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1. Executive summary
This respite and short breaks review follows on from the previous review undertaken in 2012 (see Annex I) and takes into account the recent co-production work and resulting report Walk in our Shoes (see Annex II).

This updated report brings together information from the stakeholder engagement conducted November 2016 to February 2017 as well as current financial information.

This strategic review demonstrates that Croydon’s respite and short breaks service for adults with a learning disability (currently based at a property known as Heatherway in South Croydon) has limitations and gives a less quality experience in terms of meeting the needs of stakeholders as a single option for short breaks and respite. Issues include: poor accessibility around the building; reduced availability due to alternating high and moderate need weeks; lack of availability during the day Monday to Friday; and the continued low usage of the service which means it delivers poor value for money.

The recommendation is that the Council goes out to consultation to gather wider views on the respite and short breaks service.

2. Background
Croydon’s respite and short breaks service for adults with a learning disability is currently based at a property known as Heatherway in South Croydon. The service provides overnight stays for adults with learning disabilities on a planned, or when possible, emergency basis. The building can currently accommodate a maximum of five people per night (depending on the assessed need of the individual).

The allocation of nights is based on individual assessment of need (for each person and their carer) carried out by social workers from the adults disabilities team.

The council runs the service and owns the building. It is regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The last CQC inspection was February 2017 and rated the service good overall in all five areas: safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led.

Over the last thirty years there has been significant progress which has enabled people with a learning disability to lead more fulfilling lives as citizens in the community, with the same rights as anyone else. With the introduction of personalisation and personal budgets, people now have more choice and control over how they are supported to live their lives and be more independent. There has been some good progress in Croydon. People have started to have greater choice and control by having their own tenancies, gaining employment and being part of their wider community. However, we are aware there is more to do. We are keen to build upon our work to date and continue to support more people to gain greater independence.
We want to ensure that progress to lead healthier lives continues, while ensuring people are a part of their communities rather than having separate and isolated services.

Demand for services is increasing, people are living longer with more complex needs, expectations are changing and this is against a backdrop of significant reductions in public sector budgets. We know we cannot do what we have always done as the funding no longer exists to allow this. We need to challenge traditional service models, create new solutions, use community resources and develop services that will provide for people now and for future generations. We recognise that for some people change may be difficult and we will support people and work together to find local solutions that can meet individual outcomes.

These combined factors have led to the decision to undertake a comprehensive review to determine the best model for local service provision in the future.

3. Purpose of this report
The purpose of this report is to illustrate findings and agree options to consult on resulting from the strategic review of respite and short break services (including Heatherway) and also to inform the future commissioning.

4. Aims of review
The aims of the review were to understand:

- Benefits of existing (respite & short breaks service) for adults with learning disabilities and their families/carers
- Quality and suitability of the service
- Cost of the service
- Identify systems and process issues
- Alternative short break and respite services
- Evaluate options for current provision to meet future needs

5. Context and rationale
This review has taken place in the context of a rapidly changing national and local strategic context. There is a clear need and priority for a range of respite/short break options to support family carers of people with learning disabilities. The council is aware that currently the respite and short break service does not provide the breadth of service it could.
Some strategic developments signal the need to change some aspects of how and what respite and short break services the council commissions for people with learning disabilities. There are also significant financial challenges to the way we do things now, whilst others represent significant opportunities for increased choice and independence.

**National and Local Policy Drivers**

The following are highlights from relevant documents sourced as part of the information gathering to inform this review:

**5.1 The Care Act (2014)**

There are several requirements of the Care Act (2014) which are of particular relevance to this review. These include:

*Promoting diversity and quality in provision of services*

(1) A local authority must promote the efficient and effective operation of a market in services for meeting care and support needs with a view to ensuring that any person in its area wishing to access services in the market:

   - (a) has a variety of providers to choose from who (taken together) provide a variety of services;
   - (b) has a variety of high quality services to choose from;
   - (c) Has sufficient information to make an informed decision about how to meet the needs in question.

(2) In performing that duty, a local authority must have regard to the following matters in particular:

   - (a) the need to ensure that the authority has, and makes available, information about the providers of services for meeting care and support needs and the types of services they provide;
   - (b) the need to ensure that it is aware of current and likely future demand for such services and to consider how providers might meet that demand; … (*c – f*)

(3) In having regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (2) (b), a local authority must also have regard to the need to ensure that sufficient services are available for meeting the needs for care and support of adults in its area and the needs for support of carers in its area.

(4) In arranging for the provision by persons other than it of services for meeting care and support needs, a local authority must have regard to the importance of promoting the well-being of adults in its area with needs for care and support and the well-being of carers in its area.

