

Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-committee

Modernising Day care

Draft Report

1 Introduction

1.1 This is the second report of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-committee. It sets out the recommendations and findings of the Sub-committee's short inquiry in support of the development of the Council's Community Care Day Care policies.

1.2 The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-committee was instituted in July 2002 with broad terms of reference to inquire into matters that had an impact on the health of people living in the borough. The Sub-committee is made up of elected members of the Council. Its membership is:

- Councillor Eliza Mann (Chair)
- Councillor Dominic Thorncroft (Vice-Chair)
- Councillor Denise Capstick
- Councillor Alun Hayes
- Councillor Dr Abdur-Rahman Olayiwola
- Councillor Veronica Ward

1.3 The Sub-committee's work in this area coincides with the Social Services Department's consultation on proposals to modernise day care. The consultation document was published on xx xx xx and the consultation deadline was 13 March. This has been a short inquiry and the Sub-committee has not sought to undertake a substantial review. Its focus has been primarily on the proposals for day care. Its key aim has been to aid the identification of concerns and risks and to seek to ensure that these are addressed sufficiently in the decision making process.

1.4 During this inquiry the Sub-committee met with:

- Cllr Catriona Moore, the Executive Member for Health and Social Care
- Romi Bowen Assistant Director of Social Service
- Susan Harrison, Assistant Director, Community Care
- Southwark Disabilities Forum - Mark Duke/Yvonne Poulson
- Southwark Pensioners Forum- Josephine Negro
- Southwark Community Care Forum - Angela Stansworth
- Black Elderley Group, Southwark - John Hemonstine [Presentation given by Angela Stansworth]
- Southwark Pensioner's Action Group - Tony Lynes
- Vietnamese Day Centre - Mr Q D Morton
- Aylesbury Day Centre Users

1.5 In addition the Sub-committee visited the following day care centres:

- Leonard Cheshire Centre in Westminster which provides services for people with physical Disabilities
- Royal Road, Southwark
- Fred Francis House, Southwark

1.6 In addition Members of the Sub-committee met with a representative of Toucan who provide employment services for people with learning disabilities. The Sub-

committee would like to thank the Day Centres for their hospitality and also those people who gave their time to attend meetings and prepare submissions.

2 Summary

2.1 The Sub-committee recommends that the Social Services Department should include greater detail of the proposed day care provision that will result from modernising the service, with its final recommendations to the Executive.

2.2 The Sub-committee recommends that the Council should seek to monitor the impact of any day centre closure in order to ensure that the social inclusion of older people is not compromised.

2.3 The Sub-committee recommends that the Social Services Department should demonstrate how it will ensure that through its equalities policies and through its approach to care assessments, legitimate users of day care services are not disadvantaged.

2.4 The Sub-committee recommends that the Council should continue to work with the voluntary and the wider independent sector to ensure that the effectiveness of their contribution is maximised.

2.5 The Sub-committee also recommends that the Council should consider how it might support voluntary sector organisations, affected by the modernisation of day care, to access alternative sources of funding.

2.6 The Sub-committee recommends that the Council should consider how it might ensure that the needs of people, who might lose day care services through the modernisation process, are met by other council services.

2.7 The Sub-committee recommends that the Council should ensure best practice in the operation of Council owned venues in order to widen access and that it is encouraging, through its partnership working, best practice in the use of all venues in the borough.

2.8 The estimate is that modernising day care will save approximately £1.5 million. The Sub-committee would welcome a statement from the executive on the implications for Children's services of the proposals for day care not being implemented or of the expected savings from day care not being achieved.

3 Community Care Day Care

3.1 Community Care is a very complex policy area, which encompasses a range of services to a heterogeneous client group. Day care is an element of community care provision which has been subject to considerable policy debate. The National Service Framework for Older People makes no specific reference to the role of day care. Day care is considered to have a specific role only in the mix of services to people with mental disabilities.

3.2 The policy direction in the delivery of community care service is aimed at ensuring that services:

- promote independence, not dependency;
- are a means by which people with Community Care needs are helped to access resources in the wider community;
- lead to service users' inclusion in the widest possible range of ordinary daily activities;
- are developed around the needs of the individual rather than an institution; and
- include vocational training and work, where appropriate.

4 Modernising day care proposals

4.1 The Sub-committee's work in this area coincides with the publication, by Southwark's Social Services Department, of a Consultation Document on proposals for the future of day care in the borough.

4.2 In bringing forward these proposals the Social Services Department is seeking to deliver services which meet the vision for community care.

4.3 The key elements of the proposal are:

- to restrict access to Community Care Day Care Services to those people who have eligible Community Care needs in line with the Council's published eligibility criteria;
- to close the council-run Royal Road Day Centre (Royal Rd, SE 17, Newington Ward), and to relocate the services currently provided there to the following Day Centres:
 - Fred Francis House (269 Lordship Lane, SE22, Alleyn Ward)
 - Southwark Park (345 Southwark Park Rd, SE16, Riverside Ward).
- to transfer in-house day care provision to alternative providers.

