

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 5 OCTOBER 2000

“THE SAME AS YOU?” A REVIEW OF SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Report by Director of Educational & Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1** To advise Committee of the Scottish Executive launch of “The Same As You?” A Review of Services for People with Learning Disabilities, to inform Members of the joint Ayrshire agency response to the document and to seek approval to proceed with implementation arrangements.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Current national policy for people with learning disabilities reflects a commitment to individuals being supported in an individualised, person centred way which encourages personal choice, maximises independence and promotes social inclusion. People should be supported in their own homes or in a homely environment, and hospital care should only be necessary when individuals have complex health care needs.
- 2.2** “The Same As You”? A Review of Services for People with Learning Disabilities was launched by the Scottish Executive in May 2000, following an eighteen month period of extensive consultation involving service users, carers, statutory agencies and independent sector providers.
- 2.3** The consultation document sets out a clear direction for the improvement of services and the development of opportunities for people with learning disabilities and their carers. It covers all aspects of peoples’ lives including accommodation options; care and support services; access to educational and vocational opportunities; employment; access to leisure and recreational activities; health; advocacy and transport.
- 2.4** The review has been issued in a final format due to the extensive nature of the consultation process, however comments were invited by the Scottish Executive by 31st August 2000.

3. CONTENT

3.1 The Review contains seven sections which describe:

- (i) the experiences of people with learning disabilities and their carers
- (ii) the nature of current service provision
- (iii) the difficulties for people with learning disabilities in accessing a range of opportunities and services
- (iv) the options for improving opportunities and services.

3.2 The review places considerable emphasis on the importance of service user and carer involvement, and this has been central to the process of the review.

3.3 The need for effective partnership working is also highlighted, with emphasis placed on joint work between the departments of local authorities as well as between local authorities and the health service.

3.4 Twenty nine recommendations are outlined, many of which have significant implications for local authorities, and the health service in Ayrshire. The review sets out what progress will look like, namely:

- all but a small number of long stay hospital places will go
- more supported accommodation and tenancies
- Partnerships in Practice Plans will require to be developed to ensure that local authorities, the health service and other agencies work together to co-ordinate and agree all planning activity in relation to children and adults with learning disabilities
- shift away from formal day care to accessing day opportunities through **mainstream** education and leisure and employment
- considerably more people will have real jobs
- access to independent advocacy

4. RESPONSE

4.1 The Pan Ayrshire Learning Disability Strategy Group consists of representatives of East Ayrshire Council, North Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council, Ayrshire & Arran Health Board and Ayrshire & Arran Primary Care Trust.

4.2 This group was formed to develop a Joint Ayrshire Learning Disability Strategy, and has co-ordinated the development of plans for people who are being discharged from hospital. The group is also planning an Ayrshire Learning Disability Conference involving key stakeholders. The event will take place in November 2000, and will aim to inform people of the review and the implications for Ayrshire.

- 4.3** The planning partners agreed that a joint agency response would be developed for the Scottish Executive by the Pan Ayrshire Learning Disability Strategy Group. This response set out in Appendix 1, indicates that the review is generally welcomed by all the planning partners, noting the comprehensive nature of the consultation process.
- 4.4** The recommendations contained in the Review are also welcomed as they promote social inclusion, recognising people with learning disabilities as valued citizens.
- 4.5** A number of recommendations have implications for the planning partners, and consequently some specific comments were made including:

(i) The closure of long stay hospitals for people with learning disabilities by 2005.

While there is support for this recommendation, this will have significant implications for people living in Arrol Park and Strathlea Resource Centres and their families. Hospital closure will require a transfer of resources from health to local authorities to ensure that appropriate community based housing and support services are developed. A major concern is to ensure a sufficient level of resources for people being discharged from hospital and for people already living in the community.

(ii) The establishment of Area Co-ordinator posts from existing resources.

The review suggests the development of new Area Co-ordinator posts from existing resources, which would manage and co-ordinate services within Local Health Care Co-operative (LHCC) boundaries. While there are positive aspects to this role, the development of new arrangements should be considered in the context of current local assessment and care management arrangements. The implications of adopting LHCC boundaries requires more detailed consideration as these are not co-terminus with local authorities.

(iii) Children and Young People

The review outlines that the focus is children and adults, however the vast majority of the content and recommendations relate to adults. Joint working is required between children and adult services, however the Children's Service Plan will continue to be the mechanism for progressing work relating to children and young people.

(iv) Financial Framework

The joint agency response has highlighted that the shift to modernised, flexible services is not achievable within existing resources. The Scottish Executive is giving consideration to the establishment of a change fund to support new developments, and further information is awaited.

(v) Access to Mainstream Services

The emphasis placed in the review on access to education, training, leisure and employment has implications for a range of council services.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR EAST AYRSHIRE

- 5.1** To effectively implement the recommendations contained within the review the Council has established a Corporate Learning Disabilities Group which will work alongside the Pan Ayrshire Group. The Pan Ayrshire Group, which will comprise representation from the corporate group will develop an Ayrshire wide Partnership In Practice Plan and the corporate group will develop a local implementation plan which will reflect distinct East Ayrshire needs.

Critical to the success of the plan will be effective implementation at service level and therefore relevant aspects of the plan will be submitted through service committees for approval.

Policy & Resources Committee will receive corporate progress reports.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** Discussions continue to take place between Ayrshire and Arran Health Board and the three Ayrshire local authorities regarding the level of funding to be transferred to the Council as a result of hospital closures. No hospital discharge will proceed without funding being identified.
- 6.2** The shift to more modernised services for people with learning disabilities will require additional financial resources. The Council is currently awaiting further information in respect of the change fund.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** The recommendations of the review are consistent with the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 which seeks to shift the balance of care from hospitals to community based services.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The recommendations of the Review are consistent with the objectives set out in a number of strategic Council planning documents, including:

- East Ayrshire Community Care Plan 1998-2001
- East Ayrshire Children's Service Plan 1998-2001
- Council Plan
- Community Learning Strategy 2000-2003

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Nil.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Policy & Resources Committee is asked to:

- (i) agree the recommendation set out in paragraph 5.1 in relation to the development and implementation of Partnership In Practice Plans; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of the Ayrshire response to "The Same As You?" A Review of Services for People with Learning Disabilities;

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

8 September 2000
KG/SB

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. "The Same As You"? A Review of Services for People with Learning Disabilities.

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support, Tel: (01563) 576104.

AGENDA