

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 28 MARCH 2023**

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: **MARK NUTI, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS AND HEALTH**
NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND WASTE

LEAD OFFICER: **LIZ BRUCE, JOINT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND INTEGRATED COMMISSIONING**
LEIGH WHITEHOUSE, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR RESOURCES

SUBJECT: **RE-MODELLING THE STRATEGIC SHORT BREAKS OFFER FOR ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND/OR AUTISM**

ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA: **TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITY/ENABLING A GREENER FUTURE/ EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES**

Purpose of the Report:

In November 2020 Cabinet endorsed the delivery approach for the Accommodation with Care and Support Strategy for individuals with learning disabilities and/or autism¹. Furthermore, Cabinet approved the allocation of sites that would in-principle be developed for Supported Independent Living and Short Breaks, as well as, referencing the need to re-model the strategic Short Breaks offer².

Surrey County Council's (the Council) Short Breaks offer needs modernising to provide modern fit for purpose overnight accommodation for residents. Through modernising and remodelling our strategy we will provide a more diverse offer of support in the community, ensure equity of access for individuals with eligible needs and employ a strengths-based approach that promotes the independence of our residents.

Short Breaks gives people with learning disabilities and/or autism an opportunity to share experiences and socialise in their community outside of their family home, whilst enabling their family carer, to maintain their own health and well-being by providing them with a break from their caring responsibilities.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves the proposal to re-model the Council's Strategic Short Breaks offer by working with the market to ensure a more diverse Short Breaks offer.

¹ [Part 1 - Supported Independent Living Report- Cabinet.pdf \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Supported Independent Living Programme - Batch 1 Development Part 1 report.pdf \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

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2. Grants approval to proceed with the design and construction of Short Breaks accommodation at two identified sites in Reigate and Banstead and Woking within the capital funding envelope set out in Part 2 of this paper. The sites are as follows:
 - Lakers, Denton Way, Goldsworth Park, Woking, GU21 3LG
 - The Squirrels, The Horseshoe, Banstead, SM7 2BQ
 3. Confirms approval to procure a developer to construct the new Short Breaks accommodation and delegates approval to award the contract, (including any associated changes related to the contract, once it has been awarded to ensure that it continues to meet the objectives related to this report) and manage the developments within the agreed capital funding envelope to:
 - The Director of Land and Property in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Property and Waste.
 - The Joint Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Integrated Commissioning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health.

Reason for Recommendations:

To promote Carers wellbeing and enable them to have a break from their caring responsibility, but still be able to support the individual to live at home.

To enable residents with learning disabilities and/or autism who meet the Council's eligibility criteria for Adult Social Care (ASC) funding to have their need for overnight Short Breaks met in a modern, fit for purpose setting with all the necessary facilities and amenities.

To promote the independence of Surrey residents with learning disabilities and/or autism and enable them to remain in their family homes and connected to their local community.

To ensure that together with our partners we develop a range of options that improve outcomes and support for individuals and their families when offering a short break.

To make an essential contribution towards the Council's strategic objective to tackle health inequality, in line with the 2030 Community Vision for Surrey.

Executive Summary:

1. The Council has historically mainly offered a traditional bed-based approach to providing a short break with a lack of alternative offers. As part of our consultation with carers it was identified that carers are willing to consider alternatives to bed based Short Breaks.
2. Currently there are 7 registered bed based Short Breaks services in Surrey, providing 42 beds per night but only five services are operational. The two that are non-operational are Arundel House, which has closed as the fabric of building is no longer suitable to meet the assessed needs of individuals requiring a short break; and Rodney House, closed because the site is de-registering and being re-purposed to provide Supported Independent Living through the Accommodation with Care and Support Strategy.
3. The remaining five sites provide access to 33 beds per night across Surrey. But this bed capacity is often reduced to cater for the increasingly complex needs of individuals, particularly those with behaviour that challenges, to ensure that the needs of the individuals' accessing services at any one time can be met safely by staff. Appendix 1 presents the locations of the current Short Breaks services in Surrey.