… (*5 and 6*)
(7) “Services for meeting care and support needs” means —
   (a) services for meeting adults’ needs for care and support, and
   (b) services for meeting carers’ needs for support
… (*8)

* where we have put … and a number or letter shows where we have not quoted from
the Care Act in full. The entire section can be found here:

5.2 Putting People First Policy

Indicating commitment to the personalisation of adult social care services in England
the shared ambition is to put people first, through a radical reform of public services.
The intention is that people will be able to live their own lives as they wish; confident
that services are of high quality, are safe and promote their own individual needs for
independence, well-being, and dignity.
Through “personalisation – the needs and preferences of citizens” – the vision is that
“the state should empower citizens to shape their own lives and the services they
receive.” This vision should apply equally to anyone using care and support, whether
services are arranged and paid for by the local authority or the individual arranges
and funds their own support independently.

The vision for public services is that they should enable people to feel empowered
and supported in meeting their aspirations. Everyone who requires care and support
to help them live their lives, no matter how this is arranged or funded, should
experience as much independence, choice and control as possible through that
support. The key areas of focus to help achieve this are:

- Better information
- Better quality
- More focus on prevention
- More personalised care and support

More detail can be found here
5.3  **Putting People First – Croydon**

Putting People First stated that the key elements relevant to this review of a personalised system should be:

- Council leadership and partnership working to create a high quality care system that is fair, accessible and responsive.
- Agreed and shared outcomes.

It describes a range of features that will be central to this system wide transformation relevant to this review:

- Person-centred planning and self-directed support becoming mainstreamed, with personal budgets for everyone eligible for publicly-funded care and support and more people opting to arrange their own support with direct payments.

5.4  **Valuing People Now**

The revised national strategy for people with learning disabilities was published in January 2009. One of its top priorities is to promote independence for people with learning disabilities. The Paradigm, on behalf of the Valuing People Support Team wrote a guide to Short Breaks in 2007 which emphasised the need to support family carers and people with learning disabilities to have short breaks which work for them. Short breaks help to support family carers and help people living with their families have better lives. Short breaks help family carers to carry on caring. They help people with learning disabilities to have better lives, so money spent on good quality, regular short breaks is a good investment. The White Paper “Our Health, Our Care, Our Say” directs organisations to provide better prevention services, earlier intervention and more support for people with long-term support needs and their family carers.

Paradigm’s report included a section regarding Croydon’s short break and demonstrated that Croydon’s carers and people with a learning disability wanted flexibility and choice using short breaks money in a different way, being able to pick and mix from a range of options. What was envisioned in 2016 to improve the lives of both carers and people with a disability in 2007 will be possible if the recommendations from this review are implemented.

5.5  **Making it real – Think local Act Personal (TLAP)**

This is a sector wide commitment to moving forward with personalisation and community-based support to transform adult social care through personalisation and community based support. “Making it real” is a framework built around “I” statements expressing what people want to see and experience; and what they would expect to find if personalisation is really working well. The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and key national providers groups have endorsed Making it Real.
A web based process has been developed to enable organisations to publicly declare their commitment to Making It Real. This also helps them to co-produce action plans with people who use services, carers etc. so that the delivery of personalisation in social care can be improved.

5.6 **Autism Act (2009) - Croydon’s Adult Autism Strategy**

The aim of this strategy is to help shape Croydon’s priorities in delivering improved services and outcomes for people with autism in the borough; and promote innovative local ideas, services or projects which can help people in their communities through new models of care.

5.7 **Croydon’s Community Strategy 2010-2015 Fairness and Equality Commission**

Sets out how Croydon Council together with its local partners from the public, private and third sector will help tackle Croydon’s biggest and most complex priorities. It seeks to achieve more by harnessing the combined resources and activities of all partners in Croydon around a shared set of priorities. The Community Strategy builds on a strong track record of partnership working and front-line integration in Croydon that has achieved much better outcomes, higher customer satisfactions and reduced costs. The council’s strong commitment to partnership working with the public, business and voluntary sector means that there is now closer alignment between the Council’s agenda and that of our partners in service design and delivery.

5.8 **Croydon Strategic Partnership**

Within the context of increases in demand for local authority and health services: (more babies with a learning disability surviving; young people with a learning disability demanding independence; people with a learning disability living longer; and older people with a learning disability having higher rates of dementia related support needs), Croydon’s Strategic Partnership highlights a commitment to enabling people needing care to live independently for as long as possible and to ensure fair access to services tailored to individual needs.

5.9 **Croydon’s Market Position Statement**

We will work with our provider market to ensure we have a joined up approach in care, support and health related services which will focus on achieving the outcomes that matter to individuals, their goals and aspirations and enabling people to live independent, healthy lives in the community for as long as possible. People should be fully involved in decision making and able to exercise choice and control about their care and support in all settings.
5.10 The Transformation of Adult Social Care TRASC – “A life not a care plan”

The key aims of this programme are to:

- Empower individuals and communities to be better able to take more responsibility for themselves and each other.
- Enable residents to make informed choices about how to meet their needs, and how to live healthy lives, through the provision of high quality information, advice and guidance.
- Provide people with the best opportunity to maximise their life chances and have a good quality of life through the provision of high quality universal services, including an excellent learning offer.
- Empower people to resolve issues early through the provision of joined up assessment and support.
- Enable children and adults to maximise their independence and ensure they are safe from harm through the provision of high quality specialist services.

