

**Governing Body**  
**Paper Summary Sheet**  
**Date of Meeting: 28 January 2014**

For: Decision  Discussion  Noting  Info

<b>Agenda Item and title:</b>	<b>GOV/14/01/09 Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People</b>
<b>Author:</b>	Julia Cramp, Joint Associate Director for the CCG and Wiltshire Council, Commissioning, Performance and School Effectiveness
<b>Lead Director/GP from CCG:</b>	Jacqui Chidgey-Clark
<b>Executive summary:</b>	<p>This paper provides an update following the three month consultation on a proposal to re-design overnight short breaks services for disabled children and young people alongside the closure of Hillcote, a health-run residential unit in Salisbury providing short breaks. The original recommendation was made following a Joint Review of Overnight Short Breaks undertaken by the CCG and Wiltshire Council with the involvement of Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (an organisation with approximately 800 parent carer members with a child with SEN and/or disability).</p> <p>The paper outlines the proposed model for overnight short breaks and summarises the feedback received from the consultation process. In the light of this feedback, the revised recommendation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To delay the closure of Hillcote until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015;</li> <li>• To use this additional time to enable a smooth transition for the five families currently using Hillcote, including the option of Bradbury House (an adult care residential respite unit in Salisbury) for the older young people who would be 18 or close to 18 in March 2015.</li> <li>• To develop a new Specialist Carers service with a minimum of two Specialist Carers in South Wiltshire;</li> <li>• To invest in more early intervention for families with a disabled child through the Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service to provide additional support with issues such as challenging behaviour, incontinence and sleeping difficulties.</li> </ul> <p>Care plans would be developed with the five Wiltshire families currently</p>

	<p>using Hillcote to ensure that the needs of the children, including their health needs, continue to be fully met. Staff from Hillcote would assist the transition ensuring a transfer of skills and knowledge and to make the changes as smooth as possible for the individual children and their families.</p> <p>Implementing the proposed model for overnight short breaks and delaying the closure of Hillcote until March 2015 would bring the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A continued investment and commitment to overnight short breaks for disabled children in South Wiltshire</li> <li>• A choice for families across the County of how to receive overnight short breaks</li> <li>• Improved outcomes for families of disabled children through increasing funding for early support</li> <li>• Better use of public money and resources</li> <li>• Sufficient time for a successful implementation of the changes</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence in support of arguments:</b>	Analysis of financial and activity data, a review of overnight short break service provision in other areas, information from the Shared Care Network on specialist carer schemes, views of parent carers gathered through work with Wiltshire Parent Carer Council on the need for more early support.
<b>Who has been involved/contributed:</b>	A Steering Group has overseen the review, including key representatives from NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Parent Carer Council. The consultation has included current parent carers of disabled children, parent carers of disabled adults, current and former staff and professionals and other interested parties.
<b>Cross Reference to Strategic Objectives:</b>	This works links to NHS Wiltshire's Business Plan to improve services for disabled children and young people and to emerging priorities within the CCG's 5 year plan to be submitted in February 2014.
<b>Engagement and Involvement:</b>	Pre consultation work included an online survey completed by current parent carers receiving residential short breaks, feedback via Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) and extensive engagement of parent carers of disabled children as part of Wiltshire's Pathfinder work on implementing the SEN and Disability Reforms. The three month consultation on Overnight Short Breaks included an online survey hosted on the WPCC website, emails and letters sent to a range of stakeholders and meetings with the Wiltshire families using Hillcote. A well attended public meeting was held on 6 November 2013.
<b>Communications Issues:</b>	There has been local media interest including articles in local press. The CCG and Wiltshire Council have produced joint statements and been in regular contact with Great Western Hospitals, the service provider. Great

	Western Hospitals has managed communication with Hillcote staff.
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	Closure of the service from Hillcote would release approximately £600,000. The proposal remains cost neutral with money to be reinvested in alternative provision for children currently using Hillcote, in a Specialist Carers service and also additional early help for families with a disabled child through the Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service.
<b>Review arrangements:</b>	Regular reports would need to be provided to the CCG Clinical Executive or Governing Body if a decision is made to implement the proposed model of overnight short breaks. Clinicians and Senior Managers would need to review implementation of the proposal.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	<p>The consultation highlighted that there is a perceived risk to children using alternative overnight short break services to Hillcote. All overnight short breaks services have robust risk management protocols, and look at individual care plans for all children to ensure they are safe and all their needs are met, including health needs.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council manages a residential short breaks unit in Devizes and would oversee the development of the specialist carers' scheme and take responsibility for ensuring services are appropriate for disabled children and young people.</p>
<b>National Policy/ Legislation:</b>	The recommended option for service re-design is in line with the national policy direction set out in the Green Paper 'Support and Aspiration' and the draft Children and Families Bill that is due to be implemented in September 2014. The legislation intends to give families with a disabled child more choice and control, including extending use of personal budgets for a range of support, including short breaks.
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity:</b>	An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken looking at the impact on both current children and young people using Hillcote and meeting future need for overnight short break services. Plans would be made for existing users to continue to receive an equivalent level of service.
<b>Other External Assessment:</b>	None.
<b>What specific action re. the paper do you wish the Governing Body to take at the meeting?</b>	The Governing Body is asked to approve the recommendations of this paper. If the recommendation is approved, implementation of the proposed model for overnight short breaks would be overseen by the Steering Group, reporting regularly to the Clinical Commissioning Group.

# Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People

## Purpose of Report

- 1 This paper provides an update following the three month consultation on a proposal to re-design overnight short breaks services for disabled children and young people alongside the closure of Hillcote, a health-run residential unit in Salisbury providing short breaks. This recommendation was made following a Joint Review of Overnight Short Breaks undertaken in conjunction with Wiltshire Council. On the basis of feedback provided during the consultation period, the paper recommends that the closure of Hillcote is delayed until March 2015 to enable alternative overnight short breaks to be put in place for the five families using Hillcote, and to provide time for the specialist carer scheme to be developed.

## Background

2. In June 2013, the CCG Governing Body decided to go out to formal consultation on the proposal to move from the current position where all the CCG's funding for overnight short breaks for disabled children and young people is invested in a single residential unit in Salisbury to a different model of overnight short breaks provision (working with Wiltshire Council). Under the proposal, disabled children could continue to access the Council's short breaks unit in Devizes but overnight short breaks would also be available in the homes of specialist carers. In addition, some funding currently spent on Hillcote would be available to increase staffing within the Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service to provide more early intervention for families with a disabled child.
3. The review noted that the number of children attending Hillcote was declining with a forecast of only five children and young people using the service from April 2014. Hillcote is no longer open full time and some of the staff are temporarily undertaking work in other teams within children's community health services.
4. Many other local authorities e.g. Dorset, Gloucestershire and Nottinghamshire have already made a change to less residential provision and more specialist carer provision. The proposed alternative model for overnight short breaks could offer more choice; more local overnight short breaks provision for more families, and better use of the available funding. The money saved from closing Hillcote would be reinvested in a health contribution towards the Council's residential unit, specialist carer provision and the Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service.
5. At the CCG Governing Body meeting in June, the approved next steps were: "the Clinical Commissioning Group agrees to further work taking place to develop Option 2 into a firm proposal for the closure of Hillcote and the use of the funding released to re-design an increased and enhanced range of services. This work would be done in conjunction with Wiltshire Parent Carers Council (who represent a large number of parents

of disabled children and young people). This option would need to be the subject of a public and stakeholder consultation prior to any final decision on closure being taken.”

6. During the consultation period, documents explaining the proposal and an online feedback form were hosted on the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council website. Wiltshire Parent Carer Council has around 800 parent carer members. Information was also sent out to families accessing overnight short breaks and to local Councillors and MPs. A very well-attended public meeting was held in Salisbury to discuss the proposal to close Hillcote and put an alternative model of overnight short breaks provision in place. A campaign group was also formed to ‘Save Hillcote’, although a request has recently been made by the chair of the group for the CCG to find a smaller residential unit. A number of concerns were raised during the consultation period. Full details of the consultation responses are contained in Appendix I but in summary, the most common concerns raised were:
  - The distance and travelling time to the Council-run residential unit in Devizes for families in Southern Wiltshire.
  - The numbers of children using Hillcote were reducing because families were not being made aware of Hillcote and because referrals were not being made by the Council’s Disabled Children’s Team.
  - Whether specialist carers are a viable alternative to residential provision for some disabled children.
7. Due to the level of concern expressed during the consultation period, the CCG decided to delay its decision on Hillcote from November 2013 until January 2014 to allow time to look in more detail at the specialist carer scheme and to assess whether there is unmet need for overnight short breaks amongst families with a disabled child in Southern Wiltshire. In December, there were no families from Southern Wiltshire awaiting a Social Work assessment to access overnight short breaks. Figures on the number of families with a disabled child receiving Direct Payments to purchase their own support shows higher numbers in the South of the County than in the North. This could be a factor in the reducing demand for overnight short breaks in Southern Wiltshire.

### **The proposed alternative model**

8. The proposed alternative model for overnight short breaks, with additional funding for early intervention, is in line with both the national and local direction of travel on support for disabled children and their families. National reforms for children with special educational needs and disabilities are set out in the Children and Families Bill which is due to be implemented in September 2014. The purpose of the reforms is to provide greater choice and control for families with a disabled child (including increased use of Direct Payments and Personal Budgets). In Wiltshire, regular consultation has taken place with parent carers over the last few years to help inform how support for families with a disabled child

can meet the needs of families. This is facilitated through Wiltshire Parent Carer Council. Parent carers have consistently stated that they want more support before they reach crisis point and then require specialist services such as overnight short breaks.

