

Summary of Southampton City Council's Consultation regarding Seagarth Lane and Orchard Mews residential homes

1. Introduction

This is a high level summary of the consultation responses to the two options outlined in the consultation on the Seagarth Lane and Orchard Mews residential homes for adults with learning disabilities and the comments people made in relation to the options.

The two options in the consultation were:

- The home remaining as a residential home
- The home transferring to a supported living arrangement

2. The consultation feedback overall

A completed feedback form was received from 8 out of the 11 families (73%) although not all questions were answered by everyone.

Families of clients living at Orchard Mews returned three forms out of five potential families (60%).

Families of clients living at Seagarth Lane returned five forms out of six potential families (83%).

3. Themes

The full consultation responses can be read on the following pages, however the main themes which emerged were:

- Concerns that the information provided about the financial impact on clients was not specific for each individual so there was no definitive guarantee that clients would not be worse off financially.
- A feeling that financial savings were the main driver for the proposed change
- Concerns that changes could increase risks for clients around the amount of support they receive to develop independence.
- Concern that there will be additional work for carers due to become appointees

Full Responses

The following are the full anonymised responses to the questions in the feedback form:

1.	Have you spoken to the Southampton City Council Care Manager Jenny Seagrave?
Yes	8/8 (100%)
No	0/8 (0%)

2.	Has your family member had their needs assessed?
Yes	2/6 (33%)
No	4/6 (67%)
Two people did not answer this question but one of the people commented that they thought this was going to happen in the near future.	

3.	Were any risks identified in relation to the proposed changes?
Yes	3/5 (60%)
No	2/5 (40%)
Three people did not answer this question	

4.	Are you clear how any risks would be managed in relation to the proposed changes?
Yes	2/4 (50%)
No	2/4 (50%)
Three people did not answer this question and one person was not sure.	

5.	Were you given the chance to say what you think is important to your family, so that it could be recorded?
Yes	7/7 (100%)
No	0/7 (0%)
One person did not answer this question	

Further comments relating to these first five question were:

I know that there has been a discussion between X, Deborah Murray (Choices Advocacy) and Linda Turner (Orchard Mews) about the proposed changes but I do not know if X's needs have been assessed.

As far as I remember there has been no discussion that any risks in relation to the proposed changes have been identified and therefore I am not aware of any discussion about how such risks would be managed.

Cleaners need to be employed at Seagarth, freeing up trained staff to be more hands on with clients.

A meeting was requested and held on 19th April 2016 with families invited. However information provided previously was insufficient to wholly explain the proposed changes. Furthermore, at the meeting the Council were unable to answer precisely how residents would be affected financially nor from the care perspective until such time families opted for Supported Living. But clearly this

information is required upfront to enable full understanding and a considered decision.

6.	Have you spoken to an advocate from Choices Advocacy?
Yes	4/8 (50%)
No	4/8 (50%)

Comments relating to question 6 were:

But only by messages left by both of us.

This was only an initial communication with Choices but since then they have not offered any real advice or assistance.

7.	Have you been supported by Dimensions during the consultation in respect to what is important to your family member?
Yes	5/8 (62%)
No	3/8 (38%)

8.	For example, were you offered the opportunity to see other Supported Living schemes or speak to people (and their families) who live in supported living schemes?
Yes	4/8 (50%)
No	4/8 (50%)

Did Dimensions support you in any other way?

Linda Turner (Orchard Mews) provided the opportunity of meeting with Jenny Seagrave and Deborah Murray (Choices Advocacy)

Emotionally

Dimensions have been reluctant to comment on the proposal in maintaining an impartial view overall; except at the meeting on 19th April during open debate.

9.	Were your views about the other schemes recorded and shared with Choices Advocacy and the Council's Care Manager?
Yes	0/6 (0%)
No	3/6 (50%)
Other answers given: <i>No comments made</i> <i>Not applicable</i> <i>Don't know</i> Two people did not answer this question	

10.	Did you understand the information provided about the consultation?
I understood it	3/8 (38%)
I understood most of it	5/8 (62%)
I did not understand it	0/8 (0%)

Comments relating to question 9 were:

My husband and I were concerned about the lack of cohesiveness of the consultation and the way it was expressed to the residents whom we felt were unlikely to understand the nuances of meaning between tenancy and licensed agreement.

This process has not been effective in providing good and timely information to enable a complete and full understanding of the pros/cons of Supported Living and how this will affect X. This is only available after the decision to select for Supported Living is taken and therefore, requires a 'leap of faith' and hope this was the right decision. Comments from the Council confirm this and confirm an element of risk exists in making this decision to Supported Living.

11.	Did you have an opportunity to say that things were clear or not?
Yes	6/6 (100%)
No	0/6 (0%)
One person did not answer this question and one person has not sure.	