This means - Fairness, equity, independence and people exercising choice and control at the heart of adult social care in Croydon to make the best use of the adult social care resources we have.

The TRASC Commitment Statement:

- Universal support – ‘something for everyone’
- Enabling people to make their own decisions safely
- Support for those “who need a little bit more”
- Valuing carers
- Working in partnership with health professionals and providers

One of the key outcomes of the TRASC programme is to enable service users to have more choice and control through the increased use of personal budgets and direct payments. This means that service users who wish to purchase respite breaks using their direct payments will be offered a range of services and personalised options.

6. Where are we now?

This service review has shown that there is little or no choice offered to service users and their families on where and when to take their respite and short breaks.

The council looked at a variety of areas across the service, including usage, staffing of the respite and short break service, costs and also spoke to people who used the service both carers/families and adults with learning disabilities.

There are examples of some families who have used or are going to use City Breaks and a Direct Payment for example one who has stayed with a relative in London to access exhibitions and specialist activities and another who has opted for a stay in Norfolk with a carer who will have a shared lives type of stay with activities.
However, the majority of people use Croydon’s respite and short breaks service for adults with a learning disability which is currently based at a property known as Heatherway in South Croydon.

### 6.1 Heatherway Occupancy

The use of Heatherway is currently running at below full capacity, particularly for people with moderate learning disabilities, making it a more expensive option as the building continues to operate and staff are employed to support it. The occupancy rate of Heatherway for 2016/17 for high need placements is 74% and moderate need placements is 61%. The fact the unit is staffed during the day when service users are not there also impacts on its value for money.

Approximately two thirds of people using the service have moderate learning disabilities and do not require care home support. It is likely their needs (and carers needs) could be met through a wider choice of respite and short break services.

Of the 43 people who use Heatherway, 16 have high support needs and 8 require waking nights.

### 6.2 Current Staffing

The current staffing complement for the service based at Heatherway is:

- 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) manager
- 6 FTE support staff (Including - 3 seniors, One permanent senior left this year)
- 2 agency staff

Council staff are contracted to sleep-in only and additional agency cover for waking nights is purchased whenever waking nights support are needed.

### 6.3 Service and building issues

There is one bedroom on the ground floor, a large lounge, large kitchen and accessible bathroom. On the first floor there are four further bedrooms, a large office and a further toilet and bathroom and staff sleeping-in room. Due to the layout and design of the building the service is unable to accommodate anyone in a large wheelchair or anyone who requires hoisting or who needs bathing facilities.

The service cannot be classed as true respite for the carer or a short break for the person as it remains closed during the week days. Unless a service user has prearranged week day activities in place (with transport if needed) they are required to return home to their family during the day. If they do have pre-arranged weekday activities they continue to attend them and then their ‘short break’ is only different for the night time element. This can be disruptive for the service user and a lesser quality experience and does not provide a meaningful break for the family carer/s.
The service offers only alternate weeks to those with high support needs and those with moderate needs. During the high support weeks between three service users per night are looked after and during the moderate support weeks up to five people per night can be accommodated.

This review found that the current service is not meeting the borough’s need for emergency respite care for two reasons. Firstly, Heatherway is only able to provide emergency respite care for those who are known by the centre; for those not known, arrangements elsewhere have to be made. Secondly, due to the alternate weeks of care provided (high needs one week, moderate needs the next) sometimes there is not the right level of care being provided, again resulting in arrangements needing to be made elsewhere.

6.4 Budget
The council budget for Heatherway for 2016/17 was £372,000, with an over spend of £69,801, a total of £441,801. This overspend is mostly in staffing costs, £121,828 on agency staff and £24,329 on overtime. It is worth taking into consideration there was a member of staff on long term sickness during this period. The occupancy rate of Heatherway for 2016/17 for high need placements is 74% and moderate need placements is 61%.