4.4 The Social Services department has undertaken substantial consultation on these proposals, the details of which are contained in the proposal document.

5 Findings/issues

5.1 Each community care service sector—mental health, learning disability, physical disability and older people—has specific policy initiatives and needs. In this short inquiry it has not been possible for the Sub-committee to consider in-depth the issues that relate to each of the service sectors. Most of the focus of the Sub-committees work has been on services to older people, although the Sub-committee did receive strong representations from the users of the Aylesbury day care centre for people with physical disabilities. In most case therefore the Sub-committee's findings relate to day care services for older people.

What does a modernised service look like?

5.2 During this brief inquiry the Sub-committee found that there appeared to be a good deal of consensus around the need to modernise day care services in the borough.

5.3 The social services department told the Sub-committee that the vision for the future of day care services set out in its consultation document reflected the national agenda for community care and was driven by a desire to deliver services which met the needs of those who were eligible for services under the Council's eligibility rules.

5.4 The vision for day care, was broadly welcomed by many of those who made representation to the Sub-committee, including the Southwark Pensioners Forum and Southwark Community Care Forum. However, these groups and others expressed the view that the Council's proposals for day care were too narrowly framed and that there was a lack of clarity about what would be provided under the day care banner once it had been modernised.

5.5 In the view of the Sub-committee these concerns are valid and there needs to be greater clarity and transparency about how the service will change in order to contribute to the vision of greater independence and inclusion for older people and for other day care users.

5.6 The Sub-committee recommends that the Social Services Department should include greater detail of the proposed day care provision that will result from modernising the service, with its final recommendations to the Executive.

The geographical location of Day Care provision

5.7 Much of the day care provision in Southwark is traditional building based. The Council's proposals for the future of the service include closing the Royal Road Centre, which is in the centre of the borough.

5.8 The Sub-committee were told by the Social Services Department that the proposal to close the Royal Road site was in response to over capacity in provision and in recognition that the Royal Road Centre was in a poor physical condition and was not properly equipped to accommodate wheelchair users.

5.9 The Sub-committee visited the Royal Road Centre and noted the extensive capital investment that would be required to modernise the building and bring the Centre up to an acceptable standard. The Social Services Department told the Sub-committee that renovation was a potential option, but that this would not address the issue of over capacity.

5.10 Recognition of the condition of the Royal Road Building was widespread, but concerns at its possible closure were expressed. Users of the Royal Road centre talked of their attachment to the Centre and to their day care helpers and were concerned for the future.

5.11 The Sub-committee also heard that a related, but more general concern was for the loss of provision in the middle of the borough and the potential implications for older people living in that area. These concerns focused on the implications for communities and the additional travelling time to remaining day care provision for those older people who were living in that part of the borough. The concerns were based on the view that people would want to receive day care provision in locations close to their homes and within their own communities. There was also concern that additional travel times would raise questions about the appropriateness of day care provision for some users. The Sub-committee was told by the Social Services Department that those who had an assessed day care need, which included all current users of Royal Road, would continue to receive day care services, but that it was difficult to assess the impact on individuals of the closure of Royal Road until assessments were undertaken—this would happen once proposals for modernising day care had been agreed.

5.12 The Sub-committee recommends that the Council should seek to monitor the impact of any day centre closure in order to ensure that the social inclusion of older people is not compromised.

Implications of limiting funding for services to those with an assessed need

5.13 In limiting the funding of day care services to those who have an assessed need, the Social Services Department is following national guidelines and Council policy. However, the sub-committee was told by many of those voluntary sector organisations providing day care services to black and other minority ethnic groups (BMEs) that limiting the funding of day care services in this way would have significant implications for many existing users.

5.14 Southwark Community Care Forum told the Sub-committee that some 'walk-in' users of day care services, particularly those from BME groups, would be eligible for services if they went through the assessment process. The Sub-committee was told that there were a number of reasons why users were not being assessed. These included: language barriers; worries about stigmatisation and other cultural barriers.

5.15 Voluntary sector provider organisations considered that under a more 'rigid' system services to these people would be put at risk, because providers would find it difficult to find funding from other sources in order to resource this provision.

5.16 The Sub-committee was also told that day care provision acted as an access point to information and other service provision and that this was particularly important in the case of provision to people from BME groups.

5.17 In the view of the Sub-committee it is important for the Council to be able to demonstrate that, in taking forward policy in day care, it has mitigated any potential risk of exclusion.

5.18 The Sub-committee recommends that the Social Services Department should demonstrate how it will ensure that through its equalities policies and through its approach to care assessments, legitimate users of day care services are not disadvantaged.

