

**7 December 2016**

**WYNCHLANDS CRESCENT PROPOSAL**

*Report of the Director of Children's Services*

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**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To give the School Forum an overview of the proposal to develop a complex needs resource using an existing building at Wynchlands Crescent, St Albans. The service will provide a children's residential facility for those with complex autism and behaviour that challenges so that children and young people can continue their education in local special schools in Hertfordshire and not be placed out of area.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 The report outlines the development and specifically the integration of an extended curriculum offer which integrates the school and residential aspects of the services.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 School Forum is asked to:
- Review and comment on the content of this report;
  - Agree to contribute £140,000 to a joint funding arrangement in partnership with Children's Social Care and Health to create the revenue funding necessary to deliver the service as an "invest to save" model.

**4. Background**

- 4.1 This proposal and model has already been agreed by the Children's Services Core Board and the Children and Young Peoples Boards of both East and North Herts CCG and Herts Valley CCG,

## 5. Contents of report

### 5.1 Context

This proposal is aligned within the SEN Strategic approach of Delivering Special Provision Locally and the work being taken forward in the Challenging Pupils in SLD/LD Schools Sub Group. It also supports the strategic objective to develop;

*“Appropriate provision and services to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND in their area and enabling access to a broader range of services.” \**

\* SEN Strategy

### 5.2 Proposed Development

We currently have approximately 15 C&YP in out of area schools with a profile of needs matched to the proposal. These schools are a long way from home, they disrupt family connections, community participation and outcomes for these young people into adulthood are poor. These placements are expensive, typically £200K per annum. The stated policy of HCC is to include all these young people in education opportunities in Hertfordshire so that they can live and learn locally.

We have an opportunity to use an existing high quality purpose built PFI property in Wynchlands Crescent, St Albans to provide a dedicated local 5 bed boarding resource for young people with complex needs aged between 13 and 19 years. It is anticipated that it will be configured with 4 permanent places and 1 emergency respite bed, which we are aware is often needed for when children and families reach a crisis.

This proposal will seek to transfer and reduce the existing spend from out of county placements to an in-county provision, with the benefits of keeping children local, enabling more effective transition into adult support services locally, developing a shared care opportunity supporting families to cope for longer and growing local expertise in complex needs.

### 5.3 Wynchlands Crescent Model - An Extended Curriculum

Out of county special schools are attractive because they offer an extended curriculum where learning is delivered beyond the 9-3 guided learning in schools. An extended curriculum offer is often the aspect of the residential school experience that is of particular benefit in that it offers opportunities for continued learning and skill development at all times of the day. If we are expecting to offer an alternative to out of county special schools, and for families to have confidence in it as an alternative, then an extended curriculum is an important feature of the offer.

The delivery model for Wynchlands Crescent is that it will provide an extended curriculum facilitated by a residential provision which can enhance the opportunities to develop practical skills in a real context. For older student's post 16, the opportunity to learn independent living skills in real life settings makes teaching and learning very relevant. We would use the outcomes of the EHCP as the framework around which to deliver a structured learning programme at Wynchlands that supports and reinforces the learning that takes place in school.

Also by having Wynchlands as part of the education offer we have more flexibility when C&YP are experiencing behaviour challenges at school. It will enable us to flex the education offer to accommodate this rather than having to suspend or exclude. Having a flexible extended curriculum offer will reduce exclusions by providing the capacity to adapt during times of challenge, transitioning back to full participation in school when possible.

#### 5.4 The Funding Proposal

A placement in an independent special school costs on average £200K and there is often a tripartite funding arrangement as set out below:

	£	%
<b>Education</b>	80,000	40
<b>Children's Social Care</b>	80,000	40
<b>Health</b>	40,000	20
<b>Total</b>	200,000	

Not only are out of area placements expensive, they also create significant on-costs to fulfil the duty of care in respect of review, family visits and workforce travel and costs.