9. The proposed alternative model would provide:
  - a) Continued access for disabled children from Southern Wiltshire to a residential short breaks unit in Devizes.
  - b) A minimum of two specialist carer households in Southern Wiltshire who would be contracted to provide around 400 overnight stays.
  - c) A minimum of two specialist carer households in other parts of Wiltshire. This would allow some families with disabled children who may otherwise wish to use Canon's House in the future to have a choice between a residential unit and a specialist carer.
  - d) Additional funding for the Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service provided by Great Western Hospital (for children and families across Wiltshire) so that more help can be provided for issues that parent carers of disabled children have said they struggle with such as challenging behaviour, incontinence and sleeping difficulties.

### Specialist Carers

10. Parent carers in other counties, eg, Gloucestershire and Dorset, highly value specialist carers who provide overnight short breaks to disabled children and young people. Specialist carers are vetted, trained and monitored to ensure the highest standards of safeguarding, that the varying needs of disabled children are fully met and to ensure their services are of the highest quality. The service is provided from the specialist carers' own specially adapted homes. Wiltshire has an opportunity to introduce a specialist carer service, and has been offered support from the Shared Care Network – the national organisation representing family-based short break services for disabled children and young people in the UK.
11. A few quotes from parent carers using specialist carer services are set out below:

*“ We are so blessed and happy to have J (carer) in our lives. She is like a second mum to K. She has a real spiritual connection with K too, which is lovely when she cannot express her needs verbally. J is always there in times of crisis and understands how we all feel. She is the most amazing lady”.*

*“The family are so well supported by (carer) and Family Link Contract Care social workers”.*

*“ D (Carer) has made all the difference to our family. She understands R’s needs and has even taken him away on a week’s holiday with her family to give us all a break. She has boosted our confidence in caring for R at home and has supported us at school reviews etc”.*

*“ Without our contract carer, we would not be able to spend time with our other children doing activities that S cannot manage. We also look forward to a lie in every now and again when M is at his carers for the weekend.”*

12. A specialist carer also provided the following feedback:

*“We have been breakaway carers for two and a half years now, and before that were short break carers. We have been linked with two children for all of this time, and provided holiday care for two others. One of the children we regularly care for is a 13 year old boy with cerebral palsy and associated difficulties. He is in a powered wheelchair full time. Before our house was adapted we provided day care for him, so there has been continuity of care for him since he was 7 years old. He and his family jokingly refer to me as “his second Mum”, and we have built up a close relationship with them. He phones us for a chat most days, and members of both our families often invite each other to share birthdays and Christmas. At first his family enjoyed the break while staying at their home nearby, but as time has gone on they now frequently go away. The first time they went to London for his Dad to run the marathon and I was left with a long list of instructions and they phoned several times for reassurance over the weekend. Over time, they have felt more and more at ease going away knowing he is safe with us, and have even had a weekend break in New York.*

*The other child is a 15 year old girl with global developmental delay. She had been using a local residential respite home for her breaks before we were able to provide overnight care for her. At first her mother had reservations as she felt her daughter would miss out on having children around her. However, we were a good match for her as we have a busy household with children and adults coming and going, and we like to keep busy. Although the child is non-verbal, she always appears happy to come to us, and I think her Mum has found the flexibility that we can provide is helpful. We will be having her over this New Year as we did last year, as it is a time when her Mum likes to party, where we are happy to stay home! From our point of view, my husband and I and our own four children have varying levels of involvement, but all enjoy having the children. We go out to tourist attractions, are always out and about with the children – and are getting experts at assessing wheelchair accessibility.”*

13. Specialist carers can provide an alternative to residential overnight short breaks for some disabled children and young people, and offer a flexible, very personal service. Specialist carers are working with disabled children and young people of all ages and a full range of behavioural and health needs, including the most complex. For large rural counties, specialist carers provide a practical solution for providing a countywide overnight short breaks service. Based on figures from neighbouring counties and

information from the Shared Care Network, the cost of overnight short breaks with specialist carers (including home adaptations) is approximately half of the cost of overnight short breaks at residential unit. If Wiltshire reinvested some of the current funding in residential short breaks into specialist carers this would also allow money to be invested in more early intervention.

### **Recommendations following the consultation period**

14. In light of the feedback from the consultation period, the views of the families using Hillcote, and recognition of the time needed to set up a specialist carer scheme, it is proposed that the closure of Hillcote be delayed by 12 months until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. This would mean that:
  - Two of the five children using Hillcote will become 18 and will have a planned transition to adult services (with the option of using Bradbury House residential short breaks unit in Salisbury). A third young person could also be offered Bradbury House as part of an early transition. The Care Quality Commission has been consulted (in conjunction with Council colleagues responsible for running Bradbury House) and the CQC do not have any objections to use of Bradbury House by a young person over 16 (although the CQC would routinely re-inspect Bradbury House if used by anyone under the age of 18 to check that the facility is suitable). Hillcote staff are keen to be involved in ensuring a smooth transition for their young people to Bradbury House, if needed.
  - Transition plans can be finalised with the families of two of the children using Hillcote, neither of whom live close to Salisbury and who are willing to look at alternative options. The additional time will ensure a smooth and unrushed transition to alternative arrangements.
  - The specialist carer service can be fully established with new families having the opportunity to choose this service, reducing the future demand for residential overnight short breaks.