Based on utilisation and actual budget spend the nightly cost of the service reduced during 16/17 because of an increase in occupancy of the number of nights and service users.
## Heatherway costs and occupancy table 2016/17

### Number of nights allocated to services users
- **High need provision**: 574 nights
- **Moderate need provision**: 880 nights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Available nights (at Heatherway)</th>
<th>Cost assuming full occupancy</th>
<th>Actual nights taken up</th>
<th>Actual cost per night</th>
<th>Overall occupancy rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heatherway high need provision</strong> (i)</td>
<td>546 nights</td>
<td>(ii) £405 per night</td>
<td>399 nights</td>
<td>(v) £554</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent providers for high needs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(iii) These costs range from £170 - £455 per night. This makes Heatherway £235 per night more expensive than the lowest cost provider and £50 per night less expensive than the highest cost provider.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heatherway moderate need provision</strong> (i)</td>
<td>910 nights</td>
<td>(ii) £242 per night</td>
<td>552 nights</td>
<td>(v) £400</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent providers for moderate needs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(iv) These costs range from £100 - £165 per night. This makes Heatherway £142 more expensive than the highest cost provider and £77 more expensive than the lowest cost provider.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i) based on 3 high needs bed x 7 nights per week x 26 weeks a year = 546 days
5 moderate needs beds x 7 nights per week x 26 weeks a year = 910 days
Closed over Christmas 5 beds x 2 nights = (10 days)
Total = 1446 days

(ii) Budget for 16/17 £441,801 divided by two to allow for 26 weeks high/moderate needs, then £220,900 divided by the number of nights available

(iii) Information from 8 independent providers for high needs with nights ranging from £455 to £170 a night.

(iv) Information from 5 independent providers for moderate needs with nights ranging from £100 to £165 a night.

(v) Budget for 16/17 £441,801 divided by two to allow for 26 weeks high/moderate needs, then £220,900 divided by the number of nights (depending on need) taken up to give an approx. cost per night.
7. Findings from the review

Below are the findings relating to stakeholders, the wider policy context is covered in point 2 above and details on the current service provision in point 6.

Stakeholders were engaged to get their views on the respite and short breaks service as part of this strategic review. We used a variety of approaches including written feedback forms; telephone engagement appointments; and 1-1 visits, see Annex III.

The stakeholder feedback has shown the wish for more flexible short breaks and respite provision than those that can be offered at Heatherway. Most stakeholders expressed a general fondness for Heatherway, especially the staff. However people said that as a respite/short break model it lacked choice and the service was inflexible.

Quotes from stakeholders:
‘The facilities need to be remodelled and expanded to meet future challenges and hopefully some more nights’
‘Perhaps Heatherway being open during the day as x can only go if x attends a resource centre’

‘Heatherway is adult services but some of the users are young adults. They don’t have much there for young adults to do i.e. computer games, computer, football, music’

For full detail on this engagement see Annex III.

Of those using Heatherway, the majority of people using the service have moderate learning disabilities and do not require care home support. It is likely their needs (and carers needs) could be better met through a wider choice of respite and short break services.

Comparing the market there are services which offer 24 hour person-centred short breaks, some of which are both age and gender appropriate and culturally diverse, whilst others offer themed and/or developmental breaks e.g. cooking and life skills.

Alternatives to the traditional residential based short break are already being taken up by people with learning disabilities. Some examples of these are as follows:
Person A goes on an adapted barge for a holiday each year and takes his family and a paid carer with him. His primary carer has said this enables him to be part of a family holiday where he is safe and secure with people he knows and trusts and yet able to experience a totally different lifestyle away from what is usually a very structured routine. He receives constant attention from people who are able to focus on him and not caught up in their everyday lives.

Person B went on an outward bound type holiday with a specialist provider and experienced many challenges which life in Croydon could not fulfil. He came home a confident young man, very proud of his achievements and ready to try new things wanting to become more independent.

Person C is supported at home for regular weekends throughout the year. This has enabled his family to go away for a break whilst he remains in the comfort of his own home surrounded by all his vital equipment and kept to his usual routine. This has been of benefit to all, the primary carer is less stressed as no equipment or medication can be forgotten and the family member is no longer difficult to manage on their return. He remains calm and contented in his own environment and routine. He also enjoys a swim or outing each Saturday afternoon.

The flexibility and personalised approach offered by short break menu opportunities fits well with Croydon’s aspirations to provide quality care. This approach has the added benefit of promoting and encouraging a greater take up of personal budgets and direct payments including an opportunity to trial pooled budgets.

Families would have the choice from a range of options to suit individual needs, resulting in bespoke short break packages of care. The proposed short break menu is a fluid option which can accommodate the changing needs of both the service user and their carer/s, making it a complete system which will work well into the future. Such a system has successfully been used by previous Independent Living Fund award recipients over recent years. Unlike a building with a fixed number of bedrooms and staff, people who have had an assessment can access a variety of different things which will help make respite and short breaks a more flexible model accommodate more people.

However, additional market engagement and stimulation will need to take place to further develop and expand the market place in Croydon, especially if people are choosing to stay close to home.

