

S37. ROWANS SHORT BREAK SERVICE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Social Work Adult Services providing an update to the report considered by the committee on 15 October 2015 (ref SC23). The report provided information on the consultation and engagement work which had been undertaken with families who would be affected by the service closure; occupancy levels; the views of service users and families and lessons learned from the budget decision process. Colin Moodie provided an overview of the report.

Members made comments in relation to the need for better engagement with service users and families where service re-design was considered. There was also discussion of the service available at the Meadows and whether or not this provided a suitable alternative for service users of the Rowans. The committee then heard a statement from the portfolio holder, Councillor L Gow, advising that as no suitable alternative provision had been identified locally the Administration were not minded to close the Rowans. Members welcomed the statement from the portfolio holder.

The committee asked how respite provision like that offered at the Rowans was provided in other authorities. Joe McElholm advised that some authorities still offered services similar to the Rowans but that there had been a diversification of how respite was provided due to the impact of self directed support and individual budgets. In the longer term it was felt that people would want to have a choice in the type of respite provision they accessed. The Service would continually review in this area and look at ways to modernise services.

Members asked for further information regarding the provision of placements at the Meadows. Nikki Harvey stated that the Service had been advised by PSS that the Meadows would close on 9 March 2016 and that all Scottish provision was being withdrawn.

In response to a question on the impact of this decision on service users at the Meadows, Nikki Harvey advised that families had only just been notified of the decision and that the service would support those affected as much as possible. She stated that the Rowans did provide services to some people with critical needs but that most current service users from the Meadows would need to access provision outwith the Council area. She advised that the Service would look at the occupancy at the Rowans to identify if there were opportunities to utilise space there for people affected by the closure of the Meadows. However, she also stated that the Rowans could not meet the needs of all those currently utilising the Meadows as there were no tilt and turn baths or profiling beds.

Members requested that the Service work with those families who had used their allocation at the Rowans for the year already in anticipation of a March closure.

The committee discussed that although the decision to close the Rowans had been part of the provisional budget for 2016/17 some of the preparatory actions had needed to be taken in 2015/16 and asked how a better approach would be taken to future decisions. Joe McElholm stated that the starting point for the Service was achieving good outcomes for service users and families. He advised that discussion and engagement would be widely held but stated that decisions could not just be about what people wanted and that the Service also needed to develop and modernise, particularly in

relation to self directed support. He highlighted the importance of having outcomes focussed conversations and that there would be more formalised structures for engagement.

Decision

The committee agreed to refer the report to the Executive and recommend that:-

- (i) where service redesign is undertaken in the future it is carried out using a model of co-production with service users, and**
- (ii) there is greater clarity provided around decisions made in the budget process.**