### **Equality and Diversity**

16. See Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 2)

### **Governance**

17. The Overnight Short Breaks Steering Group should continue to oversee the transition if a decision is made to put new provision in place and close Hillcote. Regular reports would need to be provided to the CCG Governing Body. A clinical representative from the Clinical Commissioning Group is invited to join the Steering Group to oversee further work.

## **Finance**

17. The June paper identified that the closure of the service from Hillcote would release approximately £600,000. The proposal remains cost neutral with money to be reinvested in alternative provision for children currently using Hillcote, the specialist carers service and additional early intervention services.
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## **Background Papers and Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Consultation Responses
  - Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment
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## Appendix 1 – Consultation Responses

1. In accordance with Section 242 of the NHS Act 2006, on July 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 a three month consultation period started and the consultation document, a questions and answers document and an online feedback form were hosted on the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council website. Wiltshire Parent Carer Council is an independent organisation with about 800 parent carer members. Letters were sent to a range of stakeholders including families using Hillcote and other overnight short breaks, local Councillors and MPs. Meetings were then arranged with the five Wiltshire families who would be directly affected by the closure of Hillcote. In October there was a meeting with the chair of the 'Save Hillcote Campaign' and on November 6<sup>th</sup> there was a very well-attended public meeting in Salisbury.
2. There were 61 entries on the online feedback form. The form allowed people to enter their own text in response to the consultation document, ie, it did not ask people specific questions. In total, there were:
  - 52 online comments
  - 5 letters typed on by Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (these were copies of letters also sent to senior Wiltshire Council/CCG officers)
  - 4 duplicates/blank responses
3. Of the 52 comments:
  - 19 clearly said that they were against the closure of Hillcote (although some of these also said they were in favour of an alternative smaller unit suggesting it is a residential service they want rather than the specific Hillcote building).
  - 3 people were in favour of the proposal, citing greater equity and value for money.
  - 30 responses did not specifically state whether they were for or against the proposal although many of these responses did raise concerns about meeting the needs of disabled children from Southern Wiltshire.
  - The most common themes within the 52 responses were:
    - The distance and travelling time to Canon's House (15 people);
    - That Hillcote numbers were reducing because referrals were not being made from social care (10 people);
    - That a smaller/more modern residential unit should be provided in Southern Wiltshire (8 people).
4. In addition to the majority of responses opposed or raising concerns about the closure of Hillcote there were a small number of responses in support; one noted that the proposal was a good idea subject to the money being reinvested in the new services and another welcomed the proposal which they felt offered greater equity to families who did not live close to either Devizes or Salisbury:

*"I have only recently come across this consultation and I am so glad I have!*

*My families lives near Malmesbury and being so far north of the county it makes it very difficult to access services in Devizes and Salisbury is out of the question! How fantastic then for us as a family that the authority has decided to make accessing this type of service fairer across the county to all families by proposing to close Hillcote and use the money released in a more cost effective way to meet the needs of a much larger group of families. We have struggled to find appropriate respite for years due to living so remotely from either of these centres and we find the prospect of more local provision very exciting and not a moment too soon! We think the idea of overnight respite being provided in a home/ family setting much more reassuring than the alien environment of an institution. We are sure that this type of provision would be much more appropriate for our child and the potential to develop a closer relationship with the host 'family' much more reassuring to us as parents.*

*We think certain elements would need to be considered to make this work such as time for the child to be introduced to the family for all parties to be comfortable and reassured, appropriate equipment installed e.g. hoists, changing facilities, disabled shower etc. It would also be necessary to have a backup plan if the 'host' family was ill at short notice and couldn't accommodate the child for instance so that respite could still be offered.*

*This said, this is a fantastic opportunity for disabled children to integrate with a family (and hopefully their children) who can so often otherwise be socially excluded. Well done Wiltshire for taking this creative and brave step forward; we for one hope it is the success it deserves to be!"*

8. The meetings with the five families who would be using Hillcote from April 2014 produced further feedback including:
  - All five families preferred for Hillcote to remain open;
  - Positive feedback on the service at Hillcote;
  - Three of the families were open to alternative carer arrangements, with one young person already in the process of planning support from adult care due to their age;
  - Two families were very upset about the proposed changes and felt neither specialist carers or a residential unit in Devizes would meet the needs of their children and family.
  
9. A meeting with the Chair of the Save Hillcote Campaign and a local supporter provided further feedback on the proposal including:
  - A strong feeling amongst parents of disabled children who have grown up that the Hillcote service was highly valued by the community
  - That Hillcote is an important local facility and that the local community had raised significant funds for the unit in the past;
  - Concerns about health implications for disabled children having to travel away from Salisbury for their overnight short breaks;

- That an acceptable alternative would be a smaller residential unit in Salisbury or close by.
10. The public meeting provided the following additional feedback:
- A number of parents recollected what a valued service Hillcote had provided to their children, in some cases many years ago.
  - Many families of disabled children are not eligible for overnight short breaks and would like more support.
  - A view that there had been a deliberate intention to run down Hillcote to make it unviable.
  - That despite assurances that the proposal was cost neutral that the closure of Hillcote was being proposed to save money.

