

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO: BEST VALUE, PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY SUB COMMITTEE -
16 DECEMBER 2008**

**REPORT ON: BEST VALUE REVIEW OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS AND EXTERNAL
RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENTS**

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 637 - 2008

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise the sub committee on the conclusions, recommendations and findings of the best value review group on residential schools and external residential placements. The terms of reference of the review are included as Appendix 1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the sub committee notes the findings and the recommendations as outlined below and that these recommendations be remitted for consideration of the Social Work and Health Committee:

- 2.1 The internal decision making process within the local authority for making external residential placements, be shared with children's panel members as part of a training event in February 2009
- 2.2 The draft contractual framework for internal residential placements be developed to ensure greater clarity about what can be expected from providers in relation to cost and outcomes for children
- 2.3 A joint decision making process across the local authority and health should be developed for external residential placements
- 2.4 Benchmarking information with other authorities should be used to further explore how one or two authorities have been able to control the increase in external residential placements and associated costs
- 2.5 The outcome of the option appraisal of The Elms Secure and Close Support Unit should be implemented
- 2.6 A review will take place of the Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS), Rowans Resource Team and the Community Support Team as well as the family support teams
- 2.7 The concept of flexible learning packages should be progressed
- 2.8 A review of Gillburn Road Residential Respite facility for children with disabilities should be completed as quickly as possible
- 2.9 A review of the Throughcare and Aftercare Service should be concluded
- 2.10 NHS Tayside should continue to progress work which will aim to provide improved services on a local basis
- 2.11 Discussions with a voluntary organisation should be progressed to establish the feasibility of a Pan Tayside Residential facility for children aged 8-12

- 2.12 Further discussion take place with another voluntary organisation to develop an accommodation and assessment service for children and parents affected by substance misuse
- 2.13 A commissioning strategy be produced based on the logic model of matching needs and services

An action plan with timescales against each recommendation is attached at Appendix 2.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The first meeting of the best value review presented information on the level of usage of different types of external residential provision and the associated costs. This was presented in the context of approximately a 93% rise in the total number of looked after children from 325 in 2002 to 627 by September 2007.

The current year financial projection for the Residential Schools and Secure Care Budget and comparison with 2002/03 is as follows:

	Budget	Actual	Projected Overspend
	£000	£000	£000
2002/03	2,439	2,518	+79
2008/09	4,900	5,248	+348

This highlights that despite significant increases in revenue budget provision, actual expenditure has continually outstripped available resources.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

Best Value Review Group on External Residential Placements met four times between September and December 2008. The terms of reference at the membership of the review group are attached at Appendix 1. The meetings covered the following broad areas:

Meeting 1

An analysis of trends over a five year period covering numbers of placements, types of placements, lengths of stay and costs

Meeting 2

Five case profiles were discussed covering the five different categories of placement. In addition the existing policy and procedure for decision making on external residential placements was presented

Meeting 3

A draft contractual framework was presented and agreement given to address this. A system for returning children from external placements using the locality joint action teams was also presented and agreed. Some benchmarking data from eight other local authorities was also presented

Meeting 4

Proposals and recommendations for the future were brought forward

The following represents the agreed recommendations:

Recommendation 1

The internal decision making process within the local authority for making external residential placements, be shared with children's panel members as part of a training event in February 2009

A robust decision making process and procedure is in place to determine which children require external residential placements. The policy and procedure comprises a thorough examination, through a multi-agency community resource panel, as to whether all appropriate

community based resources have been tried as an alternative to admission to care. This includes consideration of intensive community assessments, input from the community support team, the use of family group conferences and support from voluntary agencies.

Where it is deemed that the child requires to be accommodated, the case is then discussed at a multi-agency admissions panel for consideration of the council's own foster care or residential resources. It is only once these resources have been exhausted or are deemed to be inappropriate that the case is then presented to the residential resource monitoring group for consideration of an external residential placement.

It was noted within the best value review that this decision making process is heavily dependent upon decisions made by Children's Hearings. It was further agreed that this process would be shared with panel members as part of a training event in February 2009 with a view to trying to achieve as much consensus as possible in the decisions made about these children, whilst still retaining the independence of the Children's Panel.

Recommendation 2

The draft contractual framework for internal residential placements be developed to ensure greater clarity about what can be expected from providers in relation to cost and outcomes for children

It was agreed that this local framework should be informed by work that is going on nationally to produce a national framework for commissioning these types of services.

Recommendation 3

A joint decision making process across the local authority and health should be developed for external residential placements

The depute child health commissioner for NHS Tayside presented to the group a referral checklist used by consultants when proposing to place children in external health provision. It was agreed that further work should take place to produce a joint process with the local authority for decision making for children with significant health needs.

