

NOTE OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE LEARNING DISABILITY IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY GROUP HELD ON 18th NOVEMBER 2004 AT THE MEDIA RESOURCE CENTRE, LLANDRINDOD WELLS.

PRESENT:

David Felce – Co-chair
Glayne Walker – Co-Chair (supported by Yvonne Hedges)

Members

Roger Banks
Jim Crowe
Ian Ferris
Teifion Griffiths (attending for Evan Davies)
Mike Kerr
Paul Lawrence (supported by Cyril Luke)
Liz Neal
Sean O'Reilly
Stephen Wade
Peter Watkins
Bryan Williams

Assembly Officials

John Carter
Alyson Collins

1. Welcome & apologies

1.1 David Felce advised that the Minister had agreed to Professor David Allen, Dr Steve Beyer and Professor Mike Kerr becoming members of the LDIAG. In her letter the Minister had expressed some concerns about the membership of the Group being expanded in the future to the extent that it became unwieldy and reminded the Group that it did have the ability to co-opt members to undertake specific areas of work. The secretariat had subsequently issued invitations to the three nominated members. David Allen and Mike Kerr had accepted their invitations but the Secretariat had not as yet heard from Steve Beyer.

Action : David Felce to speak to Steve Beyer

1.2 David Felce welcomed Mike Kerr and Teifion Griffiths (attending for Evan Davies) to their first meeting of the Group.

1.3 Apologies were received from David Allen, Evan Davies, Margaret Gregory, Paul Leathwood, Chris Maggs and Ann Thomas (members) and Peter Meredith-Smith, Sarah Watkins and Pat Vogt (Assembly officials).

1.4 David Felce advised that Nigel Miller had resigned from the Group as he had stepped down from the Welsh Therapists Advisory Committee - the Committee he was representing on the LDIAG. A replacement was being sought.

Action : Secretariat

2. Report back on the meeting with the Minister.

2.1 David Felce advised that he and Roger Banks had attended the meeting with the Minister on 21st October to discuss Version 12 of the Policy Paper. Both considered the meeting to be a very positive one and were of the opinion that the Minister would be prepared to issue a contemporary Policy Statement providing she was happy with the end product. She had indicated that a more distilled document would be welcome. He added that developing targets and priorities within reasonable resource investment expectations were also discussed. The Minister had suggested that contemporaneous priorities needed to be considered and that the Group should not be too wedded to the priorities for the 1983 Strategy. The Minister explained that as the Assembly worked on a three year budget cycle it would not be possible to look further ahead than this and suggested that in the first instance the sub group needed to discuss resources with officials. She added that when considering resources the Group needed to be mindful of where existing resources could be applied in a different way. The Minister also indicated that she was keen for the LDIAG to build links with equivalent groups in England such as the sub groups carrying forward the employment issues set out in 'Valuing People' and the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit which was looking into services for disabled people. Some of these issues were non devolved. Members agreed that it was important that the meeting with the Minister had taken place.

Action : Policy Statement sub group

3. The Children's National Service Framework consultation document

3.1 The Children's NSF consultation document was circulated to members prior to the meeting. There was a general discussion on the document and in particular the specific questions raised in the consultation. Particular concern was expressed about: the lack of acknowledgement of the particular problems faced by children with a learning disability and how these may be met; the lack of reference to the needs of children who have parents with a learning disability; and the philosophy of Children First not being enshrined at the start of the document.

Action: Jim Crowe and Ian Ferris offered to put together the LDIAG's response to the consultation document. Members agreed to send their initial comments to Jim Crowe and Ian Ferris by 8th December who would then draft a response to the consultation and circulate to the Group.

4. Initial consideration of the LA's responses to the Service Principles/ Service Responses guidance

4.1 All the local authority action plans were circulated to members prior to the meeting. There was a general discussion on the plans. Particular points raised were the degree of consultation and collaboration that had taken place; the lack of a reference to health in the bids; the emphasis on building capacity rather than direct services; and little evidence of joint working. John Carter reminded the Group that the sub group could advise the Minister about any aspects of the bids they wished but that ultimately what was incorporated in each action plan was a matter for local consultation and local determination. On monitoring the action plans members were advised that there would be two levels of checks – the District Audit statement of expenditure process which would confirm that the money allocated had been spent appropriately; and an annual implementation monitoring report. John Carter confirmed that the Group would have an input into what form the monitoring report should take and invited members to submit their ideas to the Secretariat. He added that the Action Plans would be placed in the Assembly Library in due course.