### **‘Save Hillcote Campaign’**

11. Two of the parents of children at Hillcote started the ‘Save Hillcote Campaign’. They were joined by other members of the South Wiltshire community. The campaign has included several articles in the local press, a peaceful march in Salisbury city centre of around 100 people and a Facebook petition which has been supported by approximately 6,000 people.
12. A petition with around 5,000 signatures against the closure was also delivered to the CCG’s offices in Devizes.

**Equality Impact Analysis – the EIA form**

Title of the paper or Scheme:

**Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People**

<b>For the record</b>	
<b>Name of person leading this EIA:</b> Julia Cramp, Joint Associate Director, Wiltshire CCG and Wiltshire Council	<b>Date completed:</b> January 2014
<b>Names of people involved in consideration of impact:</b> Susan Tanner (Head of Joint Planning & Commissioning, Children's Services, Wiltshire Council) Matthew Look (Lead Commissioner, Children's Services, Wiltshire Council) Stuart Hall (Vicechair, Wiltshire Parent Carer Council)	
<b>Name of director signing EIA:</b> Jacqui Chidgey-Clark	<b>Date signed:</b> January 2014

**1 What is the proposal? What outcomes/benefits are you hoping to achieve?**

The proposal is to implement a new model of overnight short breaks services for disabled children and young people alongside the closure of Hillcote, a health-run residential unit in Salisbury providing short breaks. In particular:

- To delay the closure of Hillcote until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015
- To enable a smooth transition for the five Wiltshire families currently using Hillcote, including the potential option of Bradbury House (a residential respite unit in Salisbury) for young people over the age of 16
- To develop a new Specialist Carers service with a minimum of two Specialist Carers in South Wiltshire
- To invest in more early intervention in the areas highlighted by parent carers (e.g. challenging behaviour, incontinence and sleeping difficulties).

The purpose of the proposal is to achieve better outcomes for disabled children and young people and their families by:

- Ensuring equity of access across Wiltshire to overnight short breaks for families with a disabled child
- Providing parents and carers with a choice between different types of overnight short break provision (i.e. residential and specialist carer services)
- Ensuring the funding available for overnight short breaks is used effectively, avoiding tying up resource in any provision that is not well utilised
- Reinvesting any savings back into short breaks services (a cost neutral approach) so that families with disabled children can be assured that they will continue to receive effective support
- Increasing early intervention to help families with issues they have highlighted such as sleeplessness, incontinence and difficulties with behaviour

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## **Who's it for?**

Disabled children and young people and their families assessed as eligible for overnight short breaks by Social Workers within Wiltshire Council's Children's Disability Teams.

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## **How will this proposal meet the equality duties?**

The proposal will provide greater choice and equity of provision of overnight short breaks for disabled children and young people and their families in Wiltshire.

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## **What are the barriers to meeting this potential?**

Sufficient time for implementing the proposed model of overnight short breaks, including a specialist carer scheme, is required (hence the recommendation to delay closure of Hillcote until 31 March 2015)

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## **2 Who's using it?**

### **What data/evidence do you have about who is or could be affected (e.g. equality monitoring, customer feedback, current service use, national/regional/local trends)?**

Hillcote is currently being accessed by five Wiltshire children and young people, numbers have been in decline over the past few years. The total number of Wiltshire children using overnight short breaks is approximately 85. This figure is fairly static year to year.

Nationally and locally there has been a focus on transforming short breaks (not just overnight short breaks) in recent years under the 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' initiative. In Wiltshire this has included an increase in the range of short breaks available to families. We now have over 1000 children accessing our Short Breaks Scheme which gives eligible families the option of a £600 payment or 90 hours of activities clubs each year without assessment. Annual feedback on the scheme from parent carers and disabled children shows that about 96% of families think the scheme is good or excellent. Wiltshire's Short Breaks Scheme has increased the number of families with a disabled child accessing any type of short break from about 100 in 2009 to over 1000 in 2013.

Nationally there has been a move away from residential overnight short break provision to alternative service models such as Specialist Carers which offer a more personal service, greater geographical coverage and better value for money. Feedback from families using the two residential overnight short breaks units in Wiltshire is positive and most families want to continue to use residential provision and are concerned about change.

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## **How can you involve your customers in developing the proposal?**

Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) which represents over 800 families in Wiltshire have been involved from the outset of the review. In addition, the concerns raised during the 3 months consultation period, particularly by the families most immediately affected, have been considered and the proposal has been revised after reflecting on this feedback.

Subject to the proposal being approved, parent carers will be involved in the development of new

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services and WPCC will continue to be part of the Steering Group overseeing the implementation.

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### **Who is missing? Do you need to fill any gaps in your data?**

The partnership working with WPCC has been recognised nationally as best practice and the consultation has produced additional feedback on the wants and needs of families.