Recommendation 4

Benchmarking information with other authorities should be used to further explore how one or two authorities have been able to control the increase in external residential placements and associated costs

It was noted that one or two authorities appeared to have achieved some success in being able to control the increase in external residential placements and the associated increased costs. It was agreed this should be examined further with these authorities.

Recommendation 5

The outcome of the option appraisal of The Elms Secure and Close Support Unit should be implemented

An option appraisal has been completed on the council's secure and close support units at The Elms. This has concluded that the current provision of four secure beds should be maintained for a further year, then reviewed in the light of occupancy rates. Secure beds are a potential source of income when purchased by other neighbouring authorities, which has been the case over the last few years. It was also agreed that the close support unit has in effect become an emergency admissions unit over the last year or so and that the functions and objectives and the management of this unit should be adjusted to reflect this reality. The previous emergency unit had to change its remit due to young people remaining there for longer periods with positive outcomes. If the close support unit becomes an emergency unit with a short-term remit and works closely with community resources, this will potentially contribute to reducing the numbers of children who require external placements as a result of an emergency or crisis situation.

Recommendation 6

A review will take place of the Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS), Rowans Resource Team and the Community Support Team as well as the family support teams

The community support team already work a residential shift pattern and it is planned that the ISMS team and the Rowans resource team should also move towards a much more flexible pattern of working in order to create a more robust service to children and families during evenings and weekends in order to prevent the need for accommodation. The cost implications of this will be determined by the model of service but could potentially be balanced by a reduction in the need to commission such services from external providers.

Similarly, a review of our family support teams is underway with a view to creating a more flexible service into the evenings and weekends to support the early years and primary aged group children and their families.

Recommendation 7

The concept of flexible learning packages should be progressed

All Dundee's children and young people of school age are entitled to have access to full-time educational provision. The concept of introducing approved flexible learning packages is being developed under the auspices of the Education Department's Standing Group on Managing Behaviour on which sit representatives of the Social Work and Leisure and Communities Departments. Some pupils, for social, educational, health or other reasons, are unable to sustain full-time attendance on school premises. Within a flexible learning package agreed and approved by the relevant Joint Action Team in partnership with parents, the children and young people will be formally supported for each of the ten openings of the school week. Educational, social and/or health support would be delivered by a partnership of the school and at least one other partner agency. The aim of implementing a flexible learning package for an individual would be to achieve a successful and sustainable re-integration into full-time education on school premises. The development and implementation of the proposed flexible learning packages will be dependent on contributing partner agencies and services being able to commit resources and staff.

Recommendation 8

A review of Gillburn Road Residential Respite facility for children with disabilities should be completed as quickly as possible

Within this review a number of recommendations have been made to extend the current service and partnership of other agencies which will support young people to live in their own communities and develop independence and life skills. This will be particularly important as currently a number of young people with special needs require to be accommodated for substantial periods in external residential provision.

Recommendation 9

A review of the Throughcare and Aftercare Service should be concluded

This review will examine more choices and more effective routes for young people requiring planned accommodation when they leave care or return from external placements.

Recommendation 10

NHS Tayside should continue to progress work which will aim to provide improved services on a local basis

Health Services have already agreed to be involved in a joint decision making process for children with complex health needs and will attend the residential resource monitoring group meeting as necessary. NHS Tayside is progressing additional work which will aim to provide improved services on a local basis. This work is as follows:

- Autistic Spectrum Event - a week long rapid improvement event was held week commencing 27 October 2008 to explore the assessment process for children and young people with ASD. As a result of this work an action plan is being developed to address lean working approaches, access issues and treatment provision.

- CAMHs Board Paper - a paper was submitted and agreed in principle at the NHS Board Meeting on 21 August 2008, which laid out major development proposals in five key areas of Child and Adolescent Mental Health services in NHS Tayside. If implemented, this proposal would increase the capacity of the CAMH service and enable quicker access to services locally. A further paper is now being developed to take to the Strategic Policy and Resources committee in January to request funding to implement this bid.
- LAAC national work - a national multi agency group facilitated by the Scottish Government, is due to report within the next couple of weeks with further recommendations for all agencies involved in the provision of care to looked after and accommodated children.

Recommendation 11

Discussions with a voluntary organisation should be progressed to establish the feasibility of a Pan Tayside Residential facility for children aged 8-12

A voluntary organisation partner has signalled their intention to build and capital fund a Pan Tayside Specialist Residential facility for children aged 8-12. This could potentially enable the three Tayside authorities to have priority for placements at preferential costs and allow a greater partnership approach to meeting the needs of children who require this type of placement.

