

ANGUS COUNCIL**SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE25 FEBRUARY 1997****DRAFT FRAMEWORK FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SCOTLAND****REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK****ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this report is to provide members with a copy of the joint response from the Community Care Joint Commissioning Group members to the Scottish Office draft document, A Framework for Mental Health Services in Scotland (a copy of which is available in the Members' Lounge).

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:

Notes the response made to the Scottish Office from members of the Angus Joint Commissioning Group for Community Care.

2. BACKGROUND

Members of the Social Work Committee will be aware of the development of the Angus Mental Health Strategy. A draft strategy was distributed for comment in the early summer of last year. Following a period of consultation the planning stage has now been completed and the work to develop the strategy has moved to the implementation stage. Details of any proposed developments will be brought to Committee on an ongoing basis.

This report specifically relates to a response which has been prepared by the Joint Commissioning Group for Community Care to a Scottish Office draft document which outlines guidance for planning and the development of mental health services.

Members will note that the response welcomes the document and stresses the consistency with the work which we are developing locally with our planning partners. The main content of the letter of response provides the Scottish Office with some brief comments relating to our experience so far and how this could be highlighted for the benefit of others who have not reached the same stage in planning their strategy.

The letter of response is appended to this report for members information.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. CONSULTATION

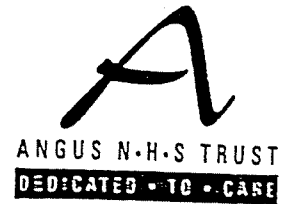
The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration, the Director of Finance and the Director of Housing have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

17 February 1997

W B Robertson
Director of Social Work

Note: The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to a material extent in preparing this report:-

A Framework for Mental Health services in Scotland. A Consultation Draft - Scottish Office 1996.



31 January 1997

Mr David Steel
Head of Health Gain
NHS Management Executive
Room 56
St Andrews House
EDINBURGH
EH1 3DE

Dear Mr Steel

DRAFT FRAMEWORK FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SCOTLAND

We are responding jointly to your letter of 28 October seeking comments on this document. We are very gratified to see that the draft framework is entirely consistent with the approach we used last year in producing our own strategy for the future delivery of mental health services in Angus. Having already applied, in Angus, the essential features of a local mental health strategy proposed within the framework, we can confirm that a successful plan can be developed which is tailored to the needs of local communities.

In Angus, we have now moved beyond the strategic planning stage and are about to enter the implementation phase. We feel we have already identified a number of key success factors in the process we have used and would like to highlight these in the hope that others can learn from our experience.

First, we support the notion that the draft framework is not intended to be a blueprint for mental health services and that, to be successful, local plans must be developed which reflect local needs. Anything which might be viewed as prescriptive or formula driven is likely to be regarded with suspicion and will not attract the local support which is essential to the delivery of a strategy.

In our view, the key to a successful mental health strategy is the commitment of the statutory agencies to work together and to share agendas at every stage. This needs to be underpinned by real commitment from the top of each organisation involved and this has been a major factor in the success of the Angus Mental Health Strategy. Early on, the Health Board, Angus Council, Angus NHS Trust and voluntary organisations made a public commitment to delivering the strategy and indicated a willingness to move resources to achieve objectives. This has been underpinned by the

creation of a Joint Commissioning Group which includes not only the Health Board and Angus Council, but members of the Trust Executive Team, which has allowed a genuinely joint focus to develop and has helped to strengthen relationships between the members of the group.

Linked to this has been the very clear commitment to the implementation of the strategy and the recognition that the strategy itself is merely the means to an end rather than an end in itself. We have ensured that all those who wished to become involved in the detailed planning have been able to contribute and there has been significant involvement of both health and social work staff in the detailed planning as well as voluntary organisations, users and carers. This has allowed people to feel involved in the process and has given them confidence that, with their help, things can and will change.

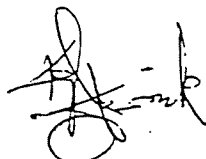
Finally, we believe that the role of the chairman in a multi-agency group planning mental health services is of paramount importance. The selection of Lis Hill as chair of the Angus Mental Health Strategic Planning Group was a key factor in the success of the strategy and her role as honest broker cannot be overstated. Her impartiality allowed the group to plan constructively and eroded the boundaries between agencies.

As we move into the implementation phase during 1997/98, we will be working towards even greater inter-agency collaboration and we see this as the single biggest factor in the successful delivery of a local mental health strategy.

Yours sincerely



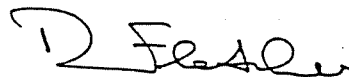
W Robertson
Director of Social Work
Angus Council



K G Fenwick
Director of Housing
Angus Council



Mrs J Wellden
Angus General Manager
Tayside Health Board



R Fletcher
Chief Executive
Angus NHS Trust