FUTURE OF OLDER PEOPLE’S PROVISION

CONSULTATION – 21ST JUNE – 1ST NOVEMBER 2010

DAY CARE SERVICE USERS, RESPITE AND FAMILIES AT WAYFARERS

Held on Thursday, 1st July 2010

Members in attendance: Graham Gibbens – Cabinet Member of Adult Social Services

Adult Social Services staff in attendance:
Margaret Howard Director Commissioning and Provision West Kent
David Weiss Head of Public, Private Partnerships & Property Team
Jane Barnes Head of Provision – Modernisation (Older People)
Brenda Channon Locality Support Manager
Jenny Olpin Co-ordination Manager
Jo Evans Administration Officer

Graham Gibbens introduced himself and the officers present and explained that the County Council’s Cabinet had agreed on 14th June for Kent Adult Social Services (KASS) to enter into consultation on the future of its Older People’s Provision in Kent.

Graham Gibbens: I truly understand that this will be a difficult and worrying time for you over the coming months. Obviously there will be uncertainty and anxiety about the future but please be assured that KASS staff will be available to work with you and your relative to support you throughout. I will handover now to Margaret Howard to take you through the presentation.

Margaret reiterated what Graham Gibbens had said and apologised for the anxiety the proposals for change would inevitably cause and explained that the decisions were not a reflection on the quality of service at the homes. We have done these consultation meetings over the last 2 weeks and people are keen to ask questions and so what I say as part of this presentation will be done as quickly as possible. You obviously want to know what is going to happen to Wayfarers.

There were 3 elements to the meeting:-
1. To give the background and details to the proposals
2. An opportunity to answer any questions about the proposals
3. To make a record of all the issues and concerns, etc.

The presentation on ‘Future of Older People’s services’ followed:-

As from 21st June 2010 a period of formal consultation in line with the Procedure for Consultation on the Modernisation Variation or Closure of Establishments and Services in the Adults Services Directorate commenced.

As you will be aware there are four main reasons for us thinking about the future of our older peoples services:-
People are living longer and the numbers of older people are increasing including those with dementia and long term conditions and we in KASS have to plan how we are going to meet these increased needs both in terms of volume and in terms of complexity.

Older people tell us they wish if at all possible to remain in their own homes and want us to support them to do that. They want more choice and a wider range of options and wherever they live they rightly expect to be treated with dignity and to receive good quality care that meets their individual needs.

Residential care should be in high quality buildings. Our older buildings have reached the end of their useful life. They were in many cases not built to serve the levels of need that our clients now have, they do not meet the standards that would be required by the regulator from any new build including available space and en-suite facilities.

There is a large and robust care market in Kent. KASS can buy good quality care for a lot less money in the independent sector. Unit costs for in-house services are substantially higher due in large part to the terms and conditions of public sector staff and the size of our units which do not allow for economies of scale.

The proposal being consulted on is for Wayfarers to be sold as it is for another organisation to run and this will affect you.

It is our intention to consult widely, not only with Kent County Council Members’, District/Borough Councillors, Service Users, relatives and carers, staff, trade unions and with other interested stakeholders e.g. Health, GP’s etc. You are also invited to put in writing your views and comments in relation to the proposal and to send your comments in by 1st November 2010.

These comments will be collated and inform a report on Wayfarers to be presented to Graham Gibbens by early January for him to make a decision by mid January 2011.

Margaret then asked for any questions from the audience on the proposals:

Q: I notice on the letter sent 2/3 weeks ago that some of the services will remain with the terms set by KCC are you not setting any terms for Wayfarers?

A: Yes we are, these will be set to ensure that the business when it is taken over continues and future plans are set.

Q: Are they cast iron guarantees?

A: There are guarantees that there will be protections and terms and conditions will be set.

Q: Will there be a guarantee that the services will stay the same?

A: The new provider will have to meet the contractual obligations that will be agreed and we will be paying for the service so if they changed it, we won’t buy it and they won’t make any money.

Q: Is there a guarantee that the provider who buys the service will continue with the services provided at the moment?
A: The proposal will come to me as prepared by Margaret Howard and her team and I, along with my colleagues on the Council, we will want to see that it is a viable business and that the care provision will continue and will also be enhanced.

Q: Margaret Howard said that you will ask for day care to be provided?

A: That is a good point but in the future there could be lots of other services in the area and clients may choose to use those services but all the while there is a need for this service it will be delivered.

One of the questions that I will ask when Margaret Howard comes to me with a proposal will be is the proposition a good viable business proposition which will meet the care standards in Sandwich.

Q: What happened to the money banked in Iceland?

A: This is not related to this; the money is coming back and I am sure that 92% of the money will be recouped.

Q: Are the County Council going to insist that the new provider provide en suite bathrooms?

A: No, not in the short term, when homes change hands they are not required to meet the environmental standards as they still have the transitional protection. If the provider goes on to make significant changes then they will be required to meet these standards as part of the Care Standards Act.

- Toilet facilities are also listed as required, these are not necessary as most require commodes and this is the better option.

A: The facts are, that as defined by the Care Quality Commission, if we build a new home we have to build the care homes to meet CQC regulations which include an en suite – the other simple fact is that a lot of people will want en suites in the future and a lot of clients do say that is what they want, they have increased expectations.

Q: What is the new provider getting out of this?