Recommendation 12

Further discussion take place with another voluntary organisation to develop an accommodation and assessment service for children and parents affected by substance misuse

A further partnership is being developed with another voluntary organisation to develop an accommodation and assessment service for children and parents affected by substance misuse. Children affected by parental substance misuse is one of the greatest challenges of social policy and practice in Scotland and in Dundee specifically with an increasing number of children being affected. An accommodation and support service for parents and their children would facilitate speedier decision making in relation to whether children should remain in the care of their parents and what services are required to support that or alternatively, facilitate the decision to remove children from their parents care where necessary and to speed up the process for securing the long-term future of these children through long-term fostering or adoption.

Recommendation 13

A commissioning strategy be produced based on the logic model of matching needs and services

Work is underway to produce a commissioning model based on a "logic model" of matching needs and services. This presents an opportunity to ensure that services provided (both council services and commissioned services) match with identified priority need and the desired outcomes for children. The implication then is that services not meeting identified priority need and outcomes are either re-focussed or de-commissioned. The commissioning model would be completed by Autumn 2009.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment.

There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Head of Finance.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

ALAN BAIRD, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

DATE: 2 December 2008

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APPENDIX 1

BEST VALUE REVIEW PROGRAMME

TERMS OF REFERENCE PAPER

REVIEW TOPIC	Use of Residential Schools and other Residential Placements Outwith the Council
LEAD OFFICER	Alex Stephen

1.	Scope of the Review
	To examine the use of residential school placements and other residential placements outwith the Council, with a view to ensuring optimum outcomes for young people and the effective use of available resources, given the continued increase in the cost of external residential provision.

2	Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the current situation regarding the numbers of children in residential placements, placement type, lengths of stay and cost • Examine patterns and trends to inform a model of financial planning and future projections • Undertake a sample case - file audit and analysis of outcomes for children by placement type • Examine internal systems and processes for the scrutiny, decision making and prioritising of referrals for external residential placements and how these articulate with the decision making of the Children's Hearing system • Establish a contractual framework and system for quality assuring the provision of external providers, incorporating the activity of the Care Commission • Establish a robust system for identifying the optimum point at which children, once placed externally, could successfully be returned to Dundee and what services and resources may be required to achieve this • Benchmark outcomes, systems and processes with comparator authorities • Bring forward recommendations for improvements in outcomes, systems and processes as well as consideration of alternative local provision

3	Core Group Membership
	<p>Alex Stephen, Chief Executive - Chair Elected Members - 1 each from Administration, SNP and Conservative groups Depute Chief Executive (Finance) Director of Social Work Children's Services Manager (Social Work) Director of Education Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) Chairperson, Dundee Children's Panel Chairperson, Children's Panel Advisory Group Reporter to the Children's Panel NHS Tayside representative Tayside Police representative Representative of external providers Clerk - Committee Services</p>

4	<i>Consultation Process – Who to Consult and How</i>
	<p>Consultation should be carried out with the following organisations and groups, whose representatives may be co-opted into the review team as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Commission • Childrens Rights Officer • Voluntary sector representatives (eg Aberlour) • Representatives of young people and parents

5	<i>Schedule for Completing the Review</i>	
	<p>Pre planning</p> <p>Milestone Meeting 1</p> <p>Milestone Meeting 2</p> <p>Milestone Meeting 3</p> <p>Milestone Meeting 4</p>	<p>September 2007</p> <p>October 2007</p> <p>November 2007</p> <p>December 2007</p>

ACTION PLAN

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Timescale
1 The internal decision making process within the local authority for making external residential placements, be shared with children's panel members as part of a training event in February 2009	Social Work	Feb 2009
2 The draft contractual framework for internal residential placements be developed to ensure greater clarity about what can be expected from providers in relation to cost and outcomes for children	Social Work	Apr 2009
3 A joint decision making process across the local authority and health should be developed for external residential placements	NHS Tayside	Apr 2009
4 Benchmarking information with other authorities should be used to further explore how one or two authorities have been able to control the increase in external residential placements and associated costs	Social Work	Jan 2009
5 The outcome of the option appraisal of The Elms Secure and Close Support Unit should be implemented	Social Work	Completed
6 A review will take place of the Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS), Rowans Resource Team and the Community Support Team as well as the family support teams	Social Work	Apr 2009
7 The concept of flexible learning packages should be progressed	Education	Jun 2009
8 A review of Gillburn Road Residential Respite facility for children with disabilities should be completed as quickly as possible	Social Work	Dec 2008
9 A review of the Throughcare and Aftercare Service should be concluded	Social Work	Jan 2009
10 NHS Tayside should continue to progress work which will aim to provide improved services on a local basis	NHS Tayside	Throughout 2009

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Timescale
11 Discussions with a voluntary organisation should be progressed to establish the feasibility of a Pan Tayside Residential facility for children aged 8-12	Social Work	Throughout 2009
12 Further discussion take place with another voluntary organisation to develop an accommodation and assessment service for children and parents affected by substance misuse	Social Work	Throughout 2009
13 A commissioning strategy be produced based on the logic model of matching needs and services	Social Work	Jun 2009

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