

**Economy, Communities & Corporate**  
Geoff Hughes

Your Ref:

Our Ref: FOI IAT 10072

Please ask for: Claire Jacobs

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11 August 2015

Dear Sir,

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST FOI IAT 10072**

Further to previous correspondence, your request for information has now been considered, and the council's response is set out below:

**Q1 I want to see the briefing notes**

- A. Please see the attached newsroom link which includes a range of documents and information. This document entitled 'Short breaks and respite services for children with disabilities: Frequently asked questions' is also publically available on Herefordshire Council's website via the following link:

<http://newsroom.herefordshire.gov.uk/1-ledbury-road.aspx>

Contained within this document are links to the 2010 'Review of services for children and young people with disabilities' and the subsequent 'Children with Disabilities Transformation Programme'.

With regards to the decision making process, some reports have also been considered by Cabinet. In November 2013, the first phase of a joint commissioning exercise between the Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (HCCG) and Herefordshire Council was undertaken. On 21 November 2013, the report 'Children with Disabilities: Short Breaks and Respite Service Provision' was presented to Cabinet, who gave approval for the commitment of £1.3m funding over 3 years. A commissioning exercise had been undertaken which had been informed by and involved parents and carers in deciding what services should be commissioned for short breaks and respite services. A copy of this report and the minutes of this Cabinet meeting are publically available and published on Herefordshire Council's website via the following link:

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=251&MIId=4727&Ver=4>

In February 2015, a report on the 'Children with Disabilities Transformation Programme' was also presented to Cabinet. A copy of this report is also publically available on the council's website, and can be viewed via the following link:

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=251&MId=5065&Ver=4>

## **Q2 The consultation process**

- A. The council has not consulted directly on the specific question of the closure of 1 Ledbury Road.

The council has consulted with families on services for children and young people with disabilities and what they require from a short breaks and respite service. Details of this consultation process are provided on the attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document.

## **Q3 Names of key persons in the decision making team**

- A. No formal decisions have been made to close the service, however, the following staff have been involved in on-going discussions regarding 1 Ledbury Road:

Jo Davidson – Director for Children's Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council

Jo Whitehead – Chief Accountable Officer, HCCG

Dr Andy Watts – Chairman, HCCG

Philippa Granthier – Head of Commissioning (Children's Wellbeing), Herefordshire Council

Vanessa Lewis – Service Unit Manager for Integrated Family Health, Wye Valley NHS Trust

Richard Beekin – Chief Executive, Wye Valley NHS Trust

Chris Baird – Assistant Director Children's Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council

Alison Talbot-Smith – Consultant in Public Health, HCCG

Paul Meredith – Assistant Director Children's Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council

Deborah Owen – Head of Service for Children with Disabilities and Practice Development, Herefordshire Council

This is detailed on the minutes of the multi-agency meeting dated 28 July 2015, which are published on Herefordshire Council's website via the following link:

<http://newsroom.herefordshire.gov.uk/1-ledbury-road.aspx>

## **Q4 Please detail the alternative facilities that are being proposed**

- A. Details of the Herefordshire short breaks for children with disabilities programme for 2015/16 is available via the following link:

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/8059666/master\\_shortbreaks\\_programme\\_2015-16v1.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/8059666/master_shortbreaks_programme_2015-16v1.pdf)

The council is investing £190,000 a year in a new specialist family-based overnight respite care service, which from January 2016, is expected to deliver six respite carer households providing 1,200 nights per year for 16 local families.

The council is also working with other local providers of alternative services that offer short breaks and overnight respite services. This is part of an ongoing commissioning project to review and plan services that meet local families' needs.

Alternatively, eligible families can choose to take a direct payment and organise their own support package that meets their individual needs. Further information regarding this is available to families via their social worker, and from the direct payments page on the council's website which can be viewed via the following link:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-services/direct-payments-for-social-care>

#### **Q5 How will respite be delivered?**

- A. This will depend on the needs of the individual child and family, working with their social worker. Further details regarding this are available on the attached FAQs document.

