members of staff.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. The County Council is reviewing how it provides overnight respite to disabled children and their families. Children's Services is developing a new offer, expanding the range of services available to give greater choice to current and future users of in-house residential respite.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

3.1 A number of alternative options have been explored and rejected:

- a) To invest resources in improving the buildings and services at the two homes. This has been rejected because this option would not seek to improve children's outcomes, would not allow investment in a wider range of services which families tell the County Council they want, and would not be in line with the approach to stop institutionalising care.
- b) To convert Merrydale to long stay residential usage. This has been rejected as a previous business case demonstrated this was not financially viable or sustainable. This also does not support the principles of developing a new and broader service for overnight respite provision.

- c) To reconfigure existing overnight respite services. For example, increasing the range of overnight respite on offer from the external market, decreasing the number of purchased or in-house residential stays – selected on the basis of being the lowest cost to implement and strongest outcomes for children and young people. This option has been rejected because this would not offer families the range or flexibility to tailor services.
- d) To make no change and continue to keep the two homes open. Through engagement with children and young people, and their parents or carers, the County Council has been told they would like more choice, control and flexibility. Also, this option would not improve value for money.

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

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:

17 July 2017

**Councillor Keith Mans,
Executive Lead Member for Children's Services**