

**A summary of the main themes that emerged from the consultation, including officer responses, is provided below.**

**Putting residents and their families at the centre of the modernisation process and ensuring timely and effective communication with them about the detailed implications for individuals as well as the general programme of change was seen as essential. Early information about the options and choices the residents would have for the future was requested.**

A dedicated team of social care practitioners will be allocated specifically to work alongside care home residents and their relatives should Cabinet decide to decommission any care home. These practitioners will carry out full care assessments for all residents and these will generate an up-to-date person-centred care and support plan for each resident. The care and support plans will help to ensure that residents, their families and the social work staff, are fully informed of their care needs when residents come to make decisions on future accommodation, should the home be decommissioned. This will enable a full understanding of people's preferences for their future care, enabling beds to be reserved in the alternative accommodation.

Arrangements will be made to ensure that residents are fully supported to move to alternative accommodation. Staff from the home would assist residents in their moves if required to do so by relatives or residents and would be encouraged to visit after each move to ensure that the residents are settling in and their needs are fully understood.

**Where Care Homes were proposed to be retained, residents and relatives want to see detailed information about how the changes will affect them. Were people to be re-assessed and those who may not meet "Complex care needs" be moved to Extra Care? Members of the senior management team present were able to re-assure people that there were no plans to re-assess people in the homes proposed for retention or move current residents to Extra Care facilities.**

All residents, if wanted, will have an opportunity with their relatives to meet with social care staff (supported by staff from the care home in which they live) to discuss any matters of concerns they have, including their individual assessed need and, if appropriate, alternative accommodation options.

However, there will be no requirement for residents to move from any retained Council residential care home, unless residents want to or until such a time as their assessed needs change and an alternative placement is required.

**In respect of Care Homes proposed to be de-commissioned transparency about the basis of evaluation used and the rationale for the decision is requested to be made available.**

Little can be said with the 15 care homes currently operating in Lower Rhondda

An objective set of evaluation themes and criteria were used to assess the options that reflected the priorities agreed by Cabinet Members, issues highlighted from the consultation exercise and endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Individual weightings were allocated that reflected the relative importance of selection criteria as part of the evaluation exercise. The weightings were driven by location and the availability of accommodation with care provision in the geographical areas of Rhondda, Cynon and Taf and once these were set determined the weighting to be given to all criteria.

The evaluation exercise applied the same criteria to each home. Issues of maintaining the wellbeing of residents for example would have been pertinent to each Council care home, so would not have altered the outcome of the evaluation exercise and therefore was not used. Other aspects that were taken into consideration:

- For building suitability: we used the property consultants' assessments, details of which were provided in the Cabinet report.
- For geographical location: we used 5 mile radius and other contract information to determine the scores and weighting, details of which were provided in the Cabinet report.
- Occupancy: we used current and future home registered beds together with contracting information held on previous and current actual occupancy levels, details of which were provided in the report.
- Unit costs: we used unit cost per homes over two financial years preceding restriction on beds to determine average cost.

**In respect of refurbishment of homes that are proposed to be retained, information is wanted about what that might entail, when it might be planned and completed for each home. Advice on the implications of refurbishment of a home for residents was sought and particularly when and how it might be completed and whether any temporary moves would be required.**

Arrangements will be made to ensure that residents and their relatives are fully informed in assessing and developing options for future refurbishment, but only once Cabinet has determined their preferred option for the future of the Council's residential care homes.

All residents will have an opportunity with their relatives to inform the refurbishment options of retained Council residential care homes and they will also be consulted on any future decisions prior to any approval by the Council's Cabinet.

**In respect of Extra Care, further awareness and understanding is needed in respect of the programme and timing for new facilities to be built as well as the detailed operation of the service, how the care and support is delivered and the facilities available and their suitability for residents impacted by decommissioning and residents in other homes. Information at a level of detail about how the transition to Extra Care would be undertaken and the timetable for homes to close was wanted.**

The Council is committed to providing the best possible service to those who need it, and Cabinet has previously agreed a £50m investment to develop new extra care facilities promoting independence, wellbeing and choice to improve the range of options available to our communities by developing five new extra care facilities across the County Borough.

Extra care is a tried and tested alternative for people and is suitable for single people or couples, where one or both have need of more supportive accommodation. Extra care allows people to live in a one or two-bedroom apartment in a communal setting and can provide a home for life with on-site care and support services that increase or decrease as needs change.

Each of our developing sites will be purpose built, fully accessible and offer a full range of facilities with a programme of regular activities to help tenants stay active and healthy and will include community activities and events, helping to retain links with the local community. The aim is to deliver what people want i.e. to live as independently as possible in their own homes.

As part of this process, a dedicated team of social care practitioners will be allocated specifically to work alongside care home residents and their relatives should Cabinet decide to decommission any existing care home to assess people and determined where extra care can meet their assessed needs.

**Staff were highly praised across all Care Homes and their role was essential in transition to new arrangements for Care Homes in the Borough.**

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council is proud of the level of care its staff provides. There has been investment in the workforce and their skills and capabilities are valued.

Following the public consultation and only when the Council is in a position to make decisions which will affect staff, there will be a separate staff consultation exercise during which the Council's Management of Change procedure will be followed. The Council's Human Resources Department will work closely with the Service and Trade Unions in order to support staff through the changes at the appropriate time. It is important to note there will be no compulsory redundancies of staff.

Staff would have the opportunity and be encouraged, where possible, to be redeployed and relocated with residents to a retained Council residential care home. In such cases, staff from the residential care home would also assist residents in their moves if required to do so by relatives or residents and would be encouraged to visit after each move to ensure that the residents are settling in and their needs are fully understood.

**There was strong resistance to decommissioning of two of the four care homes proposed – Garth Olwg and Ystrad Fechan – from residents, families and staff. Positive cases were put forward for these homes to be retained.**

~~Settled and positive with their accommodation are living at Low Ridge are well~~

It is clearly positive that the residents of the Council's residential care homes are well settled and content with their accommodation and good quality care. The Council has been acutely conscious of the depth of feeling aroused among care home residents, families, local communities and staff. The overwhelming message from people and their families can be simply summarised as wanting all Council residential care homes to remain open and it is a testament to the skills and commitment of the staff at these homes that this is the case and the residents are happy there.

Whilst the reasons offered in the consultation response have some validity in themselves, they have to be set in the wider context of the current and future needs and expectations of our communities.

Officers consider that the recommendations put forward in this report are appropriate when taking into consideration all relevant factors and themes arising from the consultation process.