

**Health Scrutiny Committee  
15 October 2014**

**Care Quality Commission Inspection  
of Mildenhall Lodge**

**Summary**

1. In October 2012, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet agreed the business case for the transfer of the Council's 16 care homes and 8 community wellbeing centres to Care UK. The plan would provide 10 new purpose-built care homes and 10 community wellbeing centres for the accommodation and support of people with dementia and other complex care needs. Care UK took full operational control of the 16 care homes and 8 community wellbeing centres on 1 December 2012.
2. This report considers what arrangements are in place to ensure the quality of care in these and other care homes in Suffolk, and looks specifically at the issues raised by the recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Mildenhall Lodge, in Suffolk.

**Objective of the Scrutiny**

3. The objective of this item is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider:-
  - a) arrangements for ensuring the quality of care in residential homes;
  - b) in light of the findings from Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Mildenhall Lodge published on 17 September 2014, what steps have been taken by Suffolk County Council and Care UK ensure residents are safeguarded and necessary improvements are being made as quickly as possible.

**Scrutiny Focus**

4. The scope of this scrutiny has been developed to provide the Committee with information to come to a view on the following key questions:
  - a) What are the arrangements for ensuring the quality of care in residential homes?
  - b) What were the findings of the CQC report on Mildenhall Lodge?
  - c) What steps have been taken by Suffolk County Council and Care UK to ensure residents at Mildenhall Lodge are safeguarded and necessary improvements have been implemented?
  - d) What further action is required?

- e) In light of the transfer of the former SCC care homes to Care UK, what assurances are being provided to residents, their relatives and the public that the safety and wellbeing of residents in the homes is a priority?
- 2) Having considered the information, the Committee may wish to:
- a) consider and comment upon the information provided;
  - b) make recommendations to the County Council's Cabinet;
  - c) make recommendations to the Cabinet Member and/or Director of Adult and Community Services;
  - d) make recommendations to Care UK;
  - e) request further information or propose matters for future scrutiny

**Contact Details**

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## Background

### Contract with Care UK

5. In October 2012, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet agreed the business case for the transfer of the Council's 16 care homes and 8 community wellbeing centres, together with their fixtures, fittings and other associated equipment to Care UK.
6. The Cabinet agreed the transfer, together with additional land, to enable the development of new care homes and community wellbeing centres in Suffolk. The plan would provide 10 new purpose-built care homes and 10 community wellbeing centres for the accommodation and support of people with dementia and other complex care needs.
7. The Cabinet report recognised that the Council's existing care homes were becoming increasingly unsuited for the care and support of older people with high dependency needs and more advanced dementia, because of the limitations of the buildings and their design. The buildings would also incur increasing maintenance costs, adding more pressure to the already high cost of the residential care places they provided.
8. On 1 December 2012, Care UK took full operational control of the 16 care homes and 8 community wellbeing centres for older people, and became the new employer of Council employees working in these facilities and who transferred under TUPE regulations. The contract was designed to meet the objectives summarised below:
  - a) Development and investment in new facilities. Care UK will provide 10 new care homes and 10 new community wellbeing centres to replace the existing facilities.
  - b) Increase capacity in specialist care. The new care homes will provide 680 specialist care beds for people living with dementia and other complex care needs.
  - c) Transfer of existing and future liabilities, including maintenance.
  - d) Value for money and price certainty.
  - e) Increased efficiency and cost effectiveness, with new homes operating to better economies of scale.
9. On 26 June 2014, the County Council's Scrutiny Committee considered an item on the progress towards the development of the new residential homes and community wellbeing centres under the contract with Care UK, set in the context of the County Council's overarching strategy to develop a model of social care which supports people to live active and independent lives, and to deliver a new approach across health and social care and with other partners. A copy of the report can be found at: [http://committeeminutes.suffolkcc.gov.uk/searchResult.aspx?qry=c\\_committee~~Scrutiny Committee](http://committeeminutes.suffolkcc.gov.uk/searchResult.aspx?qry=c_committee~~Scrutiny Committee). As part of this scrutiny, the Committee explored arrangements for monitoring the quality of services provided under the contract.
10. In summary, the Committee heard that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has statutory responsibility for regulating registered care home services. The Council also monitors the quality of the services provided under the contract, through visits by the ACS Quality Improvement Team. Quality and contract issues are discussed and resolved at the monthly contract meetings between the Council ACS Contracts Team and Care UK. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are in place within the contract, to ensure that standards are maintained.
11. The Care Quality Commission inspected Mildenhall Lodge on 31 July 2014. The Inspection report was published on 17 September 2014. The CQC spoke with eight people who used the service, three relatives, seven members of staff and the registered manager. They carried out a structured observation and observed staff

providing care and support on all three units. Other records reviewed included staff files and quality and monitoring records. The inspection findings seek to answer the five questions the CQC always ask:- Is the service safe? Is the service effective? Is the service caring? Is the service responsive? Is the service well-led?

12. Full details of the CQC findings are published on the CQC website at: <http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-1465022022/inspection-report/1-14650220222014-09-17>. A summary of the findings are set out in Evidence Set 1 attached.

## **Main Body of Evidence**

The Committee will be provided with a short presentation outlining responsibilities and arrangements for ensuring the quality of care within residential homes.

Evidence Set 1 has been provided by Suffolk County Council's Adult and Community Services in conjunction with Care UK

Invitations have been extended to representatives of the County Council's Adult and Community Services, Care UK and the Care Quality Commission to provide information and take questions from the Committee.

## **Supporting information**

Scrutiny Committee (26 June 2014); Agenda Item 6: ACS strategy and progress towards delivering new residential care homes and community wellbeing centres; Available from: [http://committeeminutes.suffolkcc.gov.uk/searchResult.aspx?qry=c\\_committee~~ScrutinyCommittee](http://committeeminutes.suffolkcc.gov.uk/searchResult.aspx?qry=c_committee~~ScrutinyCommittee).

Care Quality Commission (17 September 2014); Mildenhall Lodge Inspection Report; Available from: <http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-1465022022/inspection-report/1-14650220222014-09-17>