Action : Members were invited to forward their ideas on the monitoring report to the Secretariat by 12th January 2005.

5. Presentation on the Pearl Health Project – Mike Kerr

5.1 Mike Kerr gave a presentation on the PEARL Health Project. Members were given the opportunity to raise queries and provide comments and a discussion followed. The Group was reminded that the Minister was still hoping to get annual health checks for people with a learning disability into the GP Contract. It was suggested that Andrew Dearden, BMA should be invited to a future LDIAG meeting and that this should be after the Group had had the opportunity to discuss whether health checks should be given higher priority in the LA Action Plans in future years. The Group thanked Mike Kerr for his interesting and thought provoking presentation.

Action : Secretariat

6. Minutes of the last meeting (14th October 2004)

6.1 The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

7. Action Log and Matters arising

7.1 Draft Mental Health Bill – David Felce advised that the LDIAG's comments on the draft Mental Health Bill had been relayed to the Minister and the Parliamentary Scrutiny Committee. Copies of the two letters were circulated to members under cover of an e.mail dated 27th October. The Group indicated that it would wish to see the Ministers response to the Joint Committee.

Action : Secretariat

7.2 Employment – David Felce advised that Steve Beyer was in contact with DH on this. Liz Neal said that she was working on the information required on ELWA.

Action : David Felce/Liz Neal]

7.3 Unified Assessment Process

- a draft letter for consideration by the Group is to be drawn up by Jim Crowe.

[**Action** : Jim Crowe].

- John Carter advised the Group that in the margins of the meeting with the Minister on 21 October the Minister had suggested that Howard Teague might give a further presentation to the Group and that if the Group was agreeable this could be arranged.

Action: Members/Secretariat.

7.4 A Person Centred Approach – John Carter advised that a ‘glossy’ version of this document would be available in the near future.

7.5 Advocacy – Paul Lawrence advised that he was on the steering group for the advocacy umbrella body and that its constitution was currently under consideration. This suggested that the possibility of a joint advocacy conference was some way off.

7.6 Resettlement – Jim Crowe asked how the plan to build a new residential unit for 8 people in the grounds of Bryn y Neuadd fitted in with ‘Fulfilling the Promises’. It was agreed that clarification of the justification for this should be sought along with confirmation of whether there would be consultation on the revised proposals for re-provisioning.

Action: Secretariat.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Supporting People – Jim Crowe brought to members attention the proposals under consideration for cutting the Supporting People Grant. It was agreed that this would be considered further in the December meeting

Action: Secretariat

8.2 Communication Action Plan – A Job Description and Person Specification for the Implementation Advisory Group Information Officer were circulated at the meeting. Members recognised that it was the Group’s Communication Action Plan and that the Group must have ownership of it.

Any Communication Action Plan sub group set up would need to clear about its remit and correspond regularly. Members were asked to provide Jim Crowe with comments on the Job Description/Person Specification by 25th November. The plan was to place an advert for this post the following week. It was agreed that the Group needed to give further consideration to monitoring the implementation of their Communication Strategy at the December meeting.

Action : Members/Jim Crowe

8.3 Membership of the Group – David Felce advised that Roger Banks had stood down as Chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (Learning Disabilities) Welsh Division and his place taken by Helen Matthews. Both Roger Banks and Helen Matthews considered that the Chair of the Welsh Division should be the representative on the LDIAG. David Felce suggested the Group should agree to Roger Banks' place on the Group being taken by Helen Matthews and that Roger Banks should be co-opted to the Advocacy and Policy Statement sub groups until their work was completed. This was agreed unanimously.

Action : David Felce to inform Roger Banks

9. Date of Next Meeting

9.1 Members noted that the fifteenth meeting of the Implementation Advisory Group would take place on Thursday, 16th December 2004 at the Media Resource Centre, Llandrindod Wells.

Alyson Collins