

Item No. 7.	Classification: Open	Date: 17 July 2012	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Report into the collapse of Southern Cross Care Homes	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		2011/12 Southwark Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the cabinet notes the recommendations of the report into the collapse of Southern Cross Care Homes by the 2011/12 Southwark Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee (attached as appendix A to this report). The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) asks that Councillor Catherine McDonald, cabinet member for Health and Adult Social Care bring back a report to cabinet, in order to respond to OSC, by the 25 September 2012 cabinet meeting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. This is the final report on into the collapse of Southern Cross Care Homes. The 2011/12 Southwark Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee initiated this review in June 2011.
3. This report seeks to ascertain what lessons can be learnt from the collapse of Southern Cross care homes in order to mitigate potential risks to providing care for some of our most vulnerable residents.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

4. The sub-committee's 12 recommendations are listed below.
 1. That the council works with other local authorities to monitor the financial viability of the company(ies) that own and operate care homes in the borough on an annual basis, or more frequently as required.
 2. That the council work with other local authorities to lobby central government to widen the scope of the Care Quality Commission or Monitor's remit to include oversight of the financial viability of care home providers.
 3. That the council conduct an assessment of a provider before or immediately after a change of operator/ownership occurs (e.g. now that Terra Firma have taken over from Four Seasons).
 4. That the council works with the operators of the care homes to ensure residents and their families receive timely and accurate information of any future changes in ownership, clearly setting out what has changed, what

remains the same and where residents/family members can go for further information.

5. To drive continued improvements in care standards it is recommended that the council works closely with Southwark LINK, SPAG and the lay inspectors to continually monitor the standard of care and receive an alternative point of view.
6. That the health & adult social care scrutiny sub-committee is sent copies of all future inspection reports from the lay inspectors, and the formal responses from the strategic director/contract management team and where appropriate from the registered care home manager.
7. That reports generated by Southwark LINK be submitted to the Director of Adult Social Care, the Cabinet Member and the management of the home concerned and that a formal response is provided with a timetable for rectifying any deficiencies found, and that the health & adult social care scrutiny sub-committee is sent copies of any such correspondence.
8. That a 'leadership network' is established. This would be a forum where care home and residential home managers and relevant staff from the council can meet on at least a quarterly basis to share best practice.
9. That the care home managers ensure that staff are sufficiently trained to handle residents with the appropriate level of care and that staff members' English skills reach the required standard.
10. That the care home providers (monitored by the council) produce timely bills to residents and their family members and to ascertain whether there are any issues to be addressed arising from the move to personal budgets.
11. That visiting times for family, friends and lay inspectors should be flexible.
12. That cabinet be asked to explore the feasibility of requiring indemnification from future care contractors in the event that the provider ceases to operate.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark 2011/12 Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee Agendas	Scrutiny Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Julie Timbrell 020 7525 0514

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix A	Report into the collapse of Southern Cross Care Homes – report of the 2011/12 Southwark Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee. Appendices (a) – (e) available on the council’s website: http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Clid=302&Mid=4245&Ver=4

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Shelley Burke, Head of Overview & Scrutiny	
Report Author	Julie Timbrell, Scrutiny Project Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	25 June 2012	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Legal Services	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	25 June 2012	