

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: REPORT OF MEMBER/OFFICER REVIEW OF DAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 27 FEBRUARY 2003	Ref: DM	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report seeks approval for the recommendations of the report of 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 founded in a number of factors, namely:

- 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. REMIT AND PROCESS

- 3.1. The remit of the group was:

- 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 met monthly and had membership from elected members; officers; service users; carers; representatives from the Health service, further education and trade unions.

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. Full details of the consultation are contained within the report. In summary:

4.4. **Service users** told us about their:

- Desire to find employment
- Anxiety about their growing role as carers for frail and ageing parents
- Dissatisfaction with transport arrangements
- Concern at what happens when people reach 60 years old
- Mixed views about individual day centres but general anxiety about the future if day centres weren't there and the perceived shortage of alternatives
- Support for opportunities at evenings and weekends but uncertainty about what was available
- Limited access to advocacy
- Desire for future participation not just one off consultation exercises.

4.5. **Carers** raised issues about:

- Assessment of need – both in terms of actually accessing one and being fully involved in it
- Social and leisure activities – more support needed especially in the evening and weekends
- Advocacy and support – for carers themselves
- Day centres – carers felt reassured by the structure and continuity of the service but sought more flexible and age-appropriate services and were also critical of transport arrangements
- Information - the need for better access to advice on choice and benefits/finance
- Education – a range of issues about training for college staff, bullying and planning for the future
- Employment – issues relating to skills of Job Coaches and access to employment.

4.6. **Day centre staff** raised issues about:

- The capacity of the existing service to meet the needs of service users
- The availability of appropriate training
- Whilst 81% agreed with the principle that a modernised and flexible service would require to operate outside traditional day centre hours only 42% said they would be willing to work a more flexible work pattern.

5. THE VISION FOR THE FUTURE

5.1. The report of the Member/Officer group sets out a vision for future services which takes the form of a set of essential characteristics which should become standard features of redesigned services. The following provide a set of criteria against which to benchmark services for every individual with a learning disability. The service they receive should:

- Be informed by each individual's person centred plan, constructed with the fullest possible participation of the person concerned, their carer(s), and the people who are important figures in their life.
- Be individualised - designed and funded around each person's needs, wishes and aspirations and not be dependent on other people getting the same or a similar service in order for it to happen.
- Take every reasonable step to ensure the person with a learning disability is kept healthy and safe.
- Afford people reasonable choice over how their time is spent, where it is spent and with whom.
- Be universal and include people with high levels of needs.
- Be available at times people with learning disabilities and their carers need services and be flexible enough to vary according to changing needs and circumstances.
- Function on the basis that most people with learning disabilities want to enjoy life experiences that most of the population take for granted, but will often need the right level of support to do so.
- Ensure people are supported by teams of staff who know the individual and their needs very well and are fully familiar with the contents of that person's plan.
- Seek to connect people with their local communities and assist them to use the range of community services and facilities.
- Be able to measure success in terms of defined quality of life outcomes.

5.2. This vision was shared with carers at all consultation events. The report by Lanarkshire Community Care Forum states "the vision of what North Lanarkshire Council hope to achieve by a redesigned service for this client group is shared by all concerned."

6. ACTION PLANS

6.1. The report considered issues relating to the following areas of activity in respect of day opportunities for people with learning disabilities and proposes action plans for:

- Supported employment
- Accommodation with support
- Transition planning for young people with disabilities
- Day centres (both local authority and independent sector)
- Health care
- Lifelong learning

6.2. The main elements of the proposed action plans are:

6.3. Supported Employment:

- To secure a higher proportion of public sector jobs through a Council commitment to tackle the barriers to its own employment.
- To examine and implement ways of marketing the scheme more effectively.
- To achieve a single management structure for all aspects of the Council's supported employment scheme.
- To broaden the supported employment partnership to include other providers committed to working in the same way.
- To enable people with higher levels of needs to secure jobs, including the establishment of partnership initiatives through the EQUAL project.

6.4. Transition Planning for Young People with Disabilities:

- Complete the staffing of the Project team by the inclusion of 3 Health posts- to employ a part time Occupational Therapist, Dietician and Physiotherapist. These posts will be funded and provided by NHS Lanarkshire.
- Develop information systems that enables identification of all school leavers and sharing of appropriate information across agencies.
- Ensure that all parents of young people with disabilities have the opportunity to attend awareness raising sessions before, or at least very early during, the final year of education; ensure they hear the positive experiences of parents and young people who have been through the process.
- Ensure all young people leaving school with a record of needs have their own plan from 2003 onwards.
- Progressively roll out the project to start planning with people at a younger age.