Comments relating to question 10 were:

My husband and I appreciated the time to discuss the consultation with Jenny Seagrave, Deborah Murray and Linda Turner.

Most questions of detail asked could not wholly be answered satisfactorily.

12.	How well have we engaged and listened to you to gain your views?
Very well	2/8 (25%)
Fairly well	6/8 (75%)
Not very well	0/8 (0%)

13.	Were all your questions answered?
Yes	4/7 (57%)
No	3/7 (43%)
Other answer given: <i>No questions raised</i>	

If no, do you have any questions that have not been answered?

I asked if a comparison of costs of the different living situations could be provided and that has not yet happened

Like other people, I am awaiting replies to financial questions raised at the meeting on 19 April 2016 that needed following up with Radian.

Answers to actual financial and care provision.

14.	We always value people's feedback - would you have liked anything to have been done differently?
Yes	2/6 (33%)
No	4/6 (67%)
Two people did not answer this question	

Comments in relation to question 13 were:

Families should have been pro-actively engaged from the outset with a meeting and full explanation. Supporting information required more detail to enable a correct decision making process.

15. Which is your preferred option?	
The home remaining as a residential care home	2/5 (40%)
The home transferring to a supported living arrangement	3/5 (60%)
One person did not answer this question and two people said that they had no preference	

Comments in relation to question 14 were:

My husband and I appreciated the evening meeting held on 19 April in Southampton. We understand the need the city feels for changing the status of Orchard Mews to a supported living home but feel that they were/are trying to sell it to us as families on a false premise. Given that there are already good PCPs in place in the 2 homes under discussion it would have just been easier to explain that for these 2 homes the issue is really financial for the City rather than a change in care for the residents.

I anticipate that nothing will really change for X but much will change for me as appointee regarding financial provision and needing to relate to yet another government department.

We also felt the FAB team representative did not always fully address the specific situation relating to these 2 homes but sometimes gave examples based on people living in their own home in the community. That wasn't helpful.

It seemed to us that for at least half of the families present the main concern was what the budget for their relative would look like and you all consistently said you could not provide a sample budget. I understand you believe that but I think families would prefer one or more examples based on the experience of other situations where the status of a home has been changed rather than feeling forced to make a decision based on a significant unknown. Hearing that in most cases residents are not worse off is really not helpful. It was mentioned that you are legally prevented from providing sample budgets but I am pretty sure that you could provide a

caveat statement which would cover that legal requirement and the families would much prefer such examples than feel we are being asked to make a decision based on no information. The DWP holds appointees responsible for the use of the finances provided for our family members and yet SCC is asking us to make a decision that will affect the finances and how they can be used without anything like full information.

I can see that the only way forward will be for there to be a change of status to supported living. My question is what happens if that puts X in financial difficulties? There is no family trust money available to her to help in such a situation. I would not want to think that a decision I have made on her behalf would cause her financial difficulties.

I am happy with whichever option is chosen as long as the care is not affected.

16.	Those who responded were asked why they had chosen their preferred option.
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Those who chose residential care as their preferred option:

X's condition means he cannot make such decisions himself. He requires 24 hour care and generally needs to be lead and directed in life. Supported Living does not offer X any advantages that can be completely demonstrated. X and his family are happy with the existing Residential Care provided.

X has lived at 34-36 Seagarth Lane since it first opened in 1997. From his demeanour (as he cannot speak), he has always been and still is content there under the existing regime. Because of his severe disability, he needs 24-hour support, which he has. I remain unconvinced that changing to a supported living arrangement is in X's best interests. The needs of each individual resident must be paramount.

Those who chose supported living as their preferred option:

I believe X will receive more 1:1. Financially he will benefit, allowing freedom to take part in more activities

Because X cannot be moved against her will, and I want her to stay at Orchard Mews

Because it would benefit X.

17.	Those who responded were asked why they had not chosen the other option.
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Those who chose residential care as their preferred option:

Insufficient information about the true outcomes that Supported Living would provide to X plus a greater level of responsibility placed upon X.

From the meeting on 19 April 2016, it seems to me that Southampton City Council's primary purpose regarding Orchard Mews and Seagarth Lane is to reduce costs. The interests of individual residents is secondary. It appears that the City Council takes the view, in preferring a supported living arrangement that individual residents can fend for themselves to a greater or lesser degree. An example quoted at that meeting was the use by individual residents of kitchen facilities. In my opinion, this is a reckless presumption, having regard to the severe disability of certain residents and the possible, if not probable, dangers. Early at that meeting, reference was made by City Council staff to the well reported abuse of residents at a particular care home.

Apparently, this was intended to vindicate the City Council's favoured approach to supported living arrangements. This was a generalisation. The supported living arrangement would make each resident a tenant of Radian. X has no understanding of this and what would be involved, so why do it?

Those who chose supported living as their preferred option:

I don't see Seagarth as a registered care home, but X's home!