#### **Q6 When you refer to 'parents and carers were involved' please be specific and give me the numbers and relate this to the care needs**

- A. As stated above, there has not been a consultation specifically undertaken by the council on the closure of the 1 Ledbury Road service. The attached FAQs provides more detail on the consultation that has taken place with families on services for children and young people with disabilities and what they require from a short breaks and respite service.

#### **A public consultation was held in 2010 with children and families, including those using 1 Ledbury Road**

Details of the engagement that was undertaken, the numbers of parents / carers who responded to the consultation and the range of different care needs that this encompassed are included in the document 'Review of services for children and young people with disabilities' which can be viewed via the links provided in the attached FAQs document.

**During 2012/13, a large joint commissioning exercise was undertaken by the council and the Primary Care Trust (subsequently replaced by HCCG). Herefordshire Parent Carer Voice, a parent / carer group which is supported by Herefordshire Carers Support (HCS) was heavily involved in this work and we know that a significant proportion of parents using 1 Ledbury Road were registered with HCS at that time.**

Herefordshire Council does not hold details of the total numbers of parent / carers who are registered with Herefordshire Parent Carer Voice or Herefordshire Carers Support. However I am advised that, at the time of the consultation, 31 out of 44 families at 1 Ledbury Road were registered with HCS. These families had a range of different care needs.

#### **The engagement work included:**

**An engagement exercise with parents and carers, which involved a number of workshops, meetings and individual interviews which asked parents what they wanted from a short break and respite service. This included letters sent to all parents with children using 1 Ledbury Road in the summer of 2012, asking for their**

**views. There were also 12 individual interviews with families using 1 Ledbury Road, again asking for their views on reshaping services and providing more choice in a short breaks service.**

Herefordshire Council does not hold a record of the number of parents / carers attending workshops and meetings.

During the summer of 2012, 44 families were using 1 Ledbury Road and all were sent letters asking for their views.

Details of the individual care needs of the families using Ledbury Road and more specifically the 12 families who took part in individual interviews are withheld under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Those taking part in the consultation are from a small pool of people and it would, in our view, be possible to identify the individual families and children concerned if details of their care needs were provided to you. This would be a breach of the first principle of the Data Protection Act 1998, and the information is therefore withheld under S40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please take this letter as a refusal notice under S17 of the Act for this part of your request.

**A focus group of parents from HCS was involved in considering the responses to this tendering exercise and a parent representative also sat on the tender evaluation panel.**

The focus group was set up by HCS from their membership, and Herefordshire Council does not hold a record of the numbers of parents involved or the care needs of those families taking part.

**In December 2013, meetings were held with parents to explain the new services being put in place. The parents of children using 1 Ledbury Road were invited to these sessions and we know that a number did attend.**

Herefordshire Council does not hold a record of the number of parents who attended these meetings.

**Throughout the end of 2014 and into 2015, there has been more focused engagement, specifically with parents of children who use 1 Ledbury Road**

**Individually assessing the needs of children and their families and considering with them what services could meet their needs. This information led to the council developing and agreeing a business case for a specialist family-based overnight respite service and working with other providers to develop alternative services.**

**All parents receiving a letter in January 2015, which explained that the next phase of the short breaks commissioning work was starting and would continue over the next 18 months.**

**All parents receiving a letter in April 2015 from the council and WVT asking them for views on proposed changes to the sessions run at 1 Ledbury Road.**

During this period, 34 families were using 1 Ledbury Road and all received letters and were individually assessed.

Details of the individual care needs of the families using Ledbury Road are withheld under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Herefordshire has a relatively small population, and as a small pool of families were involved in this process, it would, in our

view, be possible to identify the individual families and children concerned if details of their care needs were provided to you. This would be a breach of the first principle of the Data Protection Act 1998, and the information is therefore withheld under S40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please take this letter as a refusal notice under S17 of the Act for this part of your request.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request or you would like a review of the response provided, further information regarding our review procedure is available in the 'Internal Review Procedure for EIR and FOI requests' which is published on Herefordshire Council's website via the following link:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/government-citizens-and-rights/data-protection-and-freedom-of-information/data-protection>

Further information is also available from the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 745 [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Yours faithfully

**CLAIRE JACOBS**

**INFORMATION ACCESS OFFICER**