

Meeting notes

1 Ledbury Road parents meeting

23 October 2015 - Plough Lane

Where we are with 1 Ledbury Road

Vanessa Lewis – We had to close completely recently but then reopened on a reduced number of nights. WVT confirmed that there are three units and that they have consolidated into two; they were already planning to reduce to one house and a bungalow. WVT has reviewed the rotas more and at that time had to reduce by one night. Two staff have been recruited and WVT is hoping to extend the number of days and nights in December, although the provision will stay at two units. Vanessa confirmed that it would be open up to the end of March 2016.

Contractual arrangements past March 2016

Jo Davidson confirmed that we are currently awaiting core assessments to be completed; once these have been completed, it is envisaged that we would have any contractual arrangements discussed and concluded by mid-December. If it is possible to conclude earlier then this would happen.

Richard Aird – With regards to contractual arrangements; for current families a decision was taken some time ago to stop new referrals to 1 Ledbury Road. Need to consider short term and long term; this will enable consideration to be given to what arrangements are in place for the future.

Paul Gilks – Really important for CCG and council to have a solution to meet the need to have overnight residential respite care available. As there have been no referrals to 1 Ledbury Road what are we (the council) going to do to ensure that we have residential respite care?

Parents received the rotas for November earlier this week, this is not sustainable from our point of view. **Paul Gilks** confirmed that he had challenged Chris Baird recently to reconsider residential respite at 1 Ledbury Road, what are we going to do to ensure that the service continues?

Jamie Miles - Confirmed that core assessments have been completed in the last 12 months, yet nothing has been done to ensure that children have the service that they are entitled to. Core assessments have been ignored.

Jo Davidson – This is about the long term to meet long term needs, changing needs and resources. Part of the reason for changing is to ensure the breadth of provision. Resources have to be shifted around, one of the big challenges that we have all got is the resources we have in terms of funding. We need to ensure that they are used in the most effective way. Herefordshire Council and CCG have got responsibilities to meet in respect of short breaks to have a range of provision. We need to have a more resilient setup to ensure that we are able to provide a service. In addition, we need to secure a more resilient approach to ensure that we have contingencies in place to help the families. The council has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to meet needs.

Paul Gilks - In the Children's Act it states that where a service is in existence then this would have been referred to. The list sent to parents following the meeting in September; one of the parents has contacted them all and confirmed they would not be able to provide the respite to meet their needs.

Jo Davidson – The council and CCG have to make all reasonable efforts to meet assessed needs. We have been talking to you as representatives of 1 Ledbury Road. We also have a responsibility to develop the market and we know that there are a range of different short breaks that are required.

Melissa Boyle - How have we got to the situation where two CWD children – single parent has lost all respite? Why is there not a provision for the 18 year old boy to move onto and an 11year old girl with no service?

Jamie Miles - Mentioned that the bungalow that had been shut included the sensory room. Vanessa Lewis apologised for the changes that they have had to make, but confirmed that there was still access to the sensory room. Rotas were late and there are large void periods as it was not deemed safe according to the clinical arrangements. Once the new staff have been trained and with an additional night they would be back up to a full week's arrangement. WVT doesn't know how much respite is in core assessments at this stage.

Another parent has been in contact with one of the parent representatives and informed them that their child has become extremely violent towards them.

WVT - What we are trying to provide is a service for a number of children. The point that is being made is that children at Ledbury Road are extremely vulnerable. There is an impact on the children and the challenge in July 2015 to the council was that they needed to do something.

Paul Gilks asked bottom line what are you actually going to do? Who are the other providers going to be? Nothing has been done. May be saying that the cliff edge has been removed.

Vanessa Lewis confirmed that WVT has come to the council and CCG, but no response from either.

Paul Gilks - No e-mails received directly back from those that have been e-mailed; doesn't want the e-mails to come from someone else / short breaks.

