ABSTRACT
This report advises committee on planned changes to the registered numbers at Wirren House and The Gables, residential units for adults with a learning disability.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS
It is recommended that the social work and health committee:-

i) agrees to reduce the registered numbers at The Gables, Forfar from 22 to 17;
ii) agrees to reduce the registered numbers at Wirren House, Montrose from 21 to 15.

2 INTRODUCTION
Angus Council owns and operates 2 care homes for people with learning disability. The care homes have operated for a number of years during which time the needs of residents have changed significantly. During the same period inspection and registration arrangements have changed placing different expectations on the type and quality of care provided by these establishments.

The needs of residents placed in these care homes have increased significantly over recent years to include:
• Moderate to severe learning disability;
• Require assistance with personal care
• Require assistance with daily living tasks
• Require supervision within and outwith the care home;
• Autistic spectrum disorders
• Epilepsy;
• Double incontinence;
• Communication difficulties;
• Challenging behaviour;
• Long term conditions (including diabetes, congestive heart failure);
• Overnight supervision and assistance;
• Dementia;
• Sensory loss.

There is a wide age range of residents in both homes, some in their 20’s to individuals in their 70’s. The mean age of residents is increasing. Five residents at Wirren House and two residents at the Gables are over 65 years. A further five residents have care needs associated with frailties of old age including 2 individuals with dementia. The main impact of the increasing needs has been on the ability of the staff to provide sufficient one to one support and to manage good housekeeping
arrangements. These increasing needs have led to care commission inspections raising issues about staffing levels in both homes and the minimum levels required. There is an expectation from individuals and from the Care Commission that service users will be supported to access facilities in the wider community. This is staff intensive and was previously managed in part by some service users attending adult resource centres. Private and voluntary sector care homes benefited from an increase in rates to support the improvement in their support of individuals throughout the day.

Both homes provide rolling respite with individuals attending for respite living with permanent residents. Many individuals using respite facilities require 2 staff for moving and handling and place significant demands on staff to the detriment of the permanent residents. Recent Care Commission inspections at both homes have looked closely at respite provision and the Care Commission now have an expectation that care plans, reviews and case files on respite service users should be maintained to the same level as those of permanent residents. This places a significant additional burden on staff at both homes that provide respite for approximately 40 different service users.

3 PROPOSAL

The long term plan through the redesign of learning disability services is to reduce our reliance on care homes and promote more opportunities for independent living. To effectively address the staffing issues faced by both homes and ensure an improvement in meeting the increasing level of needs it would seem appropriate at this point to reduce the registered numbers at these care homes in line with this strategy. Further the need for respite to support carers continues to grow and this can be provided more consistently if based within one home. The Gables building houses four separate wings and it is intended in the future to use one wing for the provision of a consolidated residential respite service.

To ensure a consistent approach to meeting the needs of individuals and ensuring appropriate staffing levels to meet those needs, the number of residents at Wirren House needs to reduce to 15 and at the Gables to 17. This includes an ongoing commitment to the provision of residential respite within our service.

It is anticipated that the reduction in numbers can be achieved over a period of time through providing more appropriate accommodation for a number of residents including some residents whose needs are more related to their age than their learning disability. An approach will be taken to improve internal transitional arrangements for individuals whose needs may be better met by other services of the department. This will include for example joint assessments with care managers from older people’s services to ensure that the most appropriate service to meet the individual needs is identified in each case.

As each move takes place the Care Commission will be notified of the reduction in number.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs will remain as currently budgeted. The redesign process as it progresses will identify a long term commissioning strategy to meet the accommodation needs of people with learning disabilities moving forward into the future. This will include the identification of levels of care home provision likely to be required in the future.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications arising as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.
CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

CONCLUSION

This report advises committee of the increasing needs amongst residents of Wirren House and The Gables and the requirement to ensure that the standard of care provided meets the needs of the individuals. Meeting the needs of individuals appropriately means that the registered numbers at both homes requires to reduce.

R Peat
Director of Social Work and Health

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.