

Appendix 4

EIT Adult Operations
Team Meeting
Blenheim House
01.09.10

Those present:	Sean McEneany	Hazel Grant
	Denise McGuire	Chris Todd
	Angela Rutland	Carrie Burns
	Ann Morgan	Maureen Walker
	Ruth Hindmarsh	Carol Storey
	Julie Anick	Lesley Snowdon
	Elsie Leeming	Jean Newman
	Anne Fox	Pat Merryweather
	Bryan McCabe	Linda Leonard
	Jackie Allison	Maxine Smith
	Debbie Passman	Eileen Jobson
	David Pollard	Claire Darbyshire
	Marion Pace.	

The purpose of the meeting was to update everyone regarding the progress of the EIT reviews and to clarify the next moves regarding Blenheim House specifically.

Sean opened the meeting by explaining that this briefing session was to advise Managers and staff of the Cabinet report that will be presented on 30 September. As this report has implications for Blenheim we felt it was important that staff were made aware of the content before they heard it from any other source. The report will be made public prior to the cabinet meeting and at that time we wanted staff to be fully informed. Sean asked that as the report was still confidential it was important that it remained so until it was released.

It was important to note that the meeting today was not a formal consultation. Approval for any formal action has to be given by Cabinet.

Sean described the ongoing work that has continued following the start of the EIT reviews. We went to Cabinet in March 2010 to ask for approval to review all long term clients care packages in the light of several expressing a wish to live more independently and also in line with the EIT aim of improving services through transition and improved efficiency. The recommendations outlined in the March Cabinet report have been completed in respect to long term clients and the outcomes have been surprising to everyone concerned. The appreciation for what else was available in terms of care in the community was a revelation to many of the clients and their carers and their enthusiasm to be a part of it enlightening. Clients have both elected to increase their independence and exercise control over their lives and/or live closer to family and friends.

When this work started we were aware that Middlesbrough had been looking to speak to their clients for some time and in order to plan effectively for any future developments related to this we decided to speak to all the funding Authorities to understand what their future plans were. In Stockton we prefer to care for all our clients near to home for many reasons and in this respect the Authorities who use Blenheim feel the same. With this in mind and with no new admissions since 1997 we knew we were managing a diminishing service.

We now intend to return to Cabinet to seek approval to enter formal consultation with staff, clients, carers, unions and other interested parties regarding the future of care provision at Blenheim

The report is submitted to Democratic Services on 7th September 2010 and it then follows a number of processes before finally reaching Cabinet on 22 September 2010. At some stage during this progress it will become a public document. We want to work with staff and clients during this progress and if we are given permission to enter formal consultation this will continue throughout October. We would then return to Cabinet with the outcome of the consultation.

During this process there are a number of implications for staff and clients.

- Clients are continuing to move
- Respite clients will continue but numbers are insufficient to sustain the Home on their own
- With the reduction in client numbers there is an opportunity for staff to assess their situation.

Since the EIT started we have continued to assess any post that has become vacant and ask managers to hold the post should it be required or fill it temporarily to cover the service. We now have 22 posts of different grades etc and since staff expressed an interest in these posts we will send the list to Angela so that everyone can look at what alternatives are already available. It has to be emphasised that this is just a taster at this stage. It does not imply a firm commitment on either your side or the manager involved. It is just an opportunity to experience alternatives in order to make an informed choice later, should this become necessary. Chris Todd (HR) will liaise with staff if requested and will facilitate trial periods in alternative settings if anyone would like to take advantage of this. This will have two advantages

- Managers with vacancies will have the opportunity to cover their service
- Staff will have the opportunity to try other jobs for a few weeks.

Anyone who does not want to take this opportunity will remain at Blenheim House. It will however be necessary for staff remaining at Blenheim to work flexibly in order to fill the gaps in the rota created by colleagues on trials. This will ensure the Home is covered.

It is important to note that no decisions have been made but there is a likelihood of eventual cessation of services at Blenheim. We want to be honest with you regarding this.

Apart from work trials Chris will be available to offer support to any member of staff who would like to talk to her. She can be contacted on **528278**. Alternatively Chris will spend time at Blenheim in order to speak to anyone who needs advice.

We want to work with everyone as carefully as we can. Anyone who feels they would like to complete a skills audit so that we can cross reference other posts not necessarily in the same role you are doing now are encouraged to do so. Chris can help with this as well. The jobs list will also be sent to another service where there are risks to employment. The posts we are holding and others that may emerge which are relevant will be ring fenced to anyone at risk of being displaced. We also anticipate that where interviews are concerned, should this become necessary, we would only want staff to attend one for multiple opportunities. Again this is all being

pre-emptive and it is important to emphasise that no formal agreement has been reached.

An important consideration has to be your clients. This is a huge step they are taking and it is within your role to help and support people to access a lifestyle that you would want for yourself in similar circumstances. You have learned to accept the progress of medium term clients through Blenheim and out into the community as being the norm and this does not raise any concern. It is vital that you now look at your long term clients in the same light and support them to live as independent a life as they can. For many of them this is an exciting time and they need to share that excitement with the people who care for them. Please keep this in mind.

Work will be starting soon to speak to Respite clients regarding their services and in preparation for this a letter will go out to them all today.

We intend to set another meeting date for October 1st 2010 in order that we can advise you first hand what the outcome of the Cabinet meeting is.

Please contact Carrie Burns if you need any advice from Unison. Similarly any questions can be sent through Angela or Chris.

Many thanks for your attention and professionalism regarding the information

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Grant'.

Hazel Grant
Adult Operations Project Manager