Richard Aird – Two staff nurses have been recruited which is good news and it is good news that WVT has been looking at who will fund and staff the unit. If we didn't have staff nurses would the service be able to be run by carers? Would there be an issue with registration?

It is encouraging that we are moving forward.

WVT has said that it would be prepared to lease the bungalows, this was the costing that was circulated to parents. The number of children that require overnight respite care is unknown until the core assessments have been completed.

The cost and the money that is available hasn't changed. A straight continuation of 1 Ledbury Road is not financially viable. Neither the CCG nor the council has the financial resources available.

There have been changes in leadership in the various organisations, there hasn't been a lack of development in the market. There are two foster carers going through assessment at the

moment and there are others that would be willing to change to support children with disabilities.

What is changing? Direct payments and personal budgets and contracting will be on a framework agreement; there would then be an allocation of funding against that and we are looking at how this can be organised.

We will be following the tendering rules to secure services going forward to put services on the list of providers. Once people reach 18 they go through a different financial assessment.

Jo Davidson explained about the new service manager, Graham Puckering whose role is to develop a 0-25 service for children with disabilities and will be starting in early November; he will be in contact with the parents.

She also confirmed that as soon as we can be clear with regards to CCG, council and WVT, we will be. In the contractual paperwork; there is potential within the contract to extend up to March 2017, but we still have to have the financial resources available to provide that.

Paul Gilks - Has the procurement process been re-instigated? You have had since 2013 to get this sorted. Had you actually consulted the parents in 2013, we wouldn't be where we are today. Exactly what you are going to do? The wellbeing of the children is being affected.

With regards to the rotas, **Vanessa Lewis** confirmed that WVT would be happy for the parents to sit round the table to have input into the structure of the rotas – more work needs to be done on these to provide as full a service as possible.

Pragmatic solutions

WVT will be spending more than the current budget.

Jo Davidson - Are the parents still looking at running 1 Ledbury Road? It was confirmed that the parents would need to have some indication of the level of interest in the provision. We are not aware across the county who would require this type of provision.

Paul Gilks confirmed that in Herefordshire, we seem to have a larger population of children with disabilities. The parents have had conversations with a vast range of people. Any consortium will need to have a period of time to put something in place.

Paul Gilks was asking the council, CCG and WVT if they would make a commitment rapidly that provides another 12 months and people to keep 1 Ledbury Road running as staff will not want to go and work there if the facility is going to close.

Communications

The parents present confirmed that e-mails had been sent and not answered by the person that the e-mail had been addressed.

Jo Davidson confirmed that there have been lots of e-mails to different people and lots of different expectations and that the responses were now being collated and only one response was being sent from one central e-mail address.

Paul Gilks – We don't want an e-mail from the short breaks e-mail address, we want a response from the person that we send the e-mail to.

Jo Davidson confirmed that the reason we are putting a communications framework in place is to ensure that we are able to provide a response within a reasonable timescale. In the same way as the parents group are organising themselves, we are putting processes in place to ensure that we are able to co-ordinate our activities and responses.

Paul Gilks confirmed that his recent e-mail was not stating that they wanted to limit their choices to 1 Ledbury Road.

Jo Davidson confirmed that we are trying to stabilise 1 Ledbury Road and the other provisions as well.

Vanessa Lewis confirmed that WVT can only provide what it can provide.

Paul Gilks - The bottom line is that parents have not been engaged with and confirmed that the focal point should be that all communications are to go through himself. Furthermore, he stated that you have nothing in place to offer, core assessments are being completed and they have to go where the service exists, you have to ensure that 1 Ledbury Road is suitable and available.

Councillor Lester confirmed that the council and CCG cannot confirm that there would be a 12 to 18 month extension today, we hope to be able to move this forward by the time we next meet. In August our intention was confirmed as working towards getting 1 Ledbury Road a 12 to 18 months continuation subject to the assessed needs, regulatory framework and staffing being available.

Next meeting suggested as 25 November 2015.