

REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: MEMBER/OFFICER REVIEW OF DAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES: PROGRESS REPORT
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK	
Date: 19 DECEMBER 2002	Ref: DM

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report advises Committee of progress made by the Member/Officer review of day opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. In May 2001 Committee approved the establishment of a Member/Officer review of day opportunities for people with learning disabilities. The reasons for the review were set out at that time, namely:

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- Most people with learning disabilities attend traditional day centres which were established around 30 years ago and, in terms of service design, have not changed substantially since.
- Recent services developed in the Council had secured a range of alternatives for some people with learning disabilities such as supported employment, but had not focused attention on existing services.
- The national strategy for people with learning disabilities “The Same As You” and the strategy for Lanarkshire “We Want A Life” both advocate the modernisation of day services and increasing choice for service users and their families.
- People with learning disabilities, during consultation on the above strategies and in quality reviews, expressed dissatisfaction with aspects of the services they received.
- Younger families have significantly increased expectations of the services their sons and daughters should receive on leaving school.
- Day centres are not designed in ways that can readily support people with high levels of needs.

3. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 3.1. The group has met monthly since February 2002 and has final meetings planned in January. The remit of the group is:

- To examine and make recommendations on the range of day opportunities available for people with learning disabilities in North Lanarkshire.
- To be informed by best practice and make recommendations to ensure services are designed to meet individual need.
- To be informed by the views, experiences and aspirations of service users and carers in determining future approaches to service delivery.

- To pay specific attention to the needs of people at times of major life transition, such as, young people leaving school and older people with increasing frailty and health problems and make recommendations on service planning and delivery.
 - To make recommendations for improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of day services provided or funded by North Lanarkshire Council and other relevant agencies.
- 3.2. The group has membership from elected members; officers; service users; carers; representatives from the Health service and further education. A feature of the group has been the effective participation of service users and carers in the process.
- 3.3. The group has received a number of presentations to date from service users, carers and staff on patterns of current service delivery; best practice; supported employment; transition planning and opportunities in further education. In addition representatives attended a conference in London on modernising day services to inform the review process.
- 3.4. Through the development partnership the Council has with the National Development Team, contact has been made with a local authority which has substantially changed their day services. A productive visit to Calderdale Social Services Department was made by members of the group in October 2002 and the findings used to inform the contents of the final report.

4. CONSULTATION

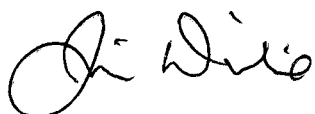
- 4.1. Extensive consultation has taken place with service users and carers to inform the work of the group. Service users attended 5 events throughout the authority during August, independently organised by North Lanarkshire Advocacy Project. Carers attended 5 events throughout the authority during September, independently organised by Lanarkshire Community Care Forum. A questionnaire was prepared to further establish the views of carers.
- 4.2. A number of briefings and development days have been held for staff employed by the authority who are working in this field and a questionnaire was prepared to further establish their views.
- 4.3. The outcome of the consultation process has been reported to the review group, and the findings will influence the contents of the final report. 186

5. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. It is intended to present the report of the group to Social Work Committee in the February cycle. This will contain an analysis of financial, personnel and other implications.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1. Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
12 November 2002

For further information on this report please contact Duncan Mackay, Manager, Community Care Partnerships (TEL: 01698 332072)