8. Recommendations
From the review, it is recommended that the council puts in place a choice based model of respite services to better meet the needs of service users and their carers. This model should be developed to ensure fair access to services which are: person centred, flexible, available 24hrs a day seven days a week 365 days a year, offers the facility for emergency stays, enables people to connect with peers, offers opportunity for achievement through learning and enjoyment that includes regular fun activities. The new model will require a robust culture and system change to move away from what has been a no choice single option of Heatherway.
The person centred choice based flexible model of short breaks and respite services

Below are examples of what this might mean based on what we’ve listened to and recent discussions during individual assessments/reviews:

From what people have told us, we think the respite and short breaks service should provide individual packages that allow people to select from a range of respite/short break services that work for them. These will be more flexible, person-centred and should better meet the needs of younger and older adults with a learning disability and their family carers for example:

A combined package of:
- Respite/short break options such as several weekends across the year
- Plus several day sessions at a respite care home (which also provides seamless day care)
- Plus a one week supported holiday, including activities the person wants and which could give the chance to link up with friends and go on holiday together
- In depth contingency planning with families in order to provide a service in case of emergencies which might include care worker coming into the home, shared lives or a residential placement.

Support worker coming into the person’s home and taking over from the carer for an agreed number of hours. This type of service can also be available overnight or for longer periods.

Two types of supported holidays
- Supported holiday with a specialist provider or
- Supported holiday with family or friends using mainstream holiday providers including cottages, villas etc.

Day opportunities provided on a flexible basis to meet people and carers general needs or leisure, educational or sporting activities.

Shared Lives, (previously called adult placement) is an established and successful way of helping adults who need support to live in our community and can offer a person with a learning disability the option to have a short break in a family home.

Planned overnight stays and breaks with a private service provider.
The options listed above could be funded by using direct payments. Having a direct payment with support can give control and flexibility to maximise independence and choice in meeting care needs. However, if families/carers were concerned about not being able to manage a direct payment budget Croydon Council could help.

9. Risks
The stakeholder engagement indicated that many parents and carers had concerns about the vulnerability of their relatives and the risk involved in any change to the model of respite and short break services.

If a decision is made to close Heatherway as a respite and short break centre for adults with learning difficulties, support officers will work with families to help them plan future respite services helping to mitigate and identified risks.

Directly providing a service which is not meeting all of the needs of all service users and their families at a high unit cost above market rates could lead to reasonable criticism of the council. The alternative options of providing a more person centred, flexible choice based model of respite and short breaks which meets people’s needs more widely and enables more people to access services at no greater costs helps to mitigate against this.

10. Equalities Impact Assessment
The respite and short breaks service is open to all eligible service users with a learning disability, including those with autism, and additional physical disabilities. However due to the gender and ethnic makeup of the staff not everyone is able to have their cultural and religious needs met by the current offer at Heatherway.

People find services hard to access and Heatherway due to building limitations, is unable to provide for those people who also have high physical and/or health need and/or significant behaviour that challenges. The changes which will be consulted on from the strategic review will improve support for people with a learning disability and their family carers, making it possible to have choice and flexibility in their short break service by selecting from a menu of options which gives a range of alternatives to meet their individual needs.

The proposed change relates to a service area where there are already local equality indicators.

It relates to two of the equality and inclusion priorities in the Council’s Equality and Inclusion policy an opportunity to fulfil their potential Individual choice and control to improve life chances and outcomes.
Any proposed change will open up opportunities for all eligible people with a learning disability and their carers making it possible to create a bespoke short break service to meet their individual needs which is individualised and person centred. The proposed change is likely to help the Council in advancing equality for all eligible service users and their family carers.

Carers and people with a learning disability themselves may find any change difficult to adjust to and for some people we may need to consider further reasonable adjustments. A person centred review and a carers assessment where needed will manage and mitigate any negative impact of the change for individuals. Once a final decision is made on the future of the service, a full equalities impact assessment will be finalised to ensure all impacts on current and future service users are realised and mitigated.

11. Next steps and options for consultation

The council is going out to consultation from 3 July until 13 August 2017 on the following options:

Option One: Provide improved, more personalised respite and short break services. The Heatherway building will no longer be used for the respite and short breaks service but will be used to provide supported living for adults with a learning disability.

From what people have told us, we think the respite and short breaks service should provide individual packages that allow people to select from a range of respite/short break services that work for them. These will be more flexible, person-centred and should better meet the needs of younger and older adults with a learning disability and their family carers for example:

A combined package of:
- Respite/short break options such as several weekends across the year
- Plus several day sessions at a respite care home (which also provides seamless day care)
- Plus a one week supported holiday, including activities the person wants and which could give the chance to link up with friends and go on holiday together
- In depth contingency planning with families in order to provide a service in case of emergencies which might include care worker coming into the home, shared lives or a residential placement.
Support worker coming into the person’s home and taking over from the carer for an agreed number of hours. This type of service can also be available overnight or for longer periods.

i. Two types of supported holidays
   - Supported holiday with a specialist provider or
   - Supported holiday with family or friends using mainstream holiday providers including cottages, villas etc.

Day opportunities provided on a flexible basis to meet people and carers general needs or leisure, educational or sporting activities.