6.5. Accommodation with Support:

- Ensure the remaining 60 people in long stay hospital care are discharged into fully supported tenancies by 2005.
- Progressively provide local supported living for people who were sent away from the authority into residential care because there was seen to be no alternative at the time.
- Enable an increasing proportion of people currently living in the family home and/or using day centres to access supported living.
- Continue to work with existing residential care providers to modernise services and promote supported living arrangements.
- Develop “Neighbourhood Networks” in all localities for people who require low levels of support.
- Review the use of the Council’s 2 hostels for people with learning disabilities.
- Promote the uptake of home ownership for those who wish to explore this option.
- Develop the adult family placement Homeshare scheme.

6.6. Day Centres:

- Modernise local authority run day centres in keeping with the vision set out in Section 5 of this report, by creating a model of locality day services.
- Undertake more detailed work on the staffing requirements of the new service.
- Establish strategic and local implementation groups to oversee service improvement.
- Continue discussions with independent sector providers and other local authority providers about provision suitable day opportunities.

6.7. Health Care:

- Roll out community based health care services for people with learning disabilities.
- Jointly consider the most effective joint resourcing and management arrangements in the context of the Joint Future agenda.

6.8. Further Education:

- Make representations to the Scottish Qualifications Authority on problems experienced accessing mainstream courses.
- Better connect the needs of individuals with course design to achieve more effective outcomes.
- Provide outreach courses from ordinary community facilities and not day centres to help break down the segregated nature of these courses.
- Apply the principle that individual personal care needs should be identified within a care plan and met by the local authority whilst more generally accessed should be met by the further education establishment.

7. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The proposals contained within the report seek to develop locality based Social Work day services for people with learning disabilities. The new service requires staff to carry out three functions: management of the service; care co-ordination and planning; and direct support. These functions are already carried out by staff in existing local authority day centres though not in a way that makes best use of available resources. Further work is being undertaken to specify future staffing requirements and this will be the subject of a report to a future Committee.
- 7.2. It is however important to establish local leadership arrangements at an early stage to facilitate implementation. Approval is therefore sought to redesignate the posts of Unit Manager at the 5 main centres (Aldarlee, ARCH, Buchanan Street, Edward Lawson Centre and Hallcraig) to that of Locality Manager (Learning Disability). These posts are currently graded at SCP36-39 (Manager 7 - 124 places) in four cases, and SCP39-42 (Manager 125 - 174) in one case. The reason for this is that the grade of post was historically calculated on the numbers of users registered with the service. It makes no sense to perpetuate this anomaly as the numbers of users registered do not reflect the daily occupancy rates and the vision for future services is constructed on a similar basis across the authority. All the posts currently fall within the PO2/5 band (£24,545- £28,904) and it is proposed that this should be the new grade for the post. Resultant minor cost adjustments would be met from existing budgets and this resolution creates no individual detriment.

The hours of work for Locality Managers will reflect normal office hours, rather than the current opening hours of Day Centres. This will include unpaid meal breaks. It is also proposed that, in the future, the service will operate flexibly to meet the needs of service users. This may require Locality Managers to adopt a more flexible work pattern, and this will be further considered by the Implementation Group.

- 7.3. A key element of the new service is an individualisation of care plans and costs, enabling more appropriate person-centred care and support as well as facilitating the new legal requirement to offer Direct Payments to those who require them. Initial financial modelling indicates that a high quality service could be run for approximately the same cost as current services. Further work is needed to test this assumption, based on an aggregate of actual individual need. No additional resources are requested at this stage, though there is likely to be a future need to “bridge” the transition between existing and future services. This will be the subject of a report to a future Committee.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1. The recommendations of the Member/Officer group report are both ambitious and affordable. They seek to provide the highest possible quality of day services for people with learning disabilities and their families. They also recognise that Council day services have an important role to play in the spectrum of provision, but need to adapt to meet the changing needs and expectations of service users and carers.
- 8.2. It is proposed to establish a strategic implementation group as well as local implementation groups to oversee the modernisation of Council services. This will allow a consistent view to be taken on matters such as human resource issues and performance framework, as well as responding to the range of different factors that exist in each locality.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. Committee is asked to:

- (i) agree the vision for day opportunities for people with learning disabilities set out in the report of the Member/Officer group; and
- (ii) agree the action plans set out in the report; and
- (iii) agree redesignation of identified Unit Manager posts to that of Locality Manager (Learning Disability) at grade PO2/5, as set out at para 7.2.; and
- (iv) establish implementation groups for the modernisation of Council day services for people with learning disabilities; and
- (v) require future monitoring reports on progress made; and
- (vi) remit this report to Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub Committee for consideration; and
- (vii) otherwise note the contents of this report.



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