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### **3 Using the information in parts 1 & 2 does the proposal:**

#### **a) Create an adverse impact which may affect some groups or individuals. Is it clear what this is? How can this be mitigated or justified?**

The consultation highlighted two groups of children and families who could be adversely affected by this proposal: i) current Hillcote children and families ii) disabled children and their families from south Wiltshire who may require overnight short breaks in the future.

- i) The five families using Hillcote have all been offered a meeting with their Social Worker to discuss options for providing overnight short break support if Hillcote were to close. Two families have indicated that other options would meet their needs. Concerns were raised by the three other families that the proposed range of services in the original proposal would not meet the needs of them and their children. The three families all felt they required a local residential service for their children. In recognition of this feedback discussions have taken place with Bradbury House (a Salisbury residential overnight short breaks unit for adults) about whether this facility is a potential option for older young people. Feedback from the managers of Bradbury House is that the service is likely to be suitable for older young people. Discussions have also taken place with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) which has confirmed that it would be happy for Bradbury House to take young people as part of a planned transition from around a year before they become 18 and confirmed that it would monitor Bradbury House to ensure provision was suitable to meet the needs of young people close to adulthood. The revised proposal would mean that two young people attending Hillcote would become 18 before Hillcote closed and could look at the option of Bradbury House as part of a normal planned process. One of the children would be turning 17 and could also consider this option.
- ii) Concerns were raised that children requiring overnight short breaks in the future who live in South Wiltshire would be disadvantaged by the closure of Hillcote. To mitigate this concern two Specialist Carers would be recruited in South Wiltshire, ensuring the current levels of overnight short breaks being delivered in South Wiltshire remains. For families who would prefer residential provision Canon's House in Devizes would also be an option. Consultation feedback showed there was concern that transport would be a barrier to families from South Wiltshire accessing Canon's House. Support with transport would be provided where needed.

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### **What can be done to change this impact?**

The closure of Hillcote should be delayed until 31 March 2015. It is very likely that Bradbury House could then be offered as an option for the three older Wiltshire children currently accessing Hillcote as part of a planned transition. A minimum of two Specialist Carers should be recruited to cover South Wiltshire to provide at least 400 nights of overnight short break care per year locally. Transport arrangements and care plans should be used to enable the use of Canon's House for

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families who would like to use residential provision but do not live locally to Devizes.

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**b) Create benefit for a particular group. Is it clear what this is? Can you maximise the benefits for other groups?**

The proposal will benefit:

- Families who do not currently live close to either of the two residential units through the introduction of a Specialist Carers service.
- Families who would prefer to have overnight short breaks provided in a family setting through a Specialist Carers service.
- More families with a disabled child will be able to access early support through the Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service.

These benefits will be maximised by:

- Ensuring the Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service works closely with the overnight short breaks services.
- Recruiting Specialist Carers in different of locations across Wiltshire, including at least two in South Wiltshire.
- Ensuring suitable matching between families and Specialist Carers.

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**Does further consultation need to be done? How will assumptions made in this Analysis be tested?**

The consultation process has been completed. Services will be monitored to ensure they deliver the expected level of support and the CCG Clinical Executive or Governing Body will receive regular reports on the implementation of the proposal and the views of families using overnight short breaks.

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**4 So what?**

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**What changes have you made in the course of this EIA?**

The following changes have been made:

- The proposal has been revised for the closure of Hillcote on 31 March 2015 (an additional 12 months for implementation and transition compared to the original proposal).
- A commitment to recruit at least two Specialist Carers in South Wiltshire to maintain the current level of overnight short breaks in South Wiltshire.
- Bradbury House has been added to the mix of services being proposed to allow a potential residential solution for three families currently using Hillcote who requested a residential service in Salisbury.

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**What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?**

If a decision is made to move to the proposed model of overnight short breaks, the CCG, Wiltshire Council, Great Western Hospitals and WPCC will work together to:

- Develop the new services described in the proposal.

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- Begin transition work with the families currently using Hillcote.
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**When will this be reviewed?**

Progress on implementing the new model would need to be reviewed every quarter. The implementation plan would be overseen by the Short Breaks Steering Group reporting back to the CCG.

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**How will success be measured?**

Success will be measured by recruitment of suitable specialist carers and feedback from parent carers on the new services and whether their needs are being met.

**Wiltshire Council**

**Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body**  
**26 November 2013**

**Children's Select Committee**  
**3 December 2013**

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## **Overnight Short Breaks for Children with SEND – rapid scrutiny exercise**

### **Purpose**

1. To report to the Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body and the Children's Select Committee the outcome of the rapid scrutiny exercise held on 7 November 2013 to look at the proposed revisions to overnight short breaks for disabled Children and Young People in Wiltshire.
2. To make recommendations to Wiltshire Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Services in regards to this issue.

