

Councillors Briefing Note No. 287

Service Area: Adult Care and Housing **Further Enquiries to:** Sue Geary, Head of Community Commissioning

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Ravenscroft Nursing Home

On 9 March 2016 Larchwood Care Homes (South) Ltd gave the council notice that it will close the above care home in three months' time.

The company wish to work closely with the council to affect a safe and timely transfer of existing residents to alternative care homes.

Perceived Risks & Mitigation

1. The ability of Larchwood to sustain adequate levels of care in the interim period
 - To incentivise staff retention during this period the company are offering alternative employment opportunities to staff when Ravenscroft closes; staff have been made aware that if they do not wish to take up alternative employment they will only be eligible for the redundancy package if they remain in post until released by the company.
 - Staff have been aware for approximately six months that there is a high probability of closure and staff retention during this period has been good with the manager saying that staff are all committed to their residents and will stay 'until the very end'.
2. Availability of appropriate alternative placements within the timescale and potential impact on delayed transfers of care in acute hospitals
 - Commissioners will work closely with operational staff and Procurement Specialist Buyers to ensure best use of available alternative placements and appropriate prioritisation

Ownership of Home

Historically Ravenscroft was owned by Southern Cross. It is now owned by Capita Bank and managed on their behalf by Larchwood Care Homes (South) Ltd. Larchwood operate 70 care homes (3,200 beds) across the UK and buy in director support via Healthcare and Management Solutions.

Background

Ravenscroft Nursing Home is a 46 bedded nursing home situated in Trowbridge. Current occupancy is 17 and this comprises 15 nursing placements and two residential placements. Of these placements seven are funded by Wiltshire Council and one by Wiltshire CCG under NHS Continuing Healthcare. The remainder are self-funded placements – there are no placements funded by other local authorities.

Following an inspection in September 2015, the home was rated as Inadequate and placed in special measures by the Care Quality Commission. Special Measures mean that if a home does not make sufficient improvements within six months the CQC will take action in line with enforcement procedures to begin the process of preventing the provider from operating the service.

When a care home is placed in special measures the council ceases to make new placements with the home.

Following further inspections in November 2015 and January 2016 the warning notice has been lifted. However, this does not change the rating of the home and the home is still rated as inadequate. From the council's perspective the home has remained on 'red alert' and no further placements have been made.

The home has not been fully occupied for some time and the provider has decommissioned unoccupied beds pending a programme of refurbishment.

In January 2016 Larchwood reviewed the refurbishment required to ensure the home was fit for purpose. Structural repairs were estimated at £600,000 with an additional cost of providing alternative accommodation for the remaining residents during the 6 month refurbishment period. The property (including planning permission for 35 additional bedrooms) is currently valued at £650,000 and therefore Capita have made the decision that it is no longer economically viable to continue to operate Ravenscroft Nursing Home.

Commissioning and contract management actions to date

- 9 March 2016 - meeting with Operations Director of Larchwood to discuss sustaining service during the notice period, communication strategy and how we can work together to achieve an efficient and effective transfer of residents.
- Larchwood have confirmed staff to be informed on the evening of 9 March 2016.

- Residents were informed by letter on 12 March 2016 and a resident/family meeting was held on 14 March 2016. The provider is offering one to one meetings with any resident/family who would like this.

Next Steps

- Adult Care Operations Team will allocate key member(s) of staff to provide updates to needs assessments
- Procurement Service to be asked to allocate key member of the Specialist Buyers Team to source alternative placements and to support a strategic overview of all other placements required to enable prioritisation of placements where necessary
- Weekly teleconference led by commissioning to manage and coordinate the council's response
- Weekly liaison by commissioning/provider to monitor progress and highlight issues/risks
- Press statement and briefing to be prepared in readiness for any media enquiries

Larchwood press office to be put in contact with Wiltshire Council Communications