

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Re-open the former Hillside Rehabilitation Centre as a residential care home for adults to relieve additional NHS pressures & reduced capacity in the care market caused by flooding in October 2019 & February 2020.
Date of decision:	28th February 2020
Decision maker:	Chief Executive
Authority for delegated decision:	In accordance with 3.7.9 of the Council's constitution the Chief Executive can take an emergency decision where they believe that there is a risk. All necessary decisions in cases of emergency. For the purposes of this scheme, 'emergency' shall mean any situation in which the chief executive believes that there is a risk of damage to property, a threat to the health or wellbeing of an individual, or that the interests of the council may be compromised. 'All necessary decisions' includes decisions to take such action as is necessary within the law to protect life, health, safety, the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the county, its communities and individuals living, working or visiting, and to preserve property belonging to the council or others;
Ward:	Redhill Ward
Consultation:	Members, Group leaders and NHS colleagues have been consulted in informal meetings and by email and are in support of the decision to urgently reopen Hillside.
Decision made:	<p>Urgently refurbish and re-open the former Hillside Rehabilitation Centre as a residential care home providing 22 beds, with work to begin immediately. The facility will then remain open, run by Herefordshire Council, as a residential care home.</p> <p>The fabric and structure of the building is sound and no major building work is required to return it to use as quickly as possible, but the facility will need to be refurbished and re-equipped, and staff and services mobilised at a cost estimated to not exceed £1,000,000. It is anticipated that the emergency costs can be recovered using Bellwin, any other costs that can't be managed within the current adults revenue budgets, will be funded using the finance resilience reserve.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council, in partnership with Hoople, will recruit staff and manage the facility as an in-house service at an estimated cost of £600 per bed per week. These costs will be funded from Adults and Communities revenue budgets for residential placements, as the clients who occupy beds at Hillside would, if Hillside were not open, be placed in other care homes funded from revenue budgets.</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>Herefordshire Council is designated as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Herefordshire. This means we have a number of duties and responsibilities in relation to managing flood risk across the county.</p> <p>A major flooding event occurred in Herefordshire during the weekend of 15th-16th February 2020, with river levels on the River Wye and River Lugg exceeding the highest levels on record. A major incident was declared by Herefordshire Council on Saturday 16th February.</p> <p>As a consequence, Herefordshire experienced significant surface water and river flooding, with a large number of properties impacted during February 2020 (many more than flooded in October 2019).</p> <p>Flooding in February 2020 has compounded problems caused by flooding in October 2019 and has removed from operation two care homes in Herefordshire,</p>

	<p>reducing capacity for residential care by 1. beds. Other care homes in the county and around our borders remain vulnerable to flooding, and care homes in neighbouring councils have also flooded. This has put severe pressure on the health and care system and compromised the council's ability to find affordable residential care for vulnerable adults. This emergency action will allow the creation of additional capacity in which to place exclusively Herefordshire residents who require residential care .</p> <p>The council owns the freehold building currently known as Hillside Rehabilitation Centre situated on Pentwyn Avenue, Hereford HR2 7LB. Until 2018 the centre was operated by Wye Valley NHS Trust (WVT) as a community hospital and currently has 22 en-suite bedrooms with three day rooms, courtyards and onsite parking, however WVT have ceased delivering services from Hillside and the building currently stands empty providing opportunity to swiftly bring the facility back into use.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>The provision of these rules does not prevent the council acting through the Chief Executive and director(s) from incurring expenditure which is essential to meet any immediate needs created by a sudden emergency or situation relating to Section 138 of the Local Government Act 1972. This is subject to the action being reported as soon as practicable to the appropriate authority.</p> <p>A budget of up to £1,000,000 is estimated as required to fund the refurbishment and mobilisation costs. The ongoing revenue costs of placements will be met from current budgets for residential care.</p> <p>In 2003 the building was refurbished at a cost of £1,800,000 by the Herefordshire NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT), with a subsequent charge on the building requiring that it continue to be used as a rehabilitation unit; this charge is now held by the Department of Health, with NHS England acting on their behalf.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the original agreement with the PCT, a risk exists that those historic refurbishment costs of £1,800,000 could be passed to the council upon change of use of the facility. NHS England has stated an intention to levy the charge should the facility have a change of use, including to becoming a care home. Officers have been working with NHS England to mitigate the risk and reduce the charge on the property. In recent weeks NHS England has indicated a willingness to renegotiate the lease and reduce the charge on the property. If a charge becomes payable in the future it will be funded using the Council's litigation reserve.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Do not reopen the facility . Adults requiring social care funded residential care will be placed in care home beds where they are available, possibly out of area, and probably at increased cost due to constrained supply. This option has been rejected because placements to residential homes are already difficult to make due to lack of available beds. New local supply, quickly available, is unlikely to be developed by the market.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date

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