

Trade Union Response to Consultation Appendix B

Home B and Home A staff comments on closure proposal

Members reject the council's position that it is necessary to close Haringey's 2 children's homes. Members believe that the council has deliberately allowed the 2 homes to reach the point where they are deemed to be unfit for purpose.

They are disappointed that management have not only failed them as employees, but have failed the young people for whom these homes are here to serve.

Staff believe that management have falsely presented the homes Ofsted rating, whilst masking their own failings. Both Ofsted reports clearly state that the quality of care the young people receive is good as were their outcomes. But it was the failings of management that ultimately effected the homes overall rating.

Staff do not expect that it would cheaper and more cost effective to use private homes and believe that this is a short sighted view and would like the evidence to demonstrate this.

Staff believe that there are various hidden costs that the council have not factored in:

Assessment costs

Cost of relocating the young people

Increased cost to social workers visiting young people in out of borough placements

Increased cost for education

Actual quality of care the young people may receive in these private homes.

Staff question the prices quoted and suggest that this can be only possible if you are comparing like for like and considering the service that HOME A and HOME B provide, can it be said that any of these homes are able to provide the flexible service that they do. Catering for young people that are known fire starters, gang members, involved in knife crime etc.

Staff equally refute the suggestion that these homes would be able to properly provide or manage the needs of these young people. The council has not taken into consideration the fact that many of the young people who have been placed at HOME B and HOME A, had previously been placed in some of these private homes. Homes that could not manage these young peoples presenting behaviours and issues.

HOME A and HOME B, have had both the strength and flexibility to adapt to the changing needs of the young people.

Both have proven to work in the community and have developed a better level of communication with the young people and their families.

Can a private home provide this?

It is with dismay that staff are being told that these homes are not cost effective. They ask what cost does the council place on severed attachments these young people will experience when they inevitably have to be sent out of borough? What cost to

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their severed roots, disrupted education? What cost to the struggle associated with re integration when they are then brought back into their own communities? What cost to the stability that these young people require?

Staff are concerned that the plan to close these homes before setting up an early intervention service(as described in the council's proposal) will have a detrimental effect on Haringey's young people.

- Where will this service be situated?
- What form will it take?
- How will it function?
- When will it be put into place
- What will the structure look like?
- How does this service differentiate from the FIP service.

Given that there is an 18 month waiting list for FIP and referral is on a voluntary basis.

Staff are equally concerned that as a LA, it will still require at least some short term bed space, particularly for those emergency situations, which is generally how these young people are placed. Most are placed via a PPO.

We all know that Haringey does not have an abundance of suitable skilled and qualified foster carers that are willing to accept the type of young people that HOME B and HOME A manage.

Staff believe it would be more effective to first set up the rapid response and early intervention service, before closing these homes, since most of the staff already have the skills to carry out this work. This is in preference to losing the valuable resources that Haringey already has, to redundancy. Indeed one of these houses could be used to provide this service.

Finally staff also believe that costs could be reduced by enabling the homes to resource their equipment on the open market, rather than through the procurement system which only allows them to purchase the things that they need from a limited source. This would not only enable them to shop around, but get value for money. Thereby reducing some of the overheads.

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