

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 20 MAY 2004

SERVICE REVIEW OF BRIDGE ADDICTION SERVICES

Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the outcomes of the 2003/04 service review of Bridge Addiction Services;

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Bridge Addiction Services operates as a specialist provider within the wider addiction and substitute prescribing infrastructure in East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire. It was founded as a voluntary organisation in Ayr in 1985, establishing its current management centre at 18 Miller Road, Ayr, in 2001.
- 2.2 Bridge opened its Cumnock base in 1994 and following a joint commissioning exercise between East Ayrshire and NHS Ayrshire and Arran, also took over a previous drug project in Kilmarnock in 1997.
- 2.3 The agency was subject to a joint Service Level Agreement from 2001/04, as partner provider to East and South Ayrshire Councils and NHS Ayrshire and Arran. This agreement expired on 31st March 2004.
- 2.4 Social Work undertook a review of Bridge services within East Ayrshire between 29th July 2003 – 30th March 2004, in anticipation of the Service Level Agreement reaching its end. South Ayrshire Council (in liaison with NHS Ayrshire and Arran) commissioned the Scottish Drugs Forum to independently review Bridge services within South Ayrshire. Common themes are evident within the review reports completed for both local authorities.

3. METHODOLOGY OF REVIEW

- 3.1 A Service Officer from Social Work's Performance and Development Team conducted the service review of Bridge provision in East Ayrshire. The review was carried out within a Best Value framework, asking the key questions:-
- Does Bridge provide the right services in the right way?

- Does the agency consult appropriately with service users and other stakeholders?
 - Did the agency meet the terms outlined in the 2001/04 Service Level Agreement?
 - Can the quality of service provided be improved?
- 3.2 Questionnaire based interviews were undertaken with fourteen service users, management and staff at the Bridge HQ and Cumnock and Kilmarnock centres. Twelve case files (6 from Cumnock and 6 from Kilmarnock) were sampled. (see paragraph 6.1 for total caseloads).
- 3.3 Meetings were held with the Lead Consultant, Addictions, Medical Prescribers from the Bridge clinics, Patient Services Manager, Bentinck Centre and NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Bridge Monitoring Officer.
- 3.4 Information was also obtained from East Ayrshire Council's specialist Drug Workers, the Community Planning Unit and the Lighthouse Foundation.
- 3.5 A copy of the report is available at the Members' Information Point.

4. REFERRAL PRIORITISATION

- 4.1 Whilst Bridge Addiction Services operate an open referral system, agreed referral criteria prioritises individuals:-
- Who are pregnant drug users;
 - Where there are child protection concerns;
 - Where there are serious diagnosed mental health difficulties.

5. POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 National policy influences include:-
- Tackling Drugs: Action in Partnership
 - Hidden Harm;
 - Getting Our Priorities Right;
 - Integrated Care for Drug Users; Principles and Practice
- 5.2 Ayrshire wide policy is driven by the:-
- ADAT Corporate Action Plan;
 - Protocol for Substitute Prescribing Clinics in Ayrshire and Arran
- 5.3 Bridge Addiction Services additionally contribute to the implementation of East Ayrshire Council policy and strategic planning. This is exemplified by the agency's role in addressing the measures of

success outlined in the 2001/04 Community Care Plan. The organisation's 'Alternatives to Addiction' and 'Youth Diversion' projects also feature in 'Inspiring Children and Young People', East Ayrshire Council's Children's Service Plan.

6. SERVICE

- 6.1 The review report identifies that 244 service users are receiving casework support from the Cumnock centre and 310 from the Kilmarnock base. Cumnock has a waiting list of 37 referrals, with 147 awaiting a service in Kilmarnock. Bridge provides a casework service to 95 social work clients (50 in Cumnock and 45 in Kilmarnock) who benefit from the organisation's expertise in drug and substance misuse.
- 6.2 Bridge service users receiving a casework service are referred (where appropriate) to the agency's 'Elevation' self-development and 'Progress 2 Work' projects. These initiatives receive temporary Social Inclusion and APEX funding.

7. ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

- 7.1 A range of management issues were identified during the period of the service review which gave significant cause for concern to each of the funding partners. This included personnel issues, financial management and the role of the Board of Directors. Towards the end of the review period there were a number of resignations from the Board and the manager of the project was dismissed. A number of other personnel issues remain outstanding. A new Board of Directors has been formed but it is clear that there is a need for significant changes within the organisation.
- 7.2 Whilst there were many satisfactory elements to the direct service with people who use the service, reducing the waiting list is a priority. The review report recommends that Bridge undertake a comprehensive review of long term cases and current waiting lists, to identify opportunities for waiting list reduction. A similar recommendation is contained in the Scottish Drugs Forum report.
- 7.3 The level of concern is such that the funding partners, East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and Health Services are of the view that the Service Level Agreement with Bridge should only be extended for a period of one year to allow the organisation to address the concerns that have been raised by the partners. The Service Level Agreement has also been reviewed and amended to ensure clearer standards and expectations around the service expected by the funding partners.
- 7.4 It is also the view of the funding partners that substance misuse services should be subject to a tendering process with a new contract being available for services from April 1st, 2005. Clearly Bridge would be in a position to submit a bid for that tender.

7.5 The proposals have been discussed with representatives of the Board at Bridge and they accept the position and the revised service level agreement. The Board have also asked the funding partners to agree to an officer from one of the partner agencies being seconded to Bridge to take over responsibility for management of the project. The funding partners have agreed to this proposal and have also offered other assistance in relation to personnel and financial management.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Bridge is currently funded to an agreed level via terms of the previous Service Level Agreement. Continuation with Bridge as provider of services and implementation of the recommendations of the review will not incur any additional costs for the Council but the level of funding support is subject to discussion with the Board of Management of Bridge.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 A new service level agreement and contract, agreed by each of the funding partners, has been issued to Bridge for consideration.

10. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Nil.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 It is recommended that Social Work Committee:-

- (i) agree to the issuing of a one year contract and service level agreement to Bridge;
- (ii) agree to substance misuse (counselling and support) services being put out to tender within this financial year with a proposed start date of 1st April 2005 for a new contracted service; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services
4 May 2004

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (i) ADAT Corporate Action Plan
- (ii) Tackling Drugs: Action in Partnership

- (iii) Getting Our Priorities Right
- (iv) Hidden Harm
- (v) Integrated Care for Drug Users: Principles and Practice
- (vi) Protocol and Substitute Prescribing Clinics in Ayrshire and Arran
- (vii) Service Review of Bridge Addiction Services

Members wishing further information should contact Bill Eadie, Senior
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