### **Background**

3. On 1 October the Children's Select Committee received a report summarising the joint review between the Council and NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group on overnight short breaks for disabled Children and Young People in Wiltshire. Having discussed the report, the Committee established a rapid scrutiny exercise – a small working group of non-executive members – to consider the proposals and supporting information in detail, with findings and recommendations being referred to the decision maker as appropriate.
4. Authority was delegated to the Committee Chairman for seeking membership and for making arrangements to link this exercise with a public meeting being arranged at the request of members of the public. The public meeting was subsequently held on 6 November and five of the six members of the rapid scrutiny group attended. The rapid scrutiny exercise itself was held on 7 November with the following in attendance:

Cllr Jon Hubbard	Lead Member for the exercise, Chairman, Children's Select Committee
Cllr Jacqui Lay	Vice-Chairman, Children's Select Committee

Mr Ken Brough	Co-opted Member, Children's Select Committee
Rev Alice Kemp	Co-opted Member, Children's Select Committee
Cllr Simon Jacobs	Member, Children's Select Committee
Cllr Sheila Parker	Member, Children's Select Committee
Cllr Laura Mayes	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Julia Cramp	Associate Director (with CCG), Quality Assurance, Commissioning, Performance, Schools and Early Years Effectiveness
Matthew Look	Lead Commissioner
Henry Powell	Senior Scrutiny Officer

5. The following papers were made available at the meeting:

- Report to the Children's Select Committee on the Review of Overnight Short Breaks for Children with SEN/LLDD – 1 October
- Consultation document
- Equality Impact Analysis
- Q&A on the review
- Notes of the public meeting – 6 November, Guild Hall, Salisbury
- Slides of the presentation given by Julia Cramp at the public meeting
- The results of a survey of parents of children at Exeter House School, Salisbury, which was circulated at the public meeting.

## Process

6. The rapid scrutiny exercise was held on 7 November at Wiltshire Council's Shurnhold offices in Melksham. The group considered the written evidence listed above, the views expressed at the public meeting on 6 November and verbal evidence provided by Wiltshire Council officers. Discussions focused on the following:

- Clarifying what the alternative service model being proposed consisted of.
- How the predicted costs of the proposed new service model have been calculated.
- The nature of the early intervention services that would receive increased investment following Hillcote's closure.
- Possible reasons why the use of Hillcote has decreased in recent years, including the development of the Short Breaks scheme, changing attitudes to residential units and a lack of parental awareness and social worker referrals.

- How Hillcote's suitability for a child or young person is assessed and the numbers of children and young people who meet the criteria.
- Arrangements for recruiting the proposed specialist carers.
- Arrangements for quality assuring and monitoring the proposed specialist carers.
- The potential impact of the proposals on parental transport arrangements and costs.
- Back-up arrangements if a specialist carer stops operating.
- The viability of potential alternative service models, including smaller residential centre(s).
- The consultation process followed and whether the results accurately capture the views of those potentially affected by the proposals.

## **Recommendations**

7. The rapid scrutiny group recommends that Wiltshire Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Services notes the following comments and makes appropriate representations to the Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body on 26 November. A formal response at the Children's Select Committee on 3 December 2013 is also requested.

**The rapid scrutiny group accepts the argument that a revised provision of services for children and young people with SEND could lead to greater accessibility of services overall, assuming the retention of a specialist residential centre (i.e. Canon's House). However, little information has been provided to evidence that the proposed alternative service model would adequately meet the needs of service users. The group therefore has considerable concerns about the proposals and the amount of information provided to support them. The group's concerns are as follows:**

1. **The proposals have not been properly costed in the following ways:**
  - a) **No figures have been provided to demonstrate how the predicted cost of specialist carers (£40kpa, per carer) has been arrived at (for example, figures from other local authorities who have already adopted this system). The group are sceptical that this sum is realistic given the high upfront costs the carers will face in order to properly adapt and equip their homes;**
  - b) **The potential impact of the new specialist carer scheme on the future use of Canon's House and its sustainability in the long term does not appear to have been considered.**

The group therefore concludes that the cost neutrality of the proposals has not been substantiated. The availability of the savings proposed for reinvestment in early intervention services therefore cannot be assumed either.

2. Given historic difficulties recruiting foster carers for young people with more complex needs, the Council may face considerable difficulties recruiting and approving the specialist carers proposed. No information has been provided demonstrating how this will be achieved (for example, from the experiences of other local authorities who have already adopted this system), particularly within the ambitious timeframe of April 2014.
3. It has been reported that specialist carers would be subject to the same quality assurance and safeguarding checks as foster carers for children and young people without SEND. The group believes that the greater vulnerability of children and young people with SEND demands a much more robust system of monitoring to protect the children's welfare and to protect the specialist carers.
4. No information has been provided to show how continuity of provision for service users will be maintained if a specialist carer decides to stop operating. This could have a serious impact on service users and their families.
5. It has not been demonstrated that the proposed specialist carer scheme will be able to provide care at short notice, for example, when a young person's parent is taken ill.
6. The group has received anecdotal evidence that parents have not been made aware of or offered provision at Hillcote when it may have been appropriate for their child. The group are therefore concerned that a lack of information and guidance, rather than a lack of demand, has contributed to the decline in Hillcote's use in recent years.
7. It has not been demonstrated what emergency plans will be put in place to ensure continuity of service if Canon's House was temporarily unable to operate, for example because of a fire.
8. It is reported that a proportion of the savings from the proposed closure of Hillcote would be reinvested in Early Intervention services. However, no information has been provided on what these services

