



PAPER E

Purpose: For Information

Committee report

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES MEETING
Date	7 JUNE 2018
Title	BEAULIEU HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOME
Report of	DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides an overview of the in-house residential and overnight respite services for children with disabilities provided by Beaulieu House children's home.
2. In January 2017, the management of Beaulieu House was transferred to Hampshire County Council Children's Services remit under the existing partnership arrangement. Overall operational responsibility now sits with Amber James, Interim Head of County Services, with Kathy Marriott, Area Director, maintaining the role of 'responsible individual' as defined in statutory regulations for children's homes.
3. Beaulieu House continues to support the council in meeting its statutory functions and achieving its corporate priorities. It continues to perform well and provide a valuable service for local children and their families. It is currently judged by Ofsted to be providing an effective service that meets the requirement for 'good'.

BACKGROUND

4. Beaulieu House is a children's home provided by the Isle of Wight Council to offer a residential and overnight respite service for children and young people with disabilities. It is registered with Ofsted to provide care and accommodation for up to ten children and young people who have learning disabilities. Children and young people accessing Beaulieu House will usually have profound and multiple learning disabilities, complex health care needs; often in combination with other disabilities such as Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), autism, cerebral palsy and Down syndrome. Beaulieu House is situated in Newport and is purpose built with accessibility features and adaptations for children and young people with disabilities.

Key Facts

Number of beds:	Six beds in the residential unit and four beds in the overnight respite unit.
Number of staff:	49 members of permanent staff and a pool of bank staff.
Current Users:	There are 30 children and their families using the home (six residents and 24 accessing respite)
Gross cost pa:	£1.39million

Accessing the service

5. Beaulieu House supports children and young people from all over the Island and is accessed via the Isle of Wight Council Children and Families branch. All children and young people who access Beaulieu House will have an identified social worker. A child and family assessment completed with the family would have identified the need for the type of specialist service offered by Beaulieu House. Beaulieu House will provide residential care and overnight respite to meet the assessed needs of the individual child. This support may be short or long term and can include a transition to Adult Services. Beaulieu House will work with children, families and their social workers to continually assess whether Beaulieu House remains a suitable provision to assist in meeting the child's assessed needs.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

6. The services that Beaulieu House provides supports the corporate priorities:
 - Keeping children safe and improving their education.
 - Protecting the most vulnerable with health and social care, investing in support, prevention and continuing care.

Sufficiency duty

7. There is a legal duty of 'sufficiency' that requires local authorities to ensure that, through direct provision or commissioned services, a range of placements sufficient to meet the needs of all children in care are available locally or that there is a plan in place to move towards that position.
8. Beaulieu House provides six residential placements for children with disabilities. As at the end of April 2018 there are a further nine external residential placements for children with disabilities, seven of whom are placed off Island. Therefore Beaulieu House makes a significant contribution to supporting the council in achieving its 'sufficiency' duty.

Short Breaks Duty

9. There is a legal duty on local authorities to provide a range of short break services for children with disabilities and their families. The council, in its Short Breaks statement, outlines the various short breaks offered to families. Beaulieu House is part of this offer providing specialist overnight respite for children with complex needs. It is the only children's home on the Island that provides this service. It therefore supports the council in meeting its Short Breaks duty but also provides a unique support service for families.

PERFORMANCE IN DELIVERING A SERVICE

10. In this section a brief overview of the current position with regards to occupancy, quality of care, staffing and premises will be outlined to provide oversight of Beaulieu House's performance in delivering a service.

Occupancy

11. During the last financial year 2017/2018 the residential unit had been running at near 100 per cent occupancy until 12 March 2018 when a young person moved on to adult social care. This bed has now been filled by another young person.
12. The respite unit had been running at between 87 per cent to 100 per cent occupancy.
13. On occasion, Beaulieu House will accept emergency admissions.
14. Beaulieu House ran at near capacity through the last financial year indicating the demand for the service.
15. Given that occupancy levels in the respite unit are high, consideration is being given to whether there is sufficient alternative respite arrangements for families should Beaulieu House not be in a position to offer support due to its ongoing commitments. Some capacity has been released by undertaking a review to make sure that Beaulieu House remains the right provision to meet the needs of those children accessing the respite provision.

Quality of care

16. Following the most recent inspection in August 2017, Ofsted graded Beaulieu House as 'good'.
17. As per statutory regulations, Beaulieu House is inspected on a monthly basis by an independent visitor who provides a 'critical friend' role. These visits have been helpful in terms of the level of scrutiny and support provided. Feedback from these visits has generally been positive, though they have identified that some work needs to be completed on the staff supervision and the process for reporting accidents and incidents. Actions plans have been completed to resolve these issues.