4. During the COVID-19 pandemic most of our Short Breaks services closed or operated a reduced service. Initially, family carers appeared to cope, but the extended duration of the COVID-19 pandemic saw families in need of support and more open to accepting alternative non-bed based Short Breaks support. This offer included:
 - Crossroads Care Surrey, a carers support Charity, extended its sitting services for carers of individuals in transition.
 - Spot purchasing more home based care for people with learning disabilities to give carers a break within the home.
 - Outreach services to provide a few hours support to individuals outside the family home.
 - Surrey Choices, the Council’s Local Authority Trading Company focused primarily on the delivery of community support services to people with a learning disability and/or autism setting up a flexi break service to provide day support at weekends.

5. Positive feedback from families about the alternative services offered during the pandemic has resulted in working with the market to develop a cost-effective offer that is sufficiently diverse to respond to differing needs and reflects the level of the different models of provision required.

6. This has also involved working with colleagues in the Council’s Land and Property team to identify appropriate sites for the development of modern, fit-for-purpose, future-proofed over-night Short Breaks facilities; and working with practitioners to understand the new menu of Short Breaks options.

7. It is anticipated that as family carers age the request for Short Breaks will increase. There are currently 1,345 individuals living with family carers. The table below shows the breakdown of individuals by age living with family carers.

Age individual	Under 18	18-19	20-30	31-39	40- 49	50+	Grand Total
Living with family carers	108	161	643	224	105	104	1,345

8. Targeted work has started with all families, focussing on those supporting individuals who are aged 50 and over. It is vital plans are in place for the care and support of their son or daughter. ASC practitioners are engaging families and helping them understand that there are a range of alternatives for Short Breaks in addition to overnight stays. These include:
 - Home based care support, which is provided in the home to allow the carer to take time out. This may or may not include personal care and may include short trips out from the home with the cared for person.
 - Outreach support (including via a Personal Assistant for example) to take the person with care/support needs out to an activity or to learn a skill. This provides the carer with a break and the person they care for continues to develop their skills and take part in activities they enjoy.
 - Day care opportunities and extended evenings where the person being cared for spends time in an appropriate setting to allow the carer to have a break.
 - A flexi-break during the day on Saturday or Sundays.
 - A flexi-break overnight with friends (rather than a break in a residential setting).
 - Shared Lives scheme offers over-night support where the person being cared lives in Shared Lives carer’s family household for a short while.

9. All these options can be purchased using a Direct Payment paid by the Council based on a person's assessed Care Act eligible needs.
10. Alongside the alternatives set out in paragraph 8, above, we have reviewed the current bed-based services. The review found significant issues with the current Short Breaks Service, including:
- The current geographical locations favour the east of the county, four services are based in East/Mid Surrey.
 - Currently there is limited provision in the North/West area of Surrey.
 - The environment of the service at one site is not fit for purpose in the delivery of Short Breaks to the people needing support and is currently not in use.
 - The built environment for much of the service is not fit for purpose and is not suitable to support the future needs of individuals with behaviour that challenge and/or who have complex needs.
 - Currently less than 8% of the potentially eligible population access provision.
 - The choice of bed based Short Breaks is not determined by the needs of the individual, but instead, reflects longstanding historic arrangements.

The Development of Short Breaks on Council owned land

11. The proposed strategic remodelling of the Short Breaks Service includes the development and construction of Short Break accommodation at two identified sites in Surrey on Council owned land. Details of the proposed capital investment by SCC in these sites is commercially sensitive and therefore set out Part 2 of this paper. These sites will provide a total of 16 bed-based places in Reigate & Banstead and Woking. When this accommodation is operational it will be for the sole use of Surrey residents with eligible care and support needs.