By commissioning our own residential provider and using Wynchlands Crescent and maintaining the local school place we anticipate that we can make a saving on the average placement cost. To do this we need to resource the extended curriculum element of the provision the current and proposed options are set out below:

<b>For 5 Children</b>	<b>Per Child</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>52 Week Residential</b>	£80,000	£400,000
<b>Wynchlands Option</b>		
Local Special School	£30,000	£150,000
Extended Curriculum	£28,000	£140,000

For 5 Children	Per Child	Total
Total	£58,000	£290,000
Saving	£22,000	£110,000

For 5 placements in a 52 Week Residential school at an average cost of £80k the total revenue funding from DSG required is £400k. If these children and young people remain in local SLD schools at an average cost of £30k the total cost is £150k. If we deliver an extended curriculum for 5 at Wynchlands Crescent the average cost of £28k this is a total of £140k. The total cost is therefore £290k with a saving of £110k.

Each of the other partners will continue to contribute their proportion of the funding for Wynchlands

We are asking for agreement from School Forum to contribute the £140K for the extended curriculum element to a joint funding arrangement in partnership with Children's Services and Health to create the revenue funding necessary to deliver the service as an invest to save model.

## 5.5 Benefits

### 5.5.1 Prepares the Local Offer for Rising Demand

The costs of out of area placements are high and demand is likely to continue to grow. The 0-25 population in Hertfordshire in January 2016 was 370,503 and the ONS estimates the 0-25 population of C&YP in 2030 will be 417,279, an increase of 46,776 in the period. As a broad estimate we currently have 1.2% prevalence rate of EHCPs and within that group we have a cohort of C&YP with learning disability, autism and challenging behaviour.

Whilst the number of C&YP with EHCPs is not the same as those that will need a provision like Wynchlands Crescent, it is predictive of an increasing demand as this group are a sub set of the EHCP cohort; if that grows we can expect the more complex group to grow as well. Given that Wynchlands is only offering places for 5 C&YP it is reasonable to assume that there will be a demand to make it sustainable.

### 5.5.2 Better Outcomes for Children and Young People

A more local service for the most challenging children and young people also provides benefits in terms of safeguarding and maximising the voice of the child. A local service where parents/carers and other family members

can maintain regular natural contact is inherently more transparent than when the service is delivered remotely and this creates a safer more flexible service offer. It also enables the local partners to work more in collaboration with the provider to monitor the quality of provision more effectively.

Having a flexible extended curriculum offer will also reduce exclusions by providing the capacity to adapt the offer during times of challenge and transitioning back to full participation in school when possible.

The spirit and intention of Transforming Care and the Children and Families Act and the SEND reforms is that local services take an integrated approach, particularly to meet the needs of the most complex C&YP with low incidence needs. Wynchlands is a service which creates a clear tripartite commissioning relationship with the intention of combining resources to use the aggregated resources to deliver more effectively and efficiently than could be achieved working individually. It is a model which formalises a whole system contribution to get better outcomes and better value by sharing resources and risks.

### 5.5.3 Better Value for Money

If we don't have a facility like Wynchlands locally we will continue to commission placements in out of area schools and the numbers of these will grow. As demand pressures rise we can expect the cost of these placements to rise as demand outstrips supply. Cost pressures from changes such as the living wage will also put upward pressure on the price of each of these placements but with few alternatives local commissioners may be placed in a position where they are reluctant "price takers" from independent providers of a scarce resource. Having a locally commissioned service will reduce the rise and any rise will be more clearly evidenced through our commercial relationship with our local contractor.

With this most complex group, although small in number, the financial risks of not having an effective local offer are significant. There are immediate short term savings and in both the short and medium term there is a clear return on investment.

There are also longer term savings to the HCC budget. Long term costs to adult services are reduced substantially, adult services often pays in excess of a 60% premium for long term residential placements with out of area providers after school places end, creating a "long tail" of additional cost for HCC.

The commitment to 5 places is an 'invest-to-save model'. It is a lower unit cost than would be incurred in out of area residential schools which are already funded, and it mitigates the risk of exceptional cost both in the medium and long term from not having an integrated education, health and care preventative local pathway.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 Wynchlands Crescent provides an opportunity to work collectively through a whole system contribution to plan and deliver a local preventative pathway for children and young people with the most complex and challenging needs. Co-producing a local service in this way is by all measures the best approach to not only improve outcomes and quality, but also to generate better value for money. Wynchlands provides an innovative model of provision, not a "siloed" service. It represents a genuine partnership, where children and young people get the support they need, when and where they need it, through a service which integrates school, social care and health with an extended curriculum offer.