

Appendix 6

THE STAFF CONSULTATION PROCESS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSALS TO CEASE PROVIDING SERVICES AT THE 3 RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND THE RESIDENTIAL HOME AND RESPITE SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

On 20 December 2011 the Director of Adults Culture and Community Services (as was) wrote to all staff stating that due to the significant savings that had to be made, proposals were going to Cabinet on 21 December 2011 regarding a number of options to reorganise services, including options to close or cease a range of services.

On 21 December 2011 Cabinet gave the approval to commence formal consultation with stakeholder groups.

This paper focuses on the process that was applied in connection with the staff consultation process for the 3 Residential Homes for Older People and the Residential Home/Respite Service for People with Learning Disabilities.

The formal staff consultation process commenced on 31 January 2011 and was due to last until 30 April 2011 however this was extended until May 2011 in order to allow sufficient time for full responses to be received.

2 briefing sessions were held with the staff teams in each of the 4 Units. UNISON trade union representative also was present at these sessions. The dates are set out in the table below.

Unit	Posts	People	Briefing 1	Briefing 2
Whitehall Street	38	32	10 February 2011	7 April 2011
Red House	45	44	14 February 2011	11 May 2011
Cranwood	43	42	7 February 2011	9 May 2011
Broadwater Lodge	46	44	7 February 2011	3 May 2011

At the sessions various issues were raised regarding ways in which staff could contribute to the consultation process about the proposals as well as the timetable and process that would be applied if Cabinet did agree that these Homes would be closed. The majority of the issues that were raised by staff focussed on matters to do with the value of the service to service users and the implications if the service closed and these have been encompassed in the Cabinet Report and the Service Consultation report that are going to Cabinet on 19 July 2011. Staff also raised questions about the timetable and likelihood of deployment and/or redundancy if approval was given. Council procedures regarding reorganisations were fully explained.

Staff were handed a leaflet at each of the first briefings. This leaflet confirmed the ways in which staff could contribute to the consultation process with contact details for trade union representatives and managers and the dates of Formal Trade Union Consultation meetings so that they could feed into these via their trade union representatives. It also set out ways in which staff could make enquiries about voluntary redundancy and redeployment as well as ways staff could access support that had been put in place for staff at them at this difficult time.

In addition to the above 6 Formal Consultation meetings were held between Senior Managers of the Department and Trade Union Representatives on 25 January 2011, 17 February 2011, 15 March 2011, 6 April 2011, 7 April 2011 and 26 May 2011.

The formal Trade Union Response to the proposals was submitted on 6 May 2011 and is attached as

Throughout the process the main focus for staff and trade union was the nature of the impact of the business changes on the various user groups. These comments and the response to them have been covered in the Cabinet and Consultation report that is going to Cabinet on 19 July 2011 in connection with the service changes.

Neither staff, nor trade union representatives, have raised any issues to do with the characteristics of the workforce that is affected by these potential closures.

We have done our best to work with staff during the course of the consultation to enable them to contribute to the consultation process, to come to terms with the impact of the proposals on them and to identify ways in which we can mitigate against compulsory redundancy by identifying those employees who have decided that they was to leave voluntarily as well as identifying suitable deployment for those that don't – should the proposals be agreed.

We have also emphasised the benefits to staff of the 'supporting changes' package that has been put in place in terms of dealing with change and other forms of staff support.