Shared Lives, (previously called adult placement) is an established and successful way of helping adults who need support to live in our community and can offer a person with a learning disability the option to have a short break in a family home.

ii. Planned overnight stays and breaks with a private service provider.

Croydon is introducing ‘My support broker’, a personalised service to support parents and carers to plan, source and manage the right support solutions for them and their family. Under this option, Croydon would be able to support the planning of respite and short breaks in a way to suit the person with learning disabilities and their family/carers.

*Reusing the Heatherway building*

Under this option, Croydon Council would continue to use the Heatherway building but it will be used to provide supported living for adults with a learning disability.

This would provide much needed shared accommodation with support staff giving the opportunity for adults with a learning disability who wish to live away from their family and be as independent as possible. In comparison to similar schemes across other boroughs, the council would gain an income from rents of approximately £70,000 - £80,000 per annum. This money would be used for council services.

**Option Two: Provide improved, more personalised respite and short break services.** The Heatherway building will no longer be used by the respite and short break service and the building will be considered for future use by the council.
A similar proposal to the one suggested above but rather than reusing the Heatherway building for people with learning disabilities, the property would be considered for future use by the council.

**Option Three: Improved, more personalised respite and short break services by investment in the Heatherway building and remodelling of the respite and short breaks service.**

The engagement with people with learning disabilities and families and carers have identified where Heatherway could be improved. However, it will be a costly and lengthy process and the building will be closed during this time.

If this option were chosen the Council would need to identify the timescale needed to make these changes.

**Option Four: Your suggestions for alternatives for respite and short break services for adults with learning difficulties**

Bearing in mind all the reasons for this consultation, we want to hear from you if you have any suggestions for alternatives on how best to provide the respite and short break services.

**Option we consider not viable**

To leave the respite and short breaks service as it is not a viable option because:

- Two thirds of people using the service do not require care home support at the level currently provided at Heatherway.
- The service is currently poor value for money.

Stakeholder feedback highlights that the service doesn’t meet all of service user needs e.g. limited accessibility and facilities for younger service users.

**Annex I – 2012 – short breaks/respite review**

Re-provision of Short Breaks Service for Adults with Learning Disabilities can be found on [www.croydon.gov.uk/respitereview](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/respitereview)

**Annex II – Walk in our shoes**

Walk in our Shoes can be found on [www.croydon.gov.uk/respitereview](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/respitereview)
**Annex III**

Respite and Short Breaks Service Engagement Work
October 2016 to February 2017

**Stakeholder engagement methodology synopsis and evaluation**

Croydon’s respite and short breaks service for adults with a learning disability is currently based at a property known as Heatherway in South Croydon.

Stakeholder engagement underpins the wider review of the future of Respite and Short Break Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and was carried out between November 2016 and February 2017, as part of the regular commissioning cycle.

This stakeholder feedback on Heatherway, from families and their relatives, forms a key addition to it.

**Key stakeholders engaged with:**

- People who use Heatherway
- Parents and carers
- Croydon Mencap
- Senior Joint Commissioning Manager and team – Learning Disabilities Croydon Council
- Croydon Council’s Care Managers Learning Disability Team Adult Social Care and All-Age Disability
- Croydon Council’s Transitions team
- The experienced social workers undertaking the review of the service users
- Croydon Council’s Direct Payments team
- Croydon Council’s Heatherway staff and management

**Findings**

*Feedback from adults with learning disabilities answering the Easy Read version of the Heatherway survey*

**Approach**

The review officer (a Council staff member) and Croydon Council’s Learning Disability commissioning officers met many of the people who use the service at their respective day centres supported by centre staff.

- One to one sessions were arranged for people who were not able to participate in a group setting.
• Three of the people who use the service wanted to participate with the support of their carer.

24 adults with learning disabilities participated in the survey.

The following questions were asked of 24 adults with learning disabilities. Below are the most common responses:

Q.1 Have you stayed at Heatherway for a short break? (24 people answered)

1. Yes (23 people)
2. No (1 person)

Q.2 Do you like going to Heatherway? (23 people answered, 1 person didn’t answer)

1. Yes (19 people)
2. No (3 people)

Q.3 What things are good about Heatherway? (22 people answered, often saying more than one thing. 2 people didn’t answer)

1. Going out (mini bus, pub, pub lunch, bowling, shopping, walks, seaside, cinema, river bus outing on the Thames) (13 people)
2. Staff (10 people)
3. Food/drinks (10 people)
4. My room (8 people)
5. Activities at Heatherway [Basketball in the garden, helping with cooking, walks, TV/cartoons] (7 people)
6. Nice people (4 people)
7. Seeing friends (4 people)
8. Never stayed/No/Can’t remember (3 people)
9. Personal care (2 people)

Q.4 What things are NOT good about Heatherway? (18 people answered, often saying more than one thing. 6 people didn’t answer)