**will actually consist of and how their effectiveness has been assessed.**

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**Members of the Overnight Short Breaks for Children with SEN/LLDD rapid scrutiny exercise**

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**Background documents**

Report to the Children's Select Committee on the Review of Overnight Short Breaks for Children with SEN/LLDD – 1 October

## **Lead Member's response to Rapid Scrutiny Exercise on Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children**

### **1 The proposals have not been properly costed**

The figure of £40,000 per specialist carer has been arrived at through discussions with two neighbouring authorities who have specialist carers providing overnight short breaks for disabled children (Dorset and Gloucestershire). Although the two schemes are slightly different, the cost is roughly the same. The cost includes adaptations and equipment. A member of staff from Wiltshire Council has gone through the costs in detail with contacts in these two authorities.

The new specialist carer scheme is highly unlikely to have any impact on the future use and sustainability of Canon's House. We know that some families prefer residential provision, whilst others are happier with their child being looked after in a family home. There will always be a need for a residential unit in a county the size of Wiltshire.

The proposal is cost neutral in that the CCG has signed up to re-investing the funding currently used to run Hillcote in other overnight short breaks and earlier support for families with a disabled child. This commitment is included in the minutes of the CCG Governing Body meeting. There is no intention on the part of the CCG to make a saving from the proposed closure of Hillcote – this is what cost neutral means.

### **2 Potential difficulties in recruiting specialist carers**

The two adjacent local authorities we have held detailed discussions with have had no difficulty recruiting specialist carers. In Dorset, these carers were recruited from their Family Link Scheme. In Wiltshire, interest has already been expressed in being a specialist carer by a member of Hillcote staff. It is right to point out that it would be difficult to recruit a number of Specialist Carers before April 2014, but this is not an option that any of the five families of the young people currently using Hillcote want to explore.

### **3 Quality assurance and safeguarding checks of specialist carers**

It is right that specialist carers are subject to the same quality assurance and safeguarding checks as foster carers. These are rigorous checks. Children and young people who are looked after by foster carers are often vulnerable in a variety of ways and this is why safeguarding checks are so important. The intention of a specialist carer scheme to provide overnight short breaks for disabled children is that the specialist carer and the family of the disabled child form a good relationship and know each other well. It is not expected that any parent leaves their child with somebody that they do not feel comfortable with.

### **4 Continuity of provision for service users if a specialist carer decides to stop operating**

Specialist carers are recruited, on a contract, to provide a specific amount of overnight short break support. Carers would need to give notice if they decided to stop operating. If this happened, then discussions would take place with families about alternative support. It is right to note that long term support cannot be guaranteed, although this is the same for any personalised service.

#### **5 Not demonstrated that proposed specialist carer scheme will be able to provide care at short notice**

Within the contracts agreed with a specialist carer, some flexibility can be built in so that they can support families at short notice. However, the position is no different than with a residential unit. Hillcote is only open for part of the week, so would not always be available at short notice. When a parent cannot care for a disabled child at short notice, Children's Social Care make arrangements for the child to be looked after if the family does not have relatives/friends who can provide help.

#### **6 Parents have not been made aware of or offered provision at Hillcote when it may have been appropriate**

Access to overnight short breaks is only given following an assessment by a Social Worker within the Children's Disability Teams. All families with a significantly disabled child are in contact with a wide range of professionals. In Southern Wiltshire, all these professionals will be aware of Hillcote, that it provides overnight short breaks and that access is via the Children's Disability Teams. These teams are not aware of any families being referred that meet the criteria for overnight short breaks and who have not been offered support. Two of the families that use Hillcote actually live closer to Canon's House than to Hillcote. The decline in the use of Hillcote is not related to a lack of information, but it is a specialist service and is therefore not 'advertised' as it is only offered to those families with the highest level of needs. For other families with a disabled child, there are other options (including Wiltshire's Short Break Scheme which is accessed by approximately 1,000 families).

#### **7 What emergency plans will be put in place if Canon's House was temporarily unable to operate**

All service providers have business continuity plans. If Canon's House was temporarily unable to operate then other arrangements would need to be made for those children and young people who had planned overnight short breaks at the unit. The closure of Hillcote would not make any difference to the position now. We do not have spare buildings for any service just in case there is a fire.

#### **8 No information provided on early intervention services and how their effectiveness has been assessed**

If Hillcote closed, then some funding would be re-invested in early intervention services (in line with the views of parents and carers of disabled children across the county who have been telling us for a number of years that they want help before things reach crisis point, for example help with challenging behaviour, sleep and continence). The CCG already funds a Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service that works with families struggling with, for example, behaviour or sleep routines for a learning disabled child. However, this only has the equivalent of 3 full-time members of staff for the whole county. This service would be expanded so that help could be provided for a larger number of families at an earlier stage. An expanded Children's Learning Disability Nursing Service would work closely with both Canon's House staff and specialist carers, alongside families with a learning disabled child.