A: I will explain how we buy services and that is what the provider will get, they will have a contract with KCC and we will purchase their services from them.

Q: What extra costs will residents incur?

A: We have made a firm commitment that whatever clients pay now is what they will pay in the future.

Q: I am almost 90, I fought in the war and am getting all this trouble now over nothing, I am quite willing to pay as they look after us very well here.

A: Yes, good, it is a good home.
Q: For Day Care respite do you envisage the price going up, do you have a view of how much extra provision will be required in the future is there a target?

A: There will be no increase in charges but I would need to talk to the locality to confirm demand but instinctively, as there is a waiting list, I think possibly the need will be double.

You are right Wayfarers services a big population and that is why KCC is fighting to keep this going in whatever way necessary. I think KCC is trying to protect this home as it is needed for the local people in Sandwich as they want more facilities, we do need more and if we could get somebody to buy this and spend more money on it, Sandwich would get a lot out of it.

Q: I am here representing my elderly mother-in-law and regarding what I have heard so far I am confused, not about the overall plan, but what I am hearing about the ‘do something plan’ for Wayfarers is that ‘do nothing’ is not an option. I would like to know why ‘do nothing’ is not an option when the service provided by the new provider will equal ‘do nothing’. The contract between the clients would continue to be via KCC and so make no difference to the client. My final point is that many of the people who make use of Day Care and respite care arrive by an external operation e.g. my mother in law uses a taxi service in Dover which is funded by the client, KCC and the taxi company using the Kent Card service, the net result is that because the sums paid into that account by KCC given enough time to balance out equal the amount paid to the taxi company and the client pays nothing. I do obviously have a book keeping concern and also given my responsibilities to my mother in law would be very concerned indeed if that transport arrangement stopped if it hadn’t been included in the contractual arrangement. You are not contracting out of my mother in laws arrangements you are contracting out of Wayfarers you want to buy back the service previously provided to my mother and how it is administered to the client – so if nothing changes – why do this?

A: The reason why we are trying to transfer Wayfarers as a going concern is different to ‘do nothing’, it doesn’t change for the people who get a service it is more about what changes in the future. The independent sector have access to capital and that will be part of the tender to ensure that the provider will have the ability to obtain this capital but this could be in 5/10 years times. How can you modernise these services in Sandwich as the building doesn’t meet future standards? One scenario might be we could get a provider who is somebody that may build something in Sandwich that is bigger and better in five years time and that would preserve the continuity of care for people in Sandwich and then they can transfer to the new modernised service, in that time the value of the land could have increased and could offset the costs to them and that would be a good deal for those people in Sandwich.

Q: I would like to congratulate the gentleman who gave the previous argument, the other point is we have formal consultations and have been given opportunities to discuss the proposed changes, there is no possibility of us changing things we have just been given the opportunity to discuss it. My other question is where will most of the people that are in the homes that are closing go as most do not want a single apartment, don’t see how you are going to achieve this other than doing things your own way?

A: If you are asking is this a genuine consultation? My answer to that question is yes this is a genuine consultation.

- I believe it is not a genuine consultation.
A: In answer to your other question, who is going to live in extra care? The people who use this will be those on the cusp of needing residential care and those are the clients moving into extra care now, it is an alternative, not necessarily for those that are currently in our residential homes although we have had a small number choose to move out of residential care into extra care. The future tenants will come through the District Council and ourselves and the 7 extra care schemes we have are either full or waiting for somebody to move in. I can honestly say that those who have moved into extra care, in particular one person who needs a lot of extra care loves it as it gives her independence as well as the opportunity to mix with other neighbouring tenants. We still need residential and nursing care but also we need the choice. We are not registered to deliver nursing care and lots of clients have to leave residential care to go into nursing care as we can no longer provide for them. Residential care is part of the whole range of services available.

Q: I do not feel that the day care is full enough? There were only two on the bus yesterday.

A: I thought we were at capacity?

The problem is that there are a lot of wheelchair users so more space is needed, Age Concern is used.

Q: You have painted a picture of people able to go into homes where they look after themselves but what happens to the people who can't go into these homes?

A: I did say that we still need residential care and it is important e.g. in West Kent I look at admissions of all that go into residential care, one was 102 and I questioned it but he wanted to go into residential care but some people want something different.

Two extra care homes opened and I have moved 8 people out of residential care into extra care and they are really happy and have really developed as they like the independent living. A lot of clients regress in residential care and I have seen this as they sit there and deteriorate – it is good to have another option – one of the clients who moved to extra care had been in residential care for 8 years. You have to have a variety of services. There have been some good success stories in the last year.

Q: Will the taxi service be continuing?

A: Of course, when we do an assessment transport will be looked at separately and if that person needs transport that will still continue.

Q: Can you confirm that what is provided will continue to be provided?

A: Yes.

Q: What is happening to the residents of the care homes you are closing, will they end up bed blocking your short term stay beds?

A: I understand your concern; people are used to Wayfarers but throughout the Dover district 313 beds in Dover and 374 in the private sector in Deal, there is plenty of opportunity for choice. Regarding concerns about those current residents they will have a dedicated case manager who will work with them to ensure that their needs are met. They will also be monitored and reviewed after they have been placed.
Q: Is there any chance to have a list of questions typed and delivered and handed out?

A: Yes we will do this.

Graham Gibbens thanked everyone for attending and then closed the meeting.