

28 December 2011

Dear

Review of Elderly Persons' Homes (EPHs) – content of the next report to Cabinet on 10th January 2012

The consultation period on the proposed programme of EPH closures and the building of new care home facilities at Fordlands, Lowfield and Haxby has now finished. I am writing to you to let you know the contents of the 10th January Cabinet report, before it is made public on the council's website on 2nd January. There is a media briefing scheduled for Tuesday 3rd January so you can expect to see or hear coverage of this story in the local media soon after.

The following summary of consultation feedback is going to be included in the report that will be considered by the council's Cabinet on Tuesday 10th January.

Summary of feedback from residents and relatives of Fordlands & Oliver

In the last few weeks council officers have met with all 28 of the residents at Fordlands (17) and Oliver House (11) and their relatives in one-to-one consultation meetings. Thank you for your input to these meetings. They have heard, and captured, people's views on (a) the proposed programme of closures and developments, and (b) where they would prefer to move to should the Cabinet make the decision to close their homes. Independent Mental Capacity Advisers have been recruited where appropriate to act for those residents that have impaired mental

capacity. The following themes emerged from conversations about the proposed closure of Fordlands and Oliver House:

- Everyone apart from a couple of residents understood the proposals and why they were being made.
- The majority of people agreed with the proposals and the need to upgrade facilities, but several people expressed understandable disappointment at their home being one of the first two to close. “We can see why it needs to happen but it’s not something we’d choose to happen”. “It would have been nicer to avoid two moves”.
- Out of 28 families, 4 did not agree with the proposals, feeling that the proposals were financially driven and being done in haste.
- A number of residents and relatives expressed understandable concern at the prospect of a move and the upheaval involved.
- The vast majority of people spoke very positively about the quality of care they currently received and hoped that the same quality would be maintained in the new homes.
- 6 people felt that the new care home should be built first (at Lowfield) so that residents would only need to move once. It is understandable that some people would express this view but it would delay the overall modernisation programme by two years.

People’s preferences if the proposed closures are agreed

Whilst there is an understandable sense of emotional upset and anxiety for residents and relatives around the proposed closures, the consultations have gone as well as could be expected. Several residents and relatives have visited other (mainly City of York Council) care homes as part of this process, to help them choose their preferences. As a result, we now have a relatively clear picture of where residents would prefer to move to should the closures be agreed.

It seems likely, at this point in time, that all apart from one or two would wish to move to other City of York Council care homes. We are reasonably confident that, should the closures be agreed, we will be able to move all of the Fordlands and Oliver House residents to their first preference home, and accommodate requests for specific friendship groups to stay together. Fordlands and Oliver House staff will also be transferring to most of the other EPHs which will help ensure a degree of continuity in care for residents.

Other consultation feedback

The Cabinet report will also include a summary of the feedback received from Fordlands and Oliver House staff, and from residents, relatives and staff at the council's other seven EPHs. This feedback was generally positive with people understanding and supporting the proposals to replace the current nine EPHs with state of the art, modern care home facilities on three sites, whilst registering (again) a clear preference for these homes to be run by the council.

The report's recommendations

Given the absence of any alternative options, the strength of support given in the original widespread consultation, and the views expressed through the more targeted consultation described above, it is recommended that Fordlands and Oliver House should close and that the following overall programme be agreed:

Phase 1 April 2012	Phase 2 April 2014	Phase 3 April 2015
Fordlands closes Oliver House closes	New Fordlands opens Lowfield Village opens Haxby Hall closes Morrell House closes Oakhaven closes Willow House closes Windsor House closes	New Haxby Hall opens Grove House closes Woolnough closes

In making that recommendation we do so confident of our ability to offer suitable alternative accommodation in our other care homes, and to reduce the impact on current residents and relatives as much as possible by following the "Moving Homes Safely" protocol. We would expect that residents will transfer to those homes identified by them and their care managers in the consultation process and that these moves would be completed by the end of March 2012.

The closure of Fordlands will allow the site to be demolished and prepared for the construction of a new 55 bed residential care home. This is in line with feedback submitted to Cabinet after the wider consultation and the desire for the council to fund, build and operate the new care home. The closure of Oliver House reflects the very low occupancy and the welfare concern and impact that emerge from such a small number of residents living in a large care home.

The report also recommends that more detailed financial modelling of the whole modernisation programme (Fordlands, Lowfield and Haxby Hall) be brought to Cabinet in April 2012 to enable Cabinet to make decisions on options for funding the programme.

Invite to a meeting at Fordlands on Weds 11th January, 2.45pm

I appreciate that you will want to know the Cabinet's decision on the proposed closure as soon as possible and so we will be **holding a meeting for residents and relatives at Fordlands on Wednesday 11th January, starting at 2.45pm**. I will be attending that meeting and will be able to update you on the previous evening's Cabinet meeting and talk through with you any next steps. Please let the home know if you are able and willing to attend on 11th, but please do not worry if you cannot make it. I will also be writing to you again to share the decisions and to explain what will happen next.

Full copy of the Cabinet report

If you wish to access a full copy of the 10th January Cabinet report it will be available at www.york.gov.uk/eph from 3rd January. Alternatively, your care home manager will be able to provide you with a copy.

Any queries?

If you have any queries or concerns about this letter please speak to your care home manager in the first instance. Failing that, please ring (01904) 554359 and leave a voicemail message and someone will come back to you as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can e-mail carehomes.consultation@york.gov.uk.

Next contact

You will be hearing from me very soon after the Cabinet's 10th January meeting, either in person at the meeting on the 11th, or in writing.

Yours sincerely



Graham Terry

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Project Lead for the Review of Elderly Person's Homes