

**People and Communities Select Committee**  
**17 September 2021**

**Item 6; Member Questions**

**Question from Cllr Brenda Jones**

I understand that Norfolk County Council purchases 83 beds from 10 care homes owned and run by the Jeasal Group.

The Jeasal group ran Cawston Park Hospital, in the national news concerning the deaths of three people with learning difficulties in their care.

Whilst this is the social care arm of the group it is the same directors that manage social care.

One of Jeasal's care homes "requires improvement" and another is "inadequate." What evidence do we have that Jeasal are any more concerned about the social care beds they provide and why shouldn't the Council cancel contracts with the Jeasal group given their appalling conduct at Cawston Park

**Response from the Chairman:**

We currently have 32 people being supported in 10 care homes run by the Jeasal Residential Care Services Ltd (JRCS) , a further 32 people are supported but through contracts placed by other local authorities. We have not cancelled these contracts, but as with any provider, we will not hesitate to do so, should we consider this to be in the best interests of the people we support in these particular homes.

Our Integrated Quality Service has been working with JRCS to improve quality since late 2018 – with overall improvements noted (8 of the 10 care homes became fully compliant during this time). Since April 2021 the Service turned attention to issues identified at Cawston Park Hospital; to ensure these were not replicated in the residential provision. Concerns regarding care delivery at the hospital were not evident in the care homes. We have brought together a dedicated team across operational and commissioning directorates who have carried out both planned and unannounced visits and reviewed care for each individual. Each care home has been audited and inspected both by CQC and our Integrated Quality Service and we have sought assurance from these visits. The homes themselves are working with us and cooperating to provide the assurance we and people's families need. During this time one setting has been closed and all individuals have been found appropriate alternative care.

Closing someone's home and moving them somewhere new can be extremely damaging for people, particularly if it has been their home for some years. Individuals will have built up relationships and friendships with staff and other people living in the home and any changes or moves need detailed and careful work – with individuals and their families.

Alongside the intense monitoring we have put in place, our first priority is to weigh up what is in the best interests of each individual – and that is exactly what we are doing.

**Question from Cllr Maxine Webb:**

At January's Committee, after a request by members, it was agreed that "Annual review figures would be included in the next report". At July's Committee, it was reported that this data was not yet complete and would be provided "within subsequent reports" but there are still no details in September's report. An EHCP is a working document which the law requires the LA to review at least annually. When will this data be available to members to reassure us that the changing needs of children and young people with SEND are being reviewed and met?

**Response from the Chairman**

We are confident that the report to Committee in November this year will contain the first data set and commentary regarding EHCP annual reviews.

The Children's Services data team have now produced the initial annual review backlog reporting tool and this has been launched with the EHCP operational teams since the start of the new academic year. They are trialling it to ensure that it provides them with the management information needed to target cases that are a) on time and could be at risk of going outside of timescale and b) those already out of timescale that require prioritisation. With 7500+ annual reviews taking place each year the data model has taken longer than expected, alongside the other EHCP improvement work, ie, initial assessments.

Also, we know now that the annual statistical report to DfE for EHCP, known as 'SEN2', which is run each January will for the first time require all LA's to provide information regarding annual reviews. Therefore, the initial reporting to Committee in November will be further enhanced in January and March 2022 with the output of the report to DfE.

The Assistant Director for SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness will be able to provide a verbal update on this progress at Committee this Friday, for example the current backlog rate and initial trends over the summer months whilst the model was being tested.