

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE – 25 MARCH 2013

REPORT ON: CONSULTATION – KEMBACK STREET ADULT RESOURCE CENTRE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 155-2013

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief members of the Committee on planned consultation with service users and carers regarding future support for adults with a learning disability in relation to the Director of Social Work's proposal to close Kemback Street Adult Resource Centre.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree the process for consultation highlighted within sections 4.4 – 4.9 of this report.

2.2 It is recommended that Committee agree to the appointment of an independent consultant who will support the consultation.

2.3 It is recommended that Committee remit to the Director of Social Work to present a further report following the conclusion of the proposed consultation process.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.0 The financial implications of engaging an independent consultant to be involved in the consultation process will be up to £10,000.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 On 23 January 2012 Report No 28-2012 "Future Supports for Adults with a Learning Disability in Dundee" was agreed by the Social Work and Health Committee. The report set out the recommended policy direction for future supports for citizens of Dundee who have a learning disability and/or autism.

4.2 A further Report No 149-2012 was submitted to Social Work and Health Committee on 26 March 2012 outlining an implementation plan for change. Within this report the proposed closure of Kemback Street Resource Centre was outlined as part of a broader move towards more personalised supports in line with national policy for adults with a learning disability and/or autism and legislation regarding Self Directed Support which was at that point in the final stages of its parliamentary passage.

4.3 Following a complaint being received and upheld by the Care Inspectorate about the consultation process regarding the proposed closure, Dundee City Council were also notified by Solicitors acting for one of the service users of Kemback Street Resource Centre that a Petition for Judicial Review seeking to overturn the decision to close the Centre would be lodged in the Court of session. In light of the prolonged period of uncertainty for service users and their families which would result from a Court process, it was recommended that a fresh consultation regarding the future of the Centre be carried out and that in the meantime Kemback Street Adult Resource Centre would not close. This proposal was considered and agreed by Social Work and Health Committee on 25 February 2013 and the Director of Social Work was tasked with presenting a further report highlighting the proposed procedure for the consultation.

- 4.4 It is proposed that both collective and individual consultation should be undertaken and that this will commence in May 2013. The Director of Social Work's proposal to close Kemback Street Adult Resource Centre is part of a wider programme of change and it is therefore important that further consultation takes this wider programme of change into account. It is believed that the opportunity for service users and carers to be part of collective consultation will enable discussion about the context for the proposed closure. Individual discussions with service users and carers will be of equal importance and this process will enable further discussion about the assessed needs of each individual and the supports which they require to be in place.
- 4.5 It is proposed that an independent consultant will be involved in both the collective and individual consultation processes. The reason for involving an independent consultant will be to validate that the consultation has been carried out properly. There will be a cost related to the engagement of an independent consultant.
- 4.6 It is proposed that this collective consultation process will involve several group discussions for service users and for carers. Service users and carers will be invited to meetings which will be held both during the day and in the evenings to maximise each person's ability to attend. The number of sessions will be confirmed in conjunction with the independent consultant, however, it is anticipated that approximately 4 sessions for service users and 4 for carers will be required to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to attend the session. The Service Manager will lead each session with those involving service users being undertaken alongside other members of the Learning Disability Service who are known to all service users and who can ensure the means of communication is effective for each person. Where individuals require specific communication aids these will be available for use in line with the recommendations made by the Care Inspectorate following their investigation into the complaint received about the consultation process.. The sessions will cover the context for future developments, including the Director of Social Work's proposal to close Kemback Street Adult Resource Centre. There will also be a number of prepared questions for service users and carers to consider about future supports for adults with a learning disability and/ or autism and an opportunity to ask the Service Manager any related questions. Independent advocacy support will be offered where required.
- 4.7 It is proposed that the individual consultation and discussion with service users and their carers take place which will focus on the assessed needs of each person and the supports which are required to meet identified needs. Each service user and their carer will be invited to attend a meeting or meetings led by the Service Manager of the Learning Disability Service. There will be Care Management representation at the meetings as well as the attendance of an independent consultant. It is envisaged that the consultant's role would be to validate the process being followed as opposed to engage in the detail of discussion about individuals' circumstances. Individuals may choose to bring a representative or independent advocate to the meetings to assist the process. It is anticipated that some individuals may choose not to engage in another individual meeting however further involvement will be encouraged to ensure every opportunity for the sharing of information and effective planning for the future.
- 4.8 Following the consultation sessions being completed all contributions will be collated, analysed and the findings presented in the form of recommendations to the Social Work and Health Committee for consideration. The outcome of the consultation process will also be shared with service users and carers directly.
- 4.9 It should be noted that some service users have already chosen to stop attending Kemback Street Adult Resource Centre. They will be advised of the consultation and given the opportunity to take part in it if they so wish but, where individuals have already made decisions about future alternative supports and are anxious to progress these it is anticipated that they will continue to be supported to effect this change. However, this will be within the context of the further consultation which is planned and individuals will have an opportunity to await the outcomes of this where that is their preference. It is crucial over the coming months that all service users and their families are supported in decision making which is specific to their own circumstances and wishes. The Director of Social Work will also make clear to all consultees that while she has recommended that Kemback Street Adult Resource Centre be closed, the final decision will be taken by the Social Work and Health Committee in due course taking account of the representations received during the consultation exercise.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and will be made available on the Council website <http://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv/equipact/>

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Equality Impact Assessment.

JENNI TOCHER
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

DATE: 14/03/2013