1. It’s all good, I’d change nothing, stay the same (4 people)
2. Bedtime at 10pm, I can’t stay up late (4 people)
3. I want to go out more (football, wrestling) (2 people)
4. Boring outings (McDonalds, pub) (2 people)
5. No computers or tablets (2 people)

Q.5 Have you had short breaks not at Heatherway?  
(21 people answered, often saying more than one thing. 3 didn’t answer)

1. Yes, with family, with family and friends 7  
2. No 11  
3. Don’t think so, don’t know 5

Q.6 Have you been given any choices for a short break?  
(18 people answered, 6 didn’t answer)

1. Yes 2  
2. No 16

Q.7 What things are important to you when you go on a short break?  
(21 people answered, often saying more than one thing. 6 didn’t answer)

1. Going out – pub, restaurants, disco, day at the seaside, walking, theme park, cinema, park, bowling, cycling, going to Brighton (14 people)  
2. Shopping, clothes and other (5 people)  
3. Watching TV (5 people)  
4. Using computers (3 people)  
5. Giving my Mum space, not having to worry about me, break for my Mum (3 people)  
6. Being with friends, being with friends my age (5 people)  
7. These comments were mentioned by two people:  
   Food, music, nice bedroom

Q.8 Is there anything else you would like to say?  
(12 people answered, often saying more than one thing. 12 didn’t answer)

1. Positive comments - Keep Heatherway with the staff, it is good we have fun with staff and friends, I would like things not to change, I like cinema and beach, I like Heatherway  
2. Negative comments - no, don’t like it there - they give me the wrong food, everyone is older and only watches TV, uncomfortable talking to staff, don’t know
Parent and Carer Feedback from Heatherway survey

Approach

- On 16th November 2016, 44 parents/carers were written to acknowledging that they had felt uninvolved in the review of Heatherway and Croydon Council should have involved them from the start. Croydon then asked for parents/carers to join in this engagement and give individual feedback about the service at Heatherway.

- A variety of approaches were used to gather feedback: written feedback forms; telephone engagement appointments; and 1-1 visits. At the parents and carers request, staff shared notes of the discussions following meetings/phone appointments.

Just over half the parents/carers (23 people) participated in the survey, most of those were happy with the staff and service at Heatherway and didn’t want any change. They said it provides a safe environment where their relative is looked after and enjoys going, they meet friends and can be independent from their family, with friendly and helpful staff.

Many would like the service to offer longer breaks (currently a two week break isn’t possible because of the high and moderate need alternative week structure in place), and to be open during the day, because, for relatives without day centre attendance, carers had to collect them each weekday morning.

13 carers had not been offered any alternative to Heatherway and as a result had never been elsewhere. This highlighted that carers were very worried about being left with no respite and concerned about their relative being upset and struggling to adapt to change.

The following questions were asked of parents/carers.

Q.1 How many times have you used Heatherway since January 2016?

This question wasn’t as clear as it might have been and was answered differently by the 21 people who responded.

In order to reflect usage accurately, the figures below are for the full financial year 16/17 split according to high/moderate need.

High need nights 399
Moderate need nights 552
Q.2 What are the four things most important to you as a carer in a respite or short break service? (23 people answered, most of them giving four reasons)

The most important things for parents/carers were:

1. Being safe and confident in the level of care (19 people)
2. Family member happy staying there (18 people)
3. To get a break from caring (14 people)
4. Family member has an opportunity to meet friends/peers (13 people)

Other responses included:
5. Day trips (4 people)
6. Supporting personal hygiene is important (3 people)
7. Independence (2 people)
8. Local (2 people)

Q.3 Have you used any other respite services? (21 people answered)

1. No (13 people)
2. Yes (8 people)

Q.4 Why do you use Heatherway? (22 people answered, often saying more than one thing)

1. Son/daughter enjoys it (10 people)
2. Not offered anything else (8 people)
3. Good staff (7 people)
4. It gave carers a break (4 people)
5. No transport was required (3 people)
6. Son/daughter does not like change (3 people)
7. Outings were good (2 people)

Q.5 What aspects of Heatherway would you want to keep? (21 people answered, often saying more than one thing)

1. Staff (9 people)
2. Keep everything as it is as it meets their son/daughter’s requirements (8 people)
3. Entertainment/ outings (2 people)
4. Short break facility (2 people)
5. Peer support and friendship (2 people)
Q.6 What aspects of Heatherway would you want to change?  
(22 people answered, often saying more than one thing)

1. Do not want to change anything (8 people)  
2. Remodel service to meet future challenges and more nights. Currently it’s only like a B&B, carer cannot go away for a full week at a time due to day time restrictions, it’s inflexible and doesn’t meet carers needs, old fashioned and needs updating (5 people)  
3. Be open during the day (4 people)  
4. A larger building (2 people)

Q.7 Have you been offered any alternatives to Heatherway Resource Centre?  
(23 people answered)

1. No (18 people)  
2. Yes (5 people)

Q.8 Is there anything else you would like to say?

