

Social Services Committee  
Wednesday, 13th November, 1974

S.S.C.44/74-75

Management Services Committee  
Thursday, 14th November, 1974

M.S.C.44/74-75 ✓

SHORT STAY HOME FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

1. Currently there is no provision within the children's home resources to accommodate mentally handicapped children. It is estimated that within Lambeth's population there is a potential demand for service from 400 mentally handicapped children and 1000 physically handicapped children.

2. There are two purpose built homes within the Council's capital works programme for this client group but the first will not be available for occupation until 1977 on present forecasts.

3. It is proposed that the current lack of resources be alleviated by re-opening a house at 121 Wickham Road as an interim measure pending the availability of purpose built accommodation. It is anticipated that a number of the children admitted to this proposed home will be suffering dual handicap and certain works of adaptation will be necessary to ensure the safety and mobility of the children within the confines of the home.

3.1. The house most suitably located within the 121 Wickham Road site for this project is the former Training Unit now known as Ivy House. The following works of minor adaptations would be required to fit the building for the proposed use:-

- 3.1.1. Remove or make safe gas fires in rooms to be used as children's bedrooms. (There is solid-fuel central heating).
- 3.1.2. Rewire as necessary and re-position light-switches in some rooms.
- 3.1.3. Install wheelchair ramps between appropriate areas.
- 3.1.4. Restrict opening of some windows.
- 3.1.5. Install grab-rail in bathrooms.
- 3.1.6. Replace sinks with hand-basins as appropriate.
- 3.1.7. Some redecoration.
- 3.1.8. Erect 5' wire mesh fence on south side of land to the rear of the building.

4. The prime function of such a home would be to provide short-term care for up to 16 mentally or mentally and physically handicapped children in such circumstances for example as the parents of a handicapped child being in need of a respite from the difficulties of continuous care for the child. The present private and voluntary homes available for the short-term placement of handicapped children are some distance from Lambeth and as such are not favoured by parents who naturally wish to visit the children. In addition the reorganisation of the Health Service into Regional Health Boards has denied the Council of the use by right of such facilities as Queen Mary's Hospital, Carshalton. The combined effect of these factors emphasises the need for a specialist short-stay home located close to Lambeth which will remedy the depletion in available resources and improve the parent/child contact facilities during the child's residence away from home.

5. The emphasis on short-term care and the difficulties inherent in providing for this special area of need requires a high level of staffing with the inbuilt flexibility for the home to be operated in two groups as circumstances dictate.

5.1. The proposed level of staffing is as follows:-

1 x RCCO 6 Officer-in-charge  
2 x RCCO 4 (one designated as deputy)  
2 x RCCO 3  
6 x RCCO 2  
6 x RCCO 1

100 hours per week domestic and laundry staff  
75 hours per week cooking and kitchen staff.

## 6. Financial Implications

6.1. Initial costs of furniture and equipment are estimated at £1,500 provision for which will need to be made in the 1975/6 estimates.

6.2. Full year salaries are estimated at £33,900, wages at £6,200 and net running costs of £10,050.

6.3. There will however be a saving of £12,150 on placements at private and voluntary homes.

6.4. The cost of adaptations of the premises is estimated at £4,550 provision for which exists within the current estimates.

6.5. Provision has been made in the Community Plan growth proposals for this scheme.

## Social Services Committee

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) That Ivy House be designated for use as a short-stay home for mentally handicapped children with effect from 1st April, 1975, pending the availability of purpose built accommodation.

(2) That the necessary works of adaptation be authorised.

(3) That provision be made in the revenue estimates for 1975/76 for the expenditure of £1,500 for furniture and equipment, and £38,000 for net running costs.

## Management Services Committee

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) That the staffing establishment be agreed.

(2) That provision be made in the revenue estimates for 1975/76 for the expenditure of £1,500 for furniture and equipment, and £38,000 for net running costs.

## For decision