Batch 1 Schemes - location	District & Borough	Planned opening	No. of Short Breaks units
Lakers, Denton Way, Goldsworth Park, Woking, GU21 3LG	Woking	Jan 2025	8
The Squirrels, The Horseshoe, Banstead, SM7 2BQ	Reigate & Banstead	April 2026	8
		TOTAL	16

12. To provide these schemes with the required specialist provisions, together with outstanding amenities including private gardens and spaces, a higher-than-average specialist accommodation standard has been applied. This is because typical accommodation standards for general needs housing do not meet the requirements for individuals with specialist needs. The Short Breaks bedrooms and communal areas have been designed to cater for the needs of individuals using the service, and enable the following:
- All bedrooms and guest communal spaces are designed to accommodate the increased activity zones needed by users with learning disabilities and autism and their care workers and to meet the functionality requirements of wheelchair users.
 - Interior and exterior spaces are all designed to Building Regulations Approved Document M4(3) wheelchair user standards which means a wheelchair user can

stay in the accommodation and will have the ability to use any outdoor space, parking, and communal facilities.

13. The specialist requirements, as listed below, were coproduced with commissioners and occupational therapists and are future-proofed. The Design Brief Document sets out the approach to deliver fit for purpose buildings meeting user requirements. The Design Brief Document was coproduced with representatives from ASC Service and the designs have been approved by the Accommodation with Care and Support Programme Board.

a. **Amenity Space:** Following best practice guidance (for the design of spaces for people with autism) specific interventions and adaptations to the landscape scheme have been made. This includes variations in the level of sensory stimulation, the creation of distinct zones some of which are deliberately designed to encourage social interaction, and others which are more private in nature. Providing a physical sense of movement was something encouraged in the feedback received from the Occupational Therapists, so the provision of a trampoline for recreational use for each site has been proposed. Areas which provide shelter from the elements are also embedded into the design, and particular treatments for specific boundaries have also been considered.

b. **Sustainability:** The Council has committed to achieving Net-Zero Carbon for Council Operations by 2030, with Surrey County to achieve Net-Zero Carbon by 2050. There is not a countywide strategy in place which defines sustainability targets to be achieved or specific approaches and measures that should be considered. The Short Breaks design is intended to deliver energy efficient buildings which will have low operating costs. The Consultant team are working to incorporate designs for super-insulated facilities with highly efficient electrical and mechanical services. As such, for the current Short Breaks schemes to meet the Council's sustainability aims, Net-Zero target and address fuel poverty, the following principles are proposed:

- Fabric first approach
- All electric buildings
- Low carbon, low-cost heating solutions
- Maximise onsite renewable energy generation
- Enhanced control of energy use
- Measure the embodied carbon
- Sustainable use of water resources
- Resource efficiency
- Encourage active transport and low/zero carbon motorised mobility
- Biodiversity and ecology
- Healthy living places
- Smart Building

14. The specialist requirements are such that the construction costs will not be like that of a typical house build. The construction costs and financial modelling for each Short Breaks scheme are commercially sensitive and set out in the Part 2 report.

15. The Short Breaks service is business critical to ASC. It will provide essential support to residents in areas of the county that lack sufficient provision and prevent carer breakdown which would lead to more expensive care and support options having to be sourced.

16. By developing the new accommodation Surrey will have 42 beds available for Short Breaks across the county in addition to the alternative options described above.

Consultation:

17. Following an extensive consultation exercise Carers have told us that being able to have a break from caring is very important to them. It is vital to provide a range of carer breaks. The value of having a break has become even more evident as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which reduced access to many care and support services.
18. Carers viewed the proposals to develop new Short Breaks services as an opportunity to ensure staff are qualified and skilled to deliver services to individuals with more complex needs and services are safe and of high quality.
19. Carers support offering a range of options that enables their loved one to develop their skills and engage in their communities, thus having a positive experience.
20. ASC continues to engage, seek feedback, and update stakeholders via the Learning Disability Partnership Board, the Autism Partnership Board, the Valuing People Groups, the Autism Reference Group, and the market.
21. Local Surrey County Council ward and District and Borough Councillors have been engaged on our plans for delivering Short Breaks at these sites.
22. Surrey Choices, who currently provide Short Breaks at the Squirrels Banstead, have been involved in discussions on the proposed plans to modernise the Banstead site and improvement of facilities available. The plan will be that the Council will develop the Woking site first so that Surrey Choices will be able to operate from this site whilst the Banstead site is developed.