The future role of the voluntary and wider independent sector in delivering day care services

5.19 The Sub-committee heard from a range of voluntary sector organisations delivering day care services in the borough. Many of these organisations also provided written submissions. The Sub-committee was told that, in contrast to the day care service provided by the Council, these organisations were required to operate waiting lists because of the high demand for services. Members were impressed by the range of services that were being provided by, or could be accessed through, voluntary sector run centres. In the view of the Sub-committee there is a tension between a modernising approach that might place voluntary organisations in a financially precarious position and a vision for future service delivery which will need to draw on voluntary sector expertise.

5.20 It is concerned at the potential impact on these organisations and their clients of the loss of any Council funding resulting from the implementation of the eligibility criteria. In the case of some organisations the Sub-committee was told that this potential loss could be significant.

5.21 The Sub-committee recommends that the Council should continue to work with the voluntary and wider independent sector to ensure that the effectiveness of their contribution is maximised.

5.22 The Sub-committee also recommends that the Council should consider how it might support voluntary sector organisations affected by the modernisation of day care to access alternative sources of funding.

Early intervention

5.23 The Social Services Department indicated that one of the risks of the proposed policy on day care was that it would lead to a reduction in the emphasis on early intervention—the purpose of which was to ensure that people led healthy active lives for longer—because organisations would no longer receive funding for clients who had not already been identified with an assessed need.

5.24 The Sub-committee heard that there were a few organisations, such as the Southwark Pensioners Centre, that were providing alternative provision with opportunities for people to engage in a range of activities which supported the early intervention ethos. However, it is not clear that such provision is widely available.

5.25 In the view of the Sub-committee early intervention should remain a priority. However, the Sub-committee recognises that this is not simply a role for Social Services provision. There is a need to ensure that the Council addresses through the full range of its services (including leisure, education and culture and transport) the needs of older people in the community.

5.26 The Sub-committee recommends that the Council should consider how it might ensure that the needs of people who might lose day care services through the modernisation process are met by other council services.

5.27 The Sub-committee heard that a key constraint on alternative provision for older people who did not have an assessed need was the difficulty that groups had in finding and accessing suitable venues in which to run activities. This is a complex matter as the ownership of such venues is spread across a range of sectors.

5.28 The Sub-committee recommends that the Council should ensure best practice in the operation of Council owned venues in order to widen access and that it should encourage, through its partnership working, best practice in the use of all venues in the borough.

Day care services to people with physical disabilities

5.29 The social services department will undertake further specific consultation on day care services for people with physical disabilities.

5.30 Some of the strongest representations received by the Sub-committee came from users of the Aylesbury Day Centre. Day Services for physically disabled people are currently centred on the Aylesbury Day Centre. Users of the centre were very supportive of the work that was undertaken at the centre and this confirmed the outcome of the Council's Best Value Review of Disabilities. However the best value review also concluded that the majority of people with physical disabilities were not using the day centre, partly because of a perceived stigma attached to attendance. The Best Value review highlighted the demand for services which would develop independence skills.

5.31 The Sub-committee visited a day centre for people with physical disabilities in Westminster, which was run by Leonard Cheshire. One of the striking features of this centre was the array of services that could be accessed—the centre operated as a one-stop-shop for services in areas such as job seeking support, education and advice services. The Best Value review established that this rich mix of provision was absent in Southwark.

5.32 The Sub-committee recognises the need to maximise the suitability and quality of provision in Southwark, but it is also aware of the strong sense of community that has been established in the Aylesbury Day Care Centre.

5.33 A great deal of work and consultation has taken place on this issue and the Sub-committee is conscious that further consultation is planned. At this stage the sub-committee would simply reiterate the need for the Council to maximise, through its community care services, the opportunities for people to live independently through the provision of effective employment, education and other advice services, while at the same time guaranteeing security of provision for those who are unable to take advantage of these opportunities.

The process of bringing forward policy

5.34 The Sub-committee is concerned at the way in which the proposals for modernising day care were brought forward. On 24th January it wrote to Councillor Moore, Executive Member for Health and Social Care, setting out these concerns and in particular that the first outline proposals for day care did not appear until the Executive considered the provisional finance settlement and its implications for the Council's revenue budget, on 17 December. At that time the arguments for the need to modernise day care services were set out, but there was a focus on the savings that would accrue from the proposed changes in provision. In the view of the Sub-committee this led to confusion over the reasons for the proposed changes. It has also led to a feeling of misgiving about the role of scrutiny in the process.

5.35 The Sub-committee welcomes the assurances from Cllr Moore that the policy is driven by a desire to ensure that Southwark's day care services meet the needs of people in greatest need of community care.

5.36 An additional concern is the implications of the consultation findings *not* supporting the proposed changes. Any savings that accrue from the modernisation of day care are earmarked for Children's Services. On the assumption that the proposed changes to day care do indeed meet the needs of people in greatest need, then the Sub-committee welcomes this reassignment of resources as a means of meeting a key priority for the Council.

5.37 The estimate is that modernising day care will save approximately £1.5 million. The Sub-committee would welcome a statement from the Executive on the implications for Children's services of the proposals for day care not being implemented or of the expected savings from day care not being achieved in full.