There were mixed responses to this question with many underlining what had already been said in answer to the questions above. A further issue for parents/carers was locality, in that they wanted services which are local as most carers did not drive.

One carer took the opportunity at an assessment of her son to provide feedback on Heatherway, Her son has not used Heatherway since May 2014 and the carer states that she stopped using the service because she did not find it to be satisfactory and transport failed to collect her son from a day centre during a stay at Heatherway.

Direct payments were raised by one carer who said they were frustrated by the difficulties in the system, which made the arrangement feel like a burden.

People who use the service indicated in summary that:  
The following is based on the 24 responses received.

Good things raised by carers;
• The overriding importance for people in having short breaks was to be with and do something with peers that was independent from carers. This included outings shopping and activities but just as important was time at the house watching TV and doing everyday things.
• The majority of people who attended Heatherway liked going there.
• The staff were listed as one of the best things about Heatherway
Not such good things raised by carers;
- There weren’t many outings or things to do – people would like to do more including wrestling, football and cinema.
- At the service, they would like to do more too, including playing games and using pcs and tablets.
- The set bedtimes and lights out rules
- Some people felt staff outnumbered the service users
- Some people felt there was no one their age attending
- No emergency placement set up
- Alternative breaks people had experienced were family holidays but most had only experienced Heatherway as a break.

*Internal Council stakeholders indicated in summary:*
Written requests for feedback and engagement were sent to internal stakeholders and the review officer also met with: the staff and manager of the service; Learning Disability Team Adult Social Care and All-Age Disability and the experienced social workers undertaking reviews of the people who use the service
- Service is held in high regard by the people who use it, their parents and carers.
- Staff are well liked and people feel safe.
- It is a familiar service, some people having used the service for a number of years.
- Outings and day trips that are sometimes arranged (picnics, bowling and visits to the pub), are tremendously enjoyed by those people who are able to attend them.
- Some people who use the service are able to see their friends.
- It is very important for young people to be supported to spend time away from their families. It allows services to understand the strengths and needs of each individual out of the family context and helps assess independence skills.

But the service is:
- Not modern in terms of promoting independence and choice.
- Limited by not being open during day time. People have to go to day services or return home to their parents/carers.
- Not geared up to skills teaching and independence.
- Not value for money compared to other respite linked provision
- Does not work towards clear outcomes.
- Limited in terms of access for anyone with a physical disability or mobility needs.
- Used by a small number of people compared to the number of people on its register
- Inflexible in terms of availability and length of stay and so doesn’t meet the needs of some of the parents and carers
- Offers little access in an emergency

**The staff and the manager at Heatherway indicated in summary:**
- They felt Heatherway had lacked investment which had resulted in the service model being out of date and inflexible
- People using the service are split into high and moderate needs and are accommodated on different weeks, this makes the service inflexible for families.
- Staff felt being a CQC registered care home restricted the service, due to the regulated activities.
- Although staff tried to accommodate emergency placements and did this well when they could, it was only with people they already knew and if it was the right high or low need level week for the person
- Although they occasionally supported people during the day on an ad hoc informal basis there were no day activities.
- The service has a planned programme of events in the summer but no events during ordinary weekdays or only low cost or no cost events at the weekends. Staff felt some people want to just come and rest and ‘be there’

**Croydon Mencap**
Written requests for feedback and engagement were sent to internal stakeholders Croydon Mencap and Care managers; Mencap have a good reputation with their members some of whom use the Heather Way service and their parents and carers. Mencap run activities that could potentially be alternatives to the Heatherway service model

**Croydon Mencap indicated in summary:**
- Parents and carers are very scared about change and of being left with nothing - either permanently or for a long period.
- Parents and carers need clear and credible assurances about what will be on offer.
- Alternatives to Heatherway must come costed with easy processes for booking so that carers can manage and plan their own lives.
- Shared Lives for respite was not successful for everyone.
- Longer term contingency planning for carers is crucial, especially for older carers.
- Information and processes for alternatives to Heatherway need to be explicit to everyone including payments and accessing respite.
- Carers need to be reassured that ‘review’ does not necessarily equal ‘closure’ and that alternatives are available.
• Members saying they felt alone with their responsibilities and would like more support.
• Members would like assurances about the Direct Payments hourly rate as they consider it is not enough.

Engagement conclusions
Although currently beds at Heatherway are not fully used, there is some resistance to change as people are struggling to imagine the alternatives and are frightened of losing respite even if they’re not currently using it. Stakeholders want to be part of the development of alternative options and the future of Heatherway. Parents and carers need to be able to see something tangible as an alternative and be able to see what their current allocation of days per year would buy from an alternative menu of options. People are key and the staff are well liked. Service users value the opportunity to meet peers in a supported environment because it means they have a life outside their family.