Risk Management and Implications:

23. Through the development of new Short Breaks accommodation that is fit for purpose, ASC are able to increase the bed capacity, alongside the additional community options, which will enable Carers to have a break and continue to support their individual. Without these resources there will be an increase in Carer breakdown which will result in an additional cost to ASC as long-term placements will be required for individuals.
24. There is a risk that if the new Short Breaks sites are not effectively utilised, service delivery and financial benefits expected for the new accommodation may not be realised. ASC will mitigate this through working closely with residents with support needs and their Carers to identify individuals who can be most effectively supported in the new Short Breaks accommodation.
25. Delivery of the new buildings is subject to planning consent; the programme includes an allowance of 6 months to obtain planning approval via Regulation 3 but if approval is delayed the start date for each development will be affected.

Financial and Value for Money Implications:

26. The development of the proposed new Short Breaks accommodation will involve SCC committing capital expenditure to fund the cost of developing the sites. There will also be costs associated with the operating the sites and maintaining them over their lifecycle. This information is commercially sensitive and so is set out in Part 2 of this paper.

27. The development of the proposed two new Short Breaks sites will have two main financial benefits.
28. Firstly, it is expected that the two new sites will lead to a reduction in the cost per night across all the Short Breaks services purchased by ASC. Currently ASC funds 4,659 nights of Short Breaks support per annum at a total cost of £1,429k so an average cost per night of £306.67. It is anticipated that the development of the new Short Breaks accommodation will enable the average cost per night to be reduced to £237.22. This factors in both the estimated cost per night of care at the proposed new Short Breaks facilities and reduced cost of existing Short Breaks settings by enabling people with more moderate needs to receive care in the new settings as opposed to higher cost settings currently. This is expected to result in a cashable saving of £324k per annum that will help to mitigate a proportion of the financing and operating costs of the sites as set out in Part 2 of this paper.
29. Secondly, additional ASC care package expenditure will be avoided by preventing breakdown of current caring arrangements through the creation of additional Short Breaks capacity. The creation of the two new proposed Short Breaks sites is estimated to add capacity of 3,953 nights of shorts breaks care in Surrey. Based on 28 average number of nights of care per client, that would enable 141 more people with a learning disability and/or autism to receive Short Breaks care per annum. As set out in this paper, Short Breaks services give respite to families who care for family members who have a learning disability and/or autism throughout the rest of the year.
30. Without the increased Short Breaks capacity that these new sites would offer, it is anticipated that over time these family caring arrangements would break down at which point the Council would need to fund support for individuals in permanent supported living accommodation at an additional estimated care package cost of almost £38,000 per annum.
31. Profiling potential carer breakdown due to insufficiency of Short Breaks accommodation if these two new sites were not to be developed, it is estimated that £305m of additional ASC care package costs could be avoided over the 60-year life of the new accommodation equivalent to £5.1m per year on average. Although this will not fund the cost of developing the new accommodation because these benefits are avoiding future increased costs rather than reducing current care package expenditure, the scale of cost avoidance clearly demonstrates the positive financial impact of developing the new accommodation alongside the benefits for residents.

Section 151 Officer Commentary:

32. Although significant progress has been made to improve the Council's financial position, the financial environment remains challenging. The UK is experiencing the highest levels of inflation for decades, putting significant pressure on the cost of delivering our services. Coupled with continued increasing demand and fixed Government funding this requires an increased focus on financial management to ensure we can continue to deliver services within available funding. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2022/23 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial

sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.

33. In this context the Section 151 Officer recognises the importance of developing new Short Breaks accommodation to both meet service demand, deliver cashable savings to the Council and avoid very significant additional care package costs that would otherwise likely be incurred without the new sites. The Section 151 Officer can confirm that the cost of developing this accommodation is already included in the Council's approved capital programme. The Part 2 report has more information about the development costs and capital funding requirement.
34. To achieve the expected financial benefits, it will clearly be important to ensure the new sites are effectively utilised alongside existing Short Breaks accommodation to maximise usage across all the Short Breaks services ASC can commission, recognising residents have a wide range of support needs. The Section 151 Officer therefore recommends this is carefully planned in the run up to the new accommodation becoming operational and then closely monitored from that point to enable commissioning plans to be adjusted accordingly so the sites are used to best effect and value for money.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer:

