Executive Summary

It is proposed to commission care services for Highdown Court, a new extra care scheme being developed in Worthing as a partnership between the County Council, Worthing Borough Council, and the housing provider Saxon Weald. A successful bid for grant funding from the Department of Health was made by Saxon Weald to commence the building which is now under construction with an expected opening date of July 2010.

Efficiency savings should be realised by delaying referrals to residential care through supporting people within an extra care scheme. It is intended that 50% of those nominated to the service will have high care needs.

Customers wishing to opt for an individual budget or direct payment will be able to do so.

Recommendations

1. That approval be given to commence a tender process to procure care for an extra care scheme, namely Highdown Court Worthing, for adults over 45 with a Learning Difficulty, other adults above the age of 55 and Older People in order to have services in place for July 2010.

2. To delegate to the Executive Director Adults and Children the letting of a contract for two years with a possible extension for a further two years within the currently planned budgets.

1. Background
1.1 Worthing has no extra care provision. Therefore land was sold by the County Council to Saxon Weald in 2005 to develop the site for Extra Care Housing.

1.2 The support provided within Extra Care recognises and reinforces peoples’ capabilities. Extra Care is a valued form of housing as an alternative to residential care and as an additional choice of care and accommodation options available to older people as their needs increase.

1.3 There is evidence from national organisations that extra care supports people in maintaining their independence, enabling them to remain in the community for longer, in turn reducing the demand for residential placements. Provision of quality, flexible services combined with care workers, housing related support, social facilities and technology can help reduce hospital admissions and reduce delays in hospital discharge whilst providing individuals with greater choice.

1.4 The Extra Care Scheme being established has 54 flats, 31 of which are being funded by the locality Adults’ Services, 4 of which are being funded by the Learning Difficulty service and the remaining 19 being shared-ownership. Tenants referred by the locality will be aged 55 and over and will include:

i. some in residential care who would prefer their own front door;
ii. those who require a care presence over night or such frequent care needs during the day that a domiciliary care package where they are currently living would be cost prohibitive;
iii. those with degenerative conditions, where an extra care scheme would prolong independent living e.g. early stages of dementia, multiple sclerosis
iv. those who are highly vulnerable and at risk (e.g. high levels of anxiety or self-neglect).

Fifty per cent of those nominated to the scheme will have high care needs, twenty five per cent medium and the remaining twenty five per cent low needs.

2. Discussion

2.1 Options considered by officers were a traditional model of Extra Care or a mix of a core service with an element of Self Directed Support. Initially it was proposed to pilot a mix of core service with self directed support, which would have been funded jointly by the Locality and Supporting People, unfortunately the housing provider felt unable to support this model at this time.

2.2 It has been concluded that cost and volume contracts still have a place within extra care schemes. The reasons include:

- an essential feature of the care offered in an extra care scheme is that care can be available on a 24 hour basis with a care worker either sleeping in or on waking night duty according to the needs of the resident. It is difficult to see how a number of care providers delivering care on a spot basis will be able to provide this service economically without a base on site, or be able to respond to emergencies.
- The fact that the contracted agency is based in the scheme around the clock means that they can offer a very flexible service.
Evidence shows that a block contracts brings a consistent and reliable service at a good price in extra care schemes.

2.3 Tenants in the extra care scheme will not be precluded from accessing a personal budget or a direct payment. The contractual arrangement with the provider will take account of a possible further reduction in hours. Many tenants who have a personal budget or a direct payment will probably choose to purchase from the contracted provider based in the scheme.

2.4 The alternative to a cost and volume arrangement would be to purchase under a spot arrangement. These tend to be more expensive as the pricing structure for call-off contracts is not usually a composite rate so would include enhancements for weekends and bank holiday work. As mentioned in 2.2 above there are also issues about how feasible it would be for providers to deliver effective care during the night on a spot basis.

3. **Proposals**

3.1 It is proposed to commence the procurement process to deliver a care service into the Extra Care Scheme, known as Highdown Court Worthing. The contract would be for 2 years with the possibility of an extension for a further 2 years, by 1 year increments.

3.2 This is a new service and core funding will come from the Locality Domiciliary Care Budget, and for the 4 units for use by people with Learning Difficulties the funding will be from the Learning Difficulties pooled budget. There are anticipated cost savings from avoiding placements into residential care and a reduction in cost from some high care packages delivered within a customer’s home.

