

Note of meeting of Representatives of Scottish Social Work Advisory Panel, held at Tom Johnston House, Kirkintilloch on **Tuesday 12 December 2000.**

Present:	Major David Ellson	Aberdeenshire
	Councillor Anne Robertson	Aberdeenshire
	Ivan Cornford	Angus
	Councillor Stephen Leslie	Angus
	Liam Byrne	Borders
	Councillor Jane Darnborough	East Ayrshire
	Melanie McLeod	East Ayrshire
	Peter Neely	East Ayrshire
	Kirsty Barry	East Dunbartonshire
	Paul McArthur	East Dunbartonshire
	June Smith	East Dunbartonshire
	Councillor Tom Smith	East Dunbartonshire
	Councillor Irene Connelly	Fife
	Mrs. Duncan	Fife
	Councillor Elliot Gray	North Ayrshire
	Gary Edgar	North Lanarkshire
	Pauline Hunt	Orkney Islands
	Catriona Edwards	Renfrewshire
	Joan Lafferty	Renfrewshire
	Dougie Foreman	South Ayrshire

In Attendance:	David Asquith	Manager, Quality Assurance Unit
	Diane Campbell	Head of Legal and Administration
	Anne Carswell	Quality Assurance Officer
	Pam Fenton	Head of Social Work and Joint Ventures
	Donna Kerr	Administrator, Quality Assurance
	Margaret Murphy	Committee Administration Officer.
	Sheema Reid	Administration Assistant, Quality Assurance

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor McInnes of East Dunbartonshire and the representatives from Edinburgh and Lothians, Dumfries and Galloway, Dundee City and Moray, Perth and Kinross and Shetland Island Councils.

Councillor Tom Smith (East Dunbartonshire Chair) Presiding

OPENING REMARKS

Tom Smith welcomed the elected members, users, providers and representatives from the various Social Work Advisory Panels/Committees throughout Scotland. He gave a brief resume of the reasons for calling the meeting and advised of the concerns of East Dunbartonshire Social Work Advisory Panel with regard to the future regulation of care.

I. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The representatives were provided with an information pack which contained the following documents:

- a) copy of a letter sent by Councillor Smith, Chair of East Dunbartonshire Social Work Advisory Panel, to Dr .Roddy McDonald of the Scottish Executive Health Department, dated 18 September 2000;
- b) Reply from Iain Gray, MSP, Deputy Minister for Community Care, dated 12 October 2000; and
- c) Suggestions for discussion which had been forwarded by the representatives of Scottish Advisory Panels/Committees;

The representatives were then given a presentation by Anne Carswell covering the various issues raised, as undernoted:

- The future of advisory panels/committees
- "The Way Forward For Care" - A Policy Position Paper
- Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care
- East Dunbartonshire's written response
- Response from Ian Gray, the then Deputy Minister for Community Care
- Suggestions for discussions within working groups

Thereafter, three working groups were formed to further discuss the concerns.

SEDERUNT

Kirsty Barrie , Diane Campbell, Pam Fenton and Councillor Elliot Gray left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item of business.

2. SUMMARY OF OUTPUT FROM DISCUSSION GROUPS

David Asquith summarised the main themes emerging from the discussion groups.

Uncertainty about how the new system for the regulation of care would operate

- a) How would the Commission encourage and enable service users, carers, and providers to communicate with it on day-to-day problems?
- b) How would the Commission make use of lay inspectors and in what way?

The value of local input into the process

- c) opportunities for service users, carers and providers to comment on the whole process as well as on individual reports;
- d) creating a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for securing improvements in service provlslon;
- e) as a dimension of local democracy;

Promoting the understanding of care standards and the process of regulation

- 1) Advisory Panels/Committees had given priority to ensuring that reports on inspection are written in a way which lay people can understand.

Looking to the future

Advisory Panels/Committees had a choice between two overall options:

- a) a 'wait and see' strategy, which would simply leave the Scottish Executive and the Commission to proceed as outlined in the policy position paper without further comment;
- b) a positive approach which focuses on persuading the Scottish Parliament of the value of local Advisory Panels/Committees.

Panels were presently part of a system in which democratically elected Councils had broad responsibilities for service strategies, purchasing and provision. Taking the process of regulation out of that local arena would mean a potential loss of accountability. Sub-Committees of the Commission would not be seen to be sufficiently independent.

A local advisory structure should be written into the legislation and should include:

- i. consistency in terms of reference;
- ii. The right to be consulted on policies and procedure and to comment on local services;
- iii. Strong 'grass roots' representation of service users (no less than 50%), providers, professionals and local authorities; and
- iv. Provision for each Panel to select its own Chairperson

Provision for lay inspectors should also be included in the legislation and they should be represented on the Panels.

Representatives were provided with a note of the expected Parliamentary Timetable for the setting up of the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care.

3. CONCLUSION

At the conclusion, the group agreed in principle to move forward on the following basis:

- a) that local Advisory Panels/Committees should be maintained to support the work of the Commission if and when it is set up;
- b) that individual Councils should be encouraged to lobby for the retention of local Advisory Panels/Committees; and
- c) that a working group would be set up to meet as soon as possible, to form an action plan to lobby to further the views of Councils in Scotland for the retention of local Advisory Panels/Committees.

It was further agreed that:

- i) the report of this meeting be circulated to all participants and others who were invited to attend; and

- ii) Each advisory panel be asked to determine whether it wished to proceed as above and, if so, whether it required any further consent from its parent council.

Anyone wishing to participate in the working group was asked to contact Councillor Tom Smith, via the Quality Assurance Unit, by 20 December 2000 if possible.

AGENDA