18. Beaulieu House regularly reports to the departmental management team on a number of performance indicators – incidents, restraints, accidents. This provides the opportunity to scrutinise performance and identify any areas of concern that require remedial action. During 2017/18 there had been no significant matters that required attention indicating that staff remained skilled at managing the complex needs/behaviours of the children who access Beaulieu House.

Staffing

19. Staffing levels have remained relatively stable with little difficulty in recruiting to any vacant posts that arise.
20. A staff review has been undertaken this year to align staffing levels/working hours to service user need. Staffing levels are now highest at times during the day where the children require the highest level of care and supervision.
21. Beaulieu House continues to recruit to bank positions to provide cover when there are staffing shortages/pressures. This has reduced the reliance on the use of agency staff and in turn reduced staffing costs.
22. Work continues to build a staff team that is flexible and resilient in their support for disabled children. This has included:
 - the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and the Earl Mountbatten Hospice providing support around resilience and group supervision;
 - the Isle of Wight Council Workforce Development Team delivering resilience and mindfulness workshops;
 - staff visiting children's homes across Hampshire, visiting local special schools and visiting social work teams for shadowing experiences in order to bring learning back to Beaulieu House.

Premises

23. The premises and accommodation remain functional and fit for purpose. However given its age and use it shows signs of 'wear and tear' and in some areas the accommodation and outside space looks 'tired'. This was noted by the most recent Ofsted inspection. Since the inspection the respite unit has been redecorated and made more child friendly. The residential dining room has been made into a 50's diner with the involvement of the children and young people. 'Beaulieu Respite' charity has been invited to assist in refurbishing the outside play equipment. An additional seven hours for general maintenance work was sourced through an existing post. There is a system in place for monitoring job schedules and ensuring repairs are carried out in house where possible.

Summary

24. The evidence suggests that Beaulieu House continues to perform well and provide a valuable service for local children and their families.

'BEAULIEU RESPITE' CHARITY

25. Beaulieu House continues to receive the support of the registered charity 'Beaulieu Respite' which provides charitable funds for additional equipment and facilities. Quarterly meetings take place between the chairman of the trustees and the service manager/registered manager to discuss the charities work, current projects and ideas around future projects. Current major projects include the construction of a soft play building on site and refurbishment of the garden play equipment and furniture.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

26. The annual gross running cost of Beaulieu House is £1.39million which is predominantly spent on staffing. A small contribution of £45,000 is received from the Isle of Wight NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) towards general respite provided at the establishment alongside some child specific continuing health care funding when additional workers are required for eligible health needs of certain individuals.

Table: Beaulieu House 2018-19 Budgeted Cost Breakdown

Type	Budget (£)	%
Employees	1,225,697	88%
Premises	76,747	6%
Transport	13,940	1%
Supplies & Services	71,491	5%
Other Payments	3,168	0%
Gross Cost	1,391,043	100%
Income	-127,203	
Net Cost	1,263,840	

27. Although the unit is fully budgeted for 100 per cent occupancy, occasional pressures arise (in particular against staffing) when higher need young people access the provision who require additional high level support. The additional pressures on the staffing budget are usually mitigated against by the cost avoidance of more expensive alternative purchased residential placements. The residential unit cost is currently £2,897 per week which compares favourably to external residential children's home placements costing in the region of £3,600 per week for a child with disabilities.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

28. This report is for information purposes only and no actions are proposed with legal consequences. Beaulieu House assists the local authority in carrying out its duties of 'sufficiency' under the Children Act 1989 (s22G) and the provision of short breaks for carers Children Act 1989 (schedule 2 paragraph 6) as outlined above in paragraphs 7-9.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

29. The council as a public body is required to meet its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities between people from different groups and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
30. Under the Equality Act 2010 we are required to have due regard to our equality duties when making decisions, reviewing services, undertaking projects, developing and reviewing policies. There are no equality and diversity issues generated from this report.

CONCLUSION

31. Beaulieu House continues to support the council in meeting its statutory functions and achieving its corporate priorities. It continues to perform well and provide a valuable service for local children and their families.
32. As outlined in this report there have been challenges associated with sustaining this, including the following:
 - Workforce development – building resilience and addressing workplace practices. A strategy to develop the workforce through building staff resilience is in place;
 - Managing staffing costs within the budget allocated – A staffing review and recruitment of bank staff has increased the effective use of staff.
 - Premises – ensuring it remains fit for purpose and a homely environment. A programme of remedial works is in place and charitable funds provide for additional facilities;
 - Capacity – ensuring those with the highest level of need have access to the respite provision. A review has taken place to make sure that Beaulieu House remains the right provision to meet the needs of those children accessing the respite provision.

RECOMMENDATION

33. That the committee notes the report and its contents.

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