3.3 A nominations panel involving Worthing Borough Council, Saxon Weald and the locality Adults’ Services will maintain a list of prospective tenants and the Locality Care Commissioning Manager will monitor vacancies and dependency levels within the scheme.

4 **Resource Implications and Value for Money**

4.1 Funding for this contract will be from Southern Locality budget allocation, more specifically the Worthing Homecare Budget and will be within the existing Service Level Agreement for the Worthing Care Commissioning Team. Individuals being referred to the extra care scheme by the County Council will either currently be in receipt of domiciliary care, in their home, or in the case of someone with a Learning Difficulty they may move to the extra care scheme from residential care. The full cost projections are set out in a separate paragraph not available for publication on the grounds that it contains information whose disclosure could compromise the tender process.

4.2 There are indicative cost savings from avoiding placements into residential care and a reduction in cost from some of the high care packages delivered within a customer’s home. The information relating to the projected cost savings are detailed in Table D in the exempt appendix.
4.3 Value for money will be demonstrated through regulatory inspection by the 
Care Quality Commission (CQC), monitoring of services by officers of the 
Council and benchmarking costs against other service providers.

4.4 The majority of people moving into the new scheme will already be receiving 
a package of care and will be, in effect, transferring some of the cost to a 
more efficient scheme.

4.6 Further financial details are available to members of the Council only, on the 
grounds that publication could prejudice the position of the Council when 
seeking tenders for this or similar procurements: Paragraph 9, Schedule 12A 
Local Government Act 1972

5. **Consultation**

5.1 A Highdown Court Extra Care Steering Group and Care and Support Group 
have met regularly since the initial concept of the scheme. The Steering 
group has included representation from Saxon Weald, Worthing District 
Council, PCT, and Adults Services staff. The Care and Support Group has 
included representatives from the Contracts Unit, Supporting People, the 
Adults’ Commissioning Team and Learning Difficulty Commissioning Team.

5.2 Customer Feedback Forums have been facilitated; one specifically 
represented a cross section of potential customers who would be eligible to 
live in the scheme. The second focused on engagement with practioners who 
would be commissioning the service. The consultation covered the design 
and décor of the building, qualitative indicators for customers and catering 
provision.

5.3 The procurement process has been established to include operational staff 
and customer/carer representative in the evaluation if the tenders received 
by the Council.

6. **Risk Management Implications**

6.1 Changes in eligibility for new applicants for Independent Living Fund could 
affect the Learning Difficulty referrals to the service but current thinking is 
that such referrals will not be affected. However there is no long term 
concern should Learning Difficulty opt to not take up these places as the care 
provisions for those 4 units will be funded in the same manner as the other 
31 County Council units.

6.2 The 19 units in private ownership are the financial risk of Saxon Weald.

6.3 Performance Indicators, targets and service standards will be detailed in the 
contract. The Provider will be registered with the Care Quality Commission 
and have a rating of good or excellent

6.4 Southern Locality will designate an Authorised Officer for the purpose of 
regular monitoring and review through a care management review, direct 
consultation with customers and monitoring meetings with the provider.
6.5 Completion of the extra care scheme is expected in July 2010. Should the County not secure a care provider for the scheme, under the nominations agreement WSCC may be responsible for the cost of voids for 35 units and the cost of night cover for the 19 privately owned units.

6.6 To minimise the risk that there may be low periods of demand, the contract will be let as a cost and volume contract. This means there will be a block of hours for a regular guaranteed payment plus an available buffer of hours payable at the tendered rate when required. Due to there being a number of people eligible to move into the scheme having Direct Payments and other needs to meet within their personal budget a lower number of block hours are to be contracted for and a higher number of buffer hours. Lower block contract hours also negate risks of voids. There is an obligation to pay for block hours regardless of whether they are filled, however buffer hours are paid on invoice for any hours of care delivered above the block hours.

6.7 The contract will include a clause referring to Direct Payments and Individual Budgets, whereby the Council retains the right to reduce the volume of guaranteed hours through a review process.

7. Customer Focus Appraisal

A Customer Focus Appraisal has been undertaken and is attached as an Appendix to this report.

8. Crime and Disorder Act Implications

There are no foreseeable implications associated with this proposal.

9. Human Rights Act Implications

The Human Rights of potential customers and those currently in receipt of care or residential services have been taken into account in designing this extra care service.

John Dixon, Executive Director for Adults’ and Children

Sara Weech, Director of Operations Joint Commissioning

Appendices

Exempt Appendix providing information relating to paragraph 4.6

Customer Focus Appraisal

Background Papers

Not applicable

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