

04 SEPTEMBER 2012

Housing 21 Services – Future of Rushall Mews

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Councillor McCracken, Social Care, Health and Housing

Executive Summary:

To explain the rationale for the development of the Frail Elderly Pathway and Hollybank House as a more effective way of enabling older people to regain their independence after a stay in hospital, leading to the closure of Rushall Mews Intermediate Care Centre.

Recommendation

To approve the closure of Rushall Mews and the transfer of this part of intermediate care services to a combination of the Frail Elderly Pathway and Hollybank House.

Reason for scrutiny:

This is a change in a complex service arrangement between Housing21, Walsall Council and Walsall Healthcare Trust. Scrutiny and Performance Committee needs to be satisfied that the service will continue to ensure that frail elderly people will retain their independence in their own home, either preventing an admission to hospital or a care home, or following a stay in hospital.

Background papers:

None

Resource and legal considerations:

Financial implications

Rushall Mews is currently provided by Housing21 as part of an overall contract with a value of £9.7m per year. The way the contract was established means that any reduction in financial value has to be by agreement with Housing21. Positive work is underway in partnership with Housing21 to gain extra value from within the contract through more flexible use of the pre-agreed amount of care hours per week; more effective use of the community space in the Extra Care courts and respite care arrangements; and by maximising shared ownership of units of accommodation.

The annual value of the services in the Rushall Mews part of the contract is approximately £1m. The Council is seeking to reinvest some of this funding in to

the alternative services, with the remainder contributing toward directorate savings targets linked to contract reviews, as agreed by full Council as part of the 2012/13 budget agreed on 23 February 2012.

The switch of part of the service to Hollybank House will result in a TUPE entitlement for the affected Housing21 staff to transfer to the Council, and they will re-join in-house Council services. There will then be a management of change process to determine which staff will be retained by the Council and which can be offered voluntary redundancy. Financial arrangements have been made as part of this package to address this.

Legal implications

Walsall Council and Housing21 have agreed to this service change by mutual agreement in accordance with the terms of the overall contract.

Staffing implications

Three sets of staff are affected by these changes:

- Housing21 workers who will have TUPE entitlement to transfer to the Council;
- Walsall Healthcare Trust Intermediate Care Team who are currently located at Rushall Mews and who will relocate to Holly Bank House; and
- the In-house Council workforce.

Currently Walsall Council, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust and Housing21 are currently looking at a range of options that seek to support the transition of all staff affected by the change.

Citizen impact:

Citizens will receive the same type and level of service, but will either be supported on the Frail Elderly Pathway or at Hollybank House instead of at Rushall Mews.

Environmental impact:

The impact of these changes on the borough's property and travel carbon footprints is anticipated to be neutral.

Performance management:

Successful performance is measured in terms of the percentage of people who entered the intermediate care service at the point of discharge from hospital and who are living at home 91 days after the episode of treatment. This service change may lead to some improvement in this measure, and is not expected to lead to any deterioration.

Equality Implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and there are no issues.

Consultation:

Consultation has taken place with all three staff groups and their representatives, in

partnership between Housing21, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust and Walsall Council. The service provided in Rushall Mews is a borough wide service and will be replaced by a combination of the Frail Elderly Pathway and Hollybank House.

Consultation with older people at both national and local level has highlighted a strong desire on their part to return home as soon as possible after an episode in hospital.

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1. Report

Intermediate care beds at Rushall Mews provide a period of intensive rehabilitation for older people commonly on discharge from hospital before they return home. This means that the length of stay is no longer than 6 weeks, and usually less. It does not provide long term care and is not the same as most care homes. Walsall Council, working in collaboration with its partners Housing21 and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, are in the process of redesigning residential reablement services.

Rushall Mews was built in 1984 as a Council run residential home for older people under Part III of the National Assistance Act. It comprises 16 beds within a main building and a further 10 bungalows which are joined to the main building, but self contained in nature. The buildings remain council property but were leased to Housing21 in 2008 as part of the transfer of the Part III estate. All the other transferred homes have now either closed or been redeveloped as Extra Care courts.

Rushall Mews is registered to provide intermediate care to a level of complexity up to residential care, but not including nursing care.

Due to the development of community based reablement within people's own homes in the form of the Frail Elderly Pathway, the level of need of people for a care home setting is now primarily moderate and more complex for which a nursing environment is necessary. The Frail Elderly Pathway is provided by a combination of Council homecare service and NHS Intermediate Care nurses and supports people at home with intensive care and rehabilitation that can prevent hospitalisation, or support people to go home directly after a stay in hospital.

As a result of a building needs analysis, the number of available beds, a lack of en-suite facilities, limited parking and the requirement for the heating plant and call systems to be replaced, Rushall Mews as a building presents the Council with a number of operational restraints and risks. Although it has provided a very successful service, a review has shown that Hollybank House is a more appropriate setting to deliver services for people with more complex needs.

Many of the people who have been supported at Rushall Mews can be supported in their own homes as part of the Frail Elderly Pathway. People with a higher level of complexity will still need a care home setting and so those people will be supported at Hollybank House. The Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust Intermediate Care Team that is currently located at Rushall Mews will also transfer to Hollybank House. GP cover for Rushall Mews is provided by the nearby practice at Rushall Health Centre and the GPs have been informed of the proposed changes.

Subject to Cabinet approval, the service will therefore transfer to a combination of the Frail Elderly Pathway and Hollybank House. This move needs to take place before the onset of winter due to the heating issues and bed capacity requirements. The current planned date is 1st October 2012.