35. This paper sets out proposals to re-model the Short Breaks offer provided by the Council to facilitate fit for purpose options for those with learning disabilities and/or autism.
36. Approval is sought by Cabinet to endorse capital funding of £12.24m which will enable the design and construction of two Short Breaks sites identified in Reigate & Banstead and Woking.
37. The Council is empowered by legislation to undertake a range of activities, including (but not limited to) extensive works/ development of land for the benefit or improvement of its area. As site specific information is made available tailored legal advice can be provided to ensure that the Council meets its legal obligations.
38. Cabinet is under fiduciary duties to residents in utilising public monies. In considering this business case Cabinet Members will want to satisfy themselves that the recommendations represent an appropriate use of the Council's resources.
39. When procuring a developer to develop the identified sites, the relevant legislation applicable at the time related to the procurement will be followed, with specific legal advice given to ensure that the regulations are met.

Equalities and Diversity:

40. An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is included as Appendix 2. This considers the particular implications of Short Breaks for people with one or more protected characteristics.
41. Positive impacts identified at this stage centre on:
- Residents' improved experience and outcomes
 - Accommodation that is fit for purpose
 - Accommodation that is fit for the future
 - Increased choice and control for individuals (and their carers/families).
 - Developing additional opportunities to overnight short breaks.
 - Support Carers to plan for the future needs of their cared for individuals.

Other Implications:

42. The potential implications for the following Council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	The actions in the strategy can positively impact in terms of safeguarding, ensuring that vulnerable adults have access to appropriate care and support services designed around them.
Environmental sustainability	<p>The surveys listed below have been completed and guided the design of the schemes. No impacts to the environment were identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acoustic / noise • Air quality • Arboriculture / tree survey • Archaeology desk study • Bat presence and hibernation surveys • Biodiversity desktop and net gain assessment • CCTV below ground drainage survey • Daylight assessment • Geo-environmental desktop study • Topographical survey • Underground utilities survey
Compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience	<p>Consistent with the Council's Net-Zero Carbon target, the buildings will be designed to be operationally net-zero and future-proofed to be adapted and resilient to the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>The key features of an operationally net-zero carbon building include: high thermal efficiency, a low carbon heating system, and maximising the generation and use of on-site renewable energy.</p> <p>The sites are designed to LETI guidelines and will have the potential to achieve net-zero carbon based on the energy and carbon assessment investigations by the Council's Sustainability Consultant, in line with the Council's Greener Future objectives.</p>

	Materials and construction emissions will be reduced where feasible. The next design stages will address the Green Agenda within the budget allowance for the project and will design solutions to address the agenda, e.g.: Sustainable Drainage Systems, opportunities for rainwater harvesting, irrigation solutions, biodiversity net gain, landscape boundary treatments etc.
Public Health	The actions in the strategy can positively impact on public health outcomes, including reductions in social isolation and/or loneliness; increased wellbeing for residents participating in community opportunities and activities.

What Happens Next:

43. Should Cabinet agree the recommendations the next steps and timescales are:
- Commence public engagement on design proposals for Lakers and Squirrels in April 2023.
 - Submit Planning Application for Short Breaks at Lakers and Squirrels in May 2023.
 - A Short Breaks dashboard will be developed to enable ASC to improve equitable access to and delivery of services by January 2024.

Report Author:

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Consulted:

People who currently use the services and their families/carers

Surrey Choices

Locally elected representatives associated with the sites.

Officers from local authorities associated with the sites.

Local health partners associated with the sites.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Registered providers of Short Breaks services in Surrey

Appendix 2 – Short Breaks Equalities Impact Assessment

Part 2 report

Sources/background papers:

Transformation of accommodation based care and support for working age adults: delivering Supported Independent Living options [Part 1 - Supported Independent Living Report-Cabinet.pdf \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

Supported Independent Living programme – Batch 1 development [Supported Independent Living Programme - Batch 1 Development Part 1 report.pdf \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

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