

REPORT TO: Children, Young People & Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 1 June 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Enterprise

SUBJECT: Inglefield Short Break Service

WARD(S) Boroughwide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To provide an update of the current usage and capacity of Inglefield.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

i) PPB to note the information contained within the report.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Inglefield is registered by Ofsted as residential, short break provision for 4 young people, aged 0-18.

3.2 The service was last inspected in November 2014 and for the fifth consecutive key inspection, the provision was deemed to be Outstanding in all areas.

3.3 The service is currently core funded to be operational 5 nights per week.

3.4 In 2012/13, Inglefield experienced a decline in referrals from the Halton area. Halton's short break strategy and the provision of more early help services had been successful in meeting the needs of families for short breaks and these services became the preferred option rather than overnight residential provision. Approximately 300-350 children have short breaks in Halton, with just 20 of these assessed as requiring a residential option.

3.5 However, it was recognised that in order to provide choice and meet the needs of some of the more complex young people, maintaining a high quality local offer for overnight short breaks was important. It was therefore decided that any excess capacity would be offered to young people from other neighbouring authorities, which would generate income and improve the sustainability of the service.

3.6 Inglefield is on the North West Residential Framework for overnight short breaks, the only such local authority provision on that framework. The service is competitively costed and has received

positive feedback from placing authorities and families.

- 3.7 In January 2014, there were 10 young people accessing the service, including 1 young person from another local authority. In April 2015 there are 22 young people accessing the service, including 3 young people from other authorities.
- 3.8 In order to meet the demand, Inglefield uses some of the income from other placing authorities to provide an additional 4 nights opening per month. The service is therefore now operational for 5 nights and 7 nights on alternate weeks.
- 3.9 On this basis, all requests for a service for Halton young people are currently met. There may be additional requests for service from other local authorities but at this time, there is no capacity to provide it.
- 3.10 The service is at capacity for a number of reasons:-
- the staff team is insufficient in number to meet any further demands for additional hours/shifts. Casual members of the Team are already being utilised and the Assistant Registered Manager is also spending the majority of his time directly delivering a service which impacts on the overall management of the service.
 - there is accommodation for a maximum of 4 young people at any one time and no physical space within the building to increase this.
 - where residential overnight short breaks are agreed as the appropriate service, the predominant request by parents is for a service at a weekend. For the reasons above this cannot be provided to any more young people.
 - there are just 2 young people who will leave the service this year, both of whom will release only a small amount of days (77)
 - a high proportion of the young people receiving a service require a high package of support, some up to the maximum of 75 nights per year.
- 3.11 Additional capacity could therefore only be created by both increasing the size of the staff team and identifying how more accommodation/space can be made available.
- 3.12 In respect of the former, providing a service to children with complex needs requires a skilled staff team. While Casual staff are trained to meet the young people's needs, they cannot be a permanent solution. By the nature of their role, they often have other jobs and limited availability to undertake shifts at Inglefield. They are available to work only at their own convenience which means that it is very difficult to plan ahead or increase any provision. Increasing the capacity of the service would therefore require the recruitment of

additional staff members.

- 3.13 In respect of the latter, the only solution to creating additional accommodation would be to utilise the building attached to Inglefield. However, this space is currently occupied by Ashley School as part of their independence work with pupils.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The service currently delivered is consistent with the requirement to provide choice and a range of options for short breaks.
- 4.2 Inglefield's operational practice is consistent with the need to ensure that Council services are delivered efficiently and are sustainable.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In order to ensure that sufficient staffing is in place to meet the demands of the service, the staff establishment will be reviewed.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Utilising all the capacity of Inglefield means that the service has a more sustainable future and so would be available in the longer term for young people and families from Halton. Services remain within the borough thus maintaining young people in their local area and preventing transport costs.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

As a Halton based service, Inglefield is able to access local health services for the young people and ensure continuity in their care.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

As a Halton based service, Inglefield is able to access local health services for the young people and ensure continuity in their care.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

The service has a positive presence in the community and that is utilised to promote the young people's place within the broader community.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

No specific issues.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Increasing capacity at Inglefield may allow other local authorities to purchase provision and therefore create income, but there are also some risks associated with it, including –

- (1) recent history indicates that parents are choosing a range of other options for short breaks and support rather than a residential option
- (2) other authorities are currently only spot purchasing the service for individual children which makes it vulnerable to changing circumstances and varying demand
- (3) those authorities who currently purchase the provision may decide to provide it themselves in the future. One authority has already indicated that they plan to do this.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Access to Inglefield will remain an option for Halton young people who are assessed as needing a residential short break service.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Ofsted Inspection of Inglefield	Ofsted Website	Karen Metcalf