

Appendix C – Statement of Consultation

Statement of Consultation

Introduction

This document outlines and highlights the public consultation and engagement activities undertaken so far in regard to the proposed recovery home at Glen Valley Guest House.

Rossendale Borough Council's Statement of Community was used as a guide to inform the programme of consultation and Rossendale Borough Council's Strategic Housing Team has supported the partners throughout the consultation process.

The consultation and engagement strategy the recovery home is responsive to a number of different factors; not least the on-going consultation and property identification that has been undertaken by Calico and Rossendale Borough Council's Strategic Housing Team for the last 12 months; as well the on-going development of the Inspire programme across Rossendale.

The aims of the public consultation and engagement were:

- Consultation should be open and inclusive to all interested parties
- Engagement should be on-going (even after the planning process)

Meetings have been held with a number of statutory organisations, peer agencies as well as initial discussions with the local community via residents and local business (within the vicinity of Glen Valley Guest House) via a drop in session.

Over 60 letters were issued to the local community (businesses and residents) to inform them of an engagement session to discuss the proposals with partners (of which 20 residents/ business owners attended). This was followed up with a more detailed letter with Frequently Asked Questions (based on comments and questions received) to a wider catchment area and displayed on partner websites.

Partners have attended Rossendale Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny meeting as well as being scheduled to speak at Neighbourhood Forums through July about the scheme.

To date there have been three separate press articles, as well as coverage in on-line blogs.

A separate meeting was held with the Police who have agreed to be part of regular monitoring meetings of the partnership. They understood the concerns from residents and businesses about community safety particularly based around the historical association of Brighton House but felt that they had strengthened their policies and procedures since then to deal with those issues robustly. They also felt that, as the residents were abstaining and choosing to recover they were less likely to commit offences. They felt establishing a good relationship with the partners was key to resolving any issues if they did arise.

A number of measures have also been proposed to alleviate concerns from residents and business owners these include:-

- Invitations to a number of residents and businesses to visit the Stockport scheme.
- Establishment of a monitoring group with local residents/ businesses which will include. Police and Lancashire County Council Supporting People so issues can be fed back to the Supporting People Commissioners. The contract is linked to the Supporting People monitoring process.
- Update letter to all residents and an expanded catchment area explaining the scheme with contact details and actions.

Frequently Asked Questions and Responses

Q. Is this a rehab?

A. No, this is not a rehab unit it is a recovery home. Treatment occurs off the premises at the current Rawtenstall site.

Q. What is a recovery home?

A. A recovery home is a supported living home for people who are attending drug and alcohol treatment in the community and have made the decision to live an abstinent life, which is one free from drugs or alcohol.

Q. Why can't the men and women moving to the recovery home stay in their own accommodation?

A. Many of the people who are in recovery and have come through treatment are homeless or live in very poor accommodation. They may also have been living with somebody else who misuses drugs or alcohol before they decided to seek treatment and recover. If they are to move on from treatment to independence and a useful life they need a more stable and supported environment to begin this journey away from anyone who may tempt them to relapse and halt their recovery

Q. Why have you chosen to create this recovery home in Waterfoot?

A. There is a need for this service in Waterfoot as this part of Rossendale and in particular the Whitewell wards has greater alcohol misuse than other parts of Rossendale and Lancashire. Many of the people coming to use the service will be from nearby communities (Waterfoot is central within The Valley) so their recovery will have a positive effect on their families, friends and the community around them.

Q. What kind of people will be coming to live in the recovery home?

A. The recovery home will house up to six adults at a time, both men and women with a minimum age of 21. The home will house people from many different backgrounds, but the common factor is that they have all made the decision to lead a life free from drugs and alcohol, and will be attending treatment at Inspire services up to six times a week.

Q. Will the people in the recovery home be doing anything else apart from attend treatment?

A. Yes they will. Inspire offers a range of support to anyone who comes forward for treatment at their services. Their treatment at Inspire focuses around actually recovering from drug or alcohol treatment rather than remaining 'parked' on drug or alcohol substitutes such as methadone for a long period of time. They will receive training to help them learn to live a useful and stable life in their local communities, moving them away from any previous behaviour. They will be encouraged to give up their time free to volunteer within their local communities, developing new skills and abilities and to become a valued member of society. They will also be attending

training courses at local colleges and in further education so that they can get paid work in the future. They will also attend further support and peer mentor meetings in their own time to help them stay free from drugs and alcohol and to provide them with addition support.

Q. What processes have you put in place to make sure that there is no anti-social behaviour at the recovery home?

A. The people living in the home will have a very full and structured life whilst they are there and will be given some guidelines for living safely and responsibly in the local community.

A care taker will be at the property 24 hours a day, in addition there will be two specialist workers at the home at all times, volunteers to help support those living there as well as the full support of the Inspire service staff based across Lancashire. Tenants will be out of the property during the day and will return to the property in the evening.

Inspire has also worked closely with the local police and community safety officers to make sure that the home will be run without disruption to those living there and the local community.

Q. Did you consult with the local community before setting this home up?

A. The partners have taken on board the previous issues within Waterfoot caused by Children's Homes such as Brighton House and have looked to engage with the community to make them aware of the recovery home and respond to any questions or concerns they may have. The drop-in event and these FAQs are the start of the engagement process. It is proposed that there will be on-going community engagement throughout the lifetime of the scheme.

Q. We have had problems with similar situations in the past, why will this be any different?

A. As this is an abstinence-based recovery home, the people living there have chosen to live in the home and are not being forced to live in the home as was formerly the case with the Children's Homes. This means that they want to make a success of the situation and their main focus is on continuing to recover. They have made the decision to change their lives and live responsibly, respectfully and soberly and are not there to cause trouble.

They will also receive strong and constant support from the staff at Inspire, their peer mentors and other organisations they are working with in the community. Their recovery is good for the community and will encourage other people who they previously misused drug or alcohol alongside to consider going into treatment.

Q. Will the residents be from Rossendale?

A. Primarily the residents will be from Rossendale as the need and demand is within Rossendale. Inspire are looking to establish abstinence homes within each of the five East Lancashire authorities.

Q. What is the typical age range of clients?

A. Typical age range is about 30 – 45. There are some who are younger and older but the scheme will not cater for under 21s as there are other more bespoke schemes operating within the valley.

Q. What about visitors just turning up on the doorstep?

A. As part of the licence agreement the tenants will not be allowed visitors.