

Summary Sheet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 22 November 2017

Report Title

Petition – ‘Save Cedar House Crisis Centre’

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

James McLaughlin, Democratic Services Manager

Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle

Summary

At the Council meeting on 18 October 2017, it was noted that a petition had been received in respect of the Cedar House Crisis Centre facility on Moorgate Road, Rotherham. As the petition had 1,000 valid signatures under the Council’s petition scheme, it has been referred to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for review.

This report sets out the background to decisions taken relating to Cedar House and the process that the Board should follow in considering the call for action contained within the petition.

Recommendations

1. That the petition be considered according to the procedure set out in paragraph 4.2.
2. That consideration be given to whether the call for action in the petition should be supported or not.
3. That the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board report back to Council on the outcome of deliberations on the petition.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Cover Letter from Lead Petitioner – Save Cedar House

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 18 November 2016 – Budget 2017/18 and MTFs Progress Update

Report to Council – 8 March 2017 – Budget and Council Tax 2017-18

Minutes of Council – 13 September 2017 – Minute 55 – Public Questions

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes

Petitions – ‘Save Cedar House Crisis Centre’

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the petition be considered according to the procedure set out in paragraph 4.2.
- 1.2 That consideration be given to whether the call for action in the petition should be supported or not.
- 1.3 That the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board report back to Council on the outcome of deliberations on the petition.

2. Background

- 2.1 At the Council meeting held on 18 October 2017, a petition in respect of Cedar House Crisis Centre was formally received. The petition contained 1,000 valid signatures under the Council’s Petition Scheme and was accordingly referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for review.
- 2.2 The covering letter submitted with the petition is enclosed as Appendix 1 to this report. The call for action within the report is to stop the Council selling Cedar House. The lead petitioner is Mrs Sonia Thackery.
- 2.3 The Lead Petitioner attended the Council meeting held on 13 September 2017 and asked the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health about the closure of Cedar House and sought information in respect of what provisions would be put in place for people in mental health crisis. In response, the Cabinet Member stated:

Over the past twelve months the Council has been working with partners to improve the range of mental health provision for people experiencing a mental health crisis and their carers. This included the availability of Council accommodation for places of safety, support at the Urgent and Emergency Care Centre, support from the Crisis and Home Treatment team, night support from the Integrated Rapid Response services and Mental Health Hospital provision. Further improvements and investment were planned over the next 12-18 months which was hoped would not only improve services for people in a mental health crisis, but also provide early support to prevent escalation to crisis.

With regard to the closure of the crisis provision at Cedar House at the end of September, the Council was currently working with the mental health trust – RDaSH, to ensure that all the people who have previously accessed the crisis provision at Cedar House have a new patient-centred crisis plan. These plans would look different for each person as each examined what type of help the individual would require during a crisis.

The Cedar House service would be replaced from 1st October, 2017 by the use of alternative service models. Support would come from the:-

- *Mental health specialists based at the Urgent and Emergency Care Centre in the hospital.*
- *Mental Health Liaison service at the hospital.*
- *RDaSH Crisis and Home Treatment team in the individuals own home.*
- *Integrated Rapid Response service in the individuals own home.*

The Council was also developing an appropriate protocol/pathway to address the needs of individuals experiencing an extreme heightened state of mental ill health due to inappropriate, unsafe housing issue/homelessness. This would ensure that alternative accommodation was available for people who have to be supported outside of their homes i.e. through use of emergency 'Crash Pads'.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Cedar House provides short-term accommodation for people experiencing a mental health crisis. The service has four beds, which can be accessed for a maximum of seven nights, during which time staff provide emotional and practical support, over a 24 hour period to assist people using the service to resolve their crisis.
- 3.2 As part of the budget setting process in March 2017, the Council agreed to decommission of the crisis accommodation service. The service at Cedar House cost £240,000 per annum, with the Council funding £190,000 and the Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) providing £50,000. As part of the budget decision, the balance of Council expenditure and the CCG contributed was to be invested in new delivery models to focus on prevention to complement alternative crisis provision.
- 3.3 An equality impact assessment in respect of Cedar House is enclosed at Appendix 2.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 A petition is a call for action and the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in reviewing the petition is to ensure that consideration is given to that call for action and to review any associated decision making processes. In this particular case, the Board should consider the merits of the case made by the petitioners and determine whether recommendations should be made to give effect to the call for action.
- 4.2 In considering the petition, the following procedure, subject to the Chair's discretion, will be followed in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme:
1. The Chair will welcome attendees to the meeting and explain the procedure that will be followed at the meeting.
 2. The Lead Petitioner will have the opportunity to present the call for action in the petition for a period of up to fifteen minutes.
 3. Members may ask questions of the Lead Petitioner in respect of the presentation for a period of up to fifteen minutes.

4. The relevant Cabinet Member and/or officers will present the background to the issue and respond to the issues raised in the petition and the statement by the Lead Petitioner.
 5. The Lead Petitioner may put questions to the Cabinet Member and/or officers for the purposes of clarification for a period of up to five minutes.
 6. Members may ask questions of the Cabinet Member and/or officers.
 7. Following the conclusion of questions, Members may debate the merits of the petition and the Council's position.
 8. The Chair will invite Members to propose a recommendation(s) on petition, which will either support or reject the petition. In recommending either, the Board may make further recommendations to Council or Cabinet on any lessons learned from the petition or decision making process.
- 4.3 At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair will advise the Lead Petitioner that formal notification of the Board's recommendation will be provided in writing within ten working days and published on the Council's website as part of the minutes.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 If the Board were minded to support the call for action from the petition, it would be necessary to report back to Council as the decision in respect of Cedar House was taken as part of the budget setting process in March 2017. A recommendation to reverse that decision would require an amendment to the budget for the 2017-18 financial year.
- 5.2 No further will action will be required if Overview and Scrutiny Management Board do not support the petition.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1 If the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board were minded to agree with the call for action in the petition and make a recommendation to Council to amend the budget for the 2017-18 financial year, a separate report from the Chief Finance Officer would be required for consideration by the Council.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly associated with the petition.

8. Human Resources Implications

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 In considering the petition, Members should seek assurances that the implications for children and young people and vulnerable adults have been addressed when any decisions in respect of Cedar House have previously been taken.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

10.1 Members should be mindful of equalities when considering the call for action within the petition. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in particular imposes an obligation on Members to have due regard to protecting and promoting the welfare and interests of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (such as: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation).

11. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

11.1 The call for action within the petition does not in itself directly impact on partners or other directorates. However, if the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board were minded to support the petition, this would be present a number of issues for the Council and other organisations which would need to be addressed before any final decision by the Council. These implications would be addressed in future reports as required.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 As above, the call for action within the petition does not in itself directly present any risks to the Council. However, if the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board were minded to support the petition, this may present risks to the delivery of budget savings which the Council would need to review prior to making any final determination on the matter.