

FINAL REPORT

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

POLICY REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAY CARE REVIEW

DECEMBER 2002

SUMMARY

The Care Services and Housing Management Overview and Scrutiny Panel commenced its policy review of implementation of the Day Care Review in October 2000, following a direction from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to undertake scrutiny of this issue.

The Panel's original remit was to scrutinise the implementation of the Day Care Review specifically for older people and this continued until July 2001. However, in February 2001, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission agreed that the review terms of reference should be widened to include day care for adults of all ages. The Panel therefore continued to work on this part of the review up to September 2002.

The findings on both parts of the review are now drawn up and brought together in one document.

Part One refers to the Review of Implementation of the Day Care Review for Older People.

Part Two refers to the Review of Implementation of the Day Care Review for Other Adults.

There are specific recommendations relating to each part of the review and these are contained in the relevant parts of the document.

FOREWORD BY PANEL CHAIR

(to be completed prior to final publication)

PART ONE

CARE SERVICES AND HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT POLICY REVIEW SCRUTINY PANEL ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAY CARE REVIEW FOR OLDER PEOPLE

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1. Terms of Reference

MEMBERS OF THE POLICY REVIEW SCRUTINY PANEL

From October 2000:-

Councillor Sheila Knight – Panel Chair
Councillor Jan Jones – Vice Chair (Chair of the Older People Review)
Councillor Sam Chaudhry *
Councilor Michael Mannion
Councillor Dennis Pearce
Councillor Mark Thompson
Also Councillor Brian White (Substitute Member for Councillor Thompson)

* Councillor Joyce Paton replaced Councillor Chaudhry from May 2001

From October 2001:-

Councillor Sheila Knight – Chair *
Councillor Jan Jones – Vice Chair
Councillor Margaret Brierly
Councillor John Cole
Councillor Iain Dysart
Councillor Michael Mannion
Councillor Joyce Paton
Councillor Dennis Pearce

* Councillor Vivien Guy replaced Councillor Sheila Knight and chaired the Panel from March 2002

From May 2002:-

Councillor Sheila Knight – Chair
Councillor Margaret Brierly – Vice Chair
Councillor Tony Giles
Councillor Dorothy Kilsby
Councillor Beth Mitchell
Councillor Dennis Pearce
Councillor Amanda Ramsay

OFFICER SUPPORT FOR THE PANEL

Officer Support for the Panel has been supplied by scrutiny officers from the Chief Executive's Department, Scrutiny Team, at Merton Civic Centre. If you wish to discuss any aspect of this report, please contact Barbara Jarvis, Scrutiny Officer on 020 8545 3390 or by e-mail on Barbara.jarvis@merton.gov.uk

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REPORT OF THE POLICY REVIEW SCRUTINY PANEL ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAY CARE REVIEW FOR OLDER PEOPLE

SEPTEMBER 2001

1. The Panel's Key Conclusions

The policy published in 1999, to change day care for older people appears to have failed and we have yet to see the intended benefits. The objective of channelling older people referred to day care, into more inclusive & mainstream activities did not yet take place. What has happened is a money saving operation with fewer people getting a service and even less in the future. Those that still have places are getting fewer days and frequently what is on offer is more institutionalised than was on offer in London Borough of Merton Older Peoples' Day Centres before.

The panel undertook a large number of visits to day centres and viewed activities that were taking place within centres run by Merton and the Voluntary sector. Staff from both Merton and the voluntary sector gave their total co-operation at panel meetings and during the visits that were undertaken. Members of the Panel would like to record their appreciation of the time and helpfulness that was given by all those who have assisted the panel in its work.

Many aspects of the change were not thought out for example the transport needs of older people to go to alternative destinations do not appear to have been considered. There was no evidence of consultation with transport at the time or rethinking how it is delivered and there is now spare capacity in the transport system, which has still not been taken up.

There is a need to provide transport to those who have dropped out of day care, to allow them to be involved in community activities such as shopping trips. Transport is a key factor in widening the opportunities for older people and make for more flexibility. It could also benefit from working with the various voluntary transport schemes in the borough. Simon Williams and Helen Catling started to discuss this and have identified the under use of transport and the possibility of trips out for shopping, library visits, garden visits, etc are to be encouraged. However, this has still not materialised.

The panel were concerned that the money allocated to fund new and innovative services did not materialise. The 2 or 3 projects that were funded were more of the same types of services already offered and did not look at providing innovative day care activities.

It was clear that there has been a lack of communication between day centres and Social Services staff at the centre, Managers and staff of day care centres

appear to have little involvement in central planning despite in some cases day centre managers trying to engage with Social Services. No monitoring of service delivery regarding customer satisfaction and the necessary level of need, appear to have taken place.

Users talked to, showed much uncertainty about what was happening with the provision of day care services. Those who had moved to other day centres felt that they had not been consulted about their wishes and some found what they were offered conflicted with voluntary day care they already attended. Others expressed uncertainty about the future of the day centre they attended knowing that 2 centres within the borough had already closed.

Those who under the new eligibility criteria were considered not to have high needs were transferred to voluntary sector day centres en bloc. No efforts were made to develop pathways to more mainstream activities or to encourage and help voluntary agencies to provide a wider range of provision. At least one voluntary sector organisation had to move other people out to move statutory day centre groups in with no choice of friendship networks or days of the week.

A major concern on visits to remaining day centres was that in 2 out of 3 activity levels and choices had dwindled drastically and staff roles appeared to have changed in that there appeared to be clear patterns of inclusion and exclusion.

It is unclear how much individual wishes were taken into account when they were reassessed. At some stage the new eligibility criteria will need to be reviewed as to whether the removal of day care for medium and lower needs has meant more demand on other services, as well as consumer and carer satisfaction. Concern was also expressed about rehabilitation. A feature of the reassessment had been that much higher number of men than women who it was considered needed 3 to 5 days of day care.

The panel was also unhappy about the time being taken to move the Asian Elderly Group of Merton and Merton African Caribbean Organisation into Taylor Road which on current plans has still not happened despite the building becoming available two years ago.

If more funding became available then a lot more work needs to be done to reconfigure older people's day activities. The panel supports the overall policy but the concerns are how it has in fact not been implemented. Much more formal consultation needs to take place including questionnaires focus groups etc. If voluntary organisations are expected to pick up more of the work then this needs to be negotiated rather than just transferred and they have ideas and experience of alternative ways and would want to participate from day one.

The areas in the remaining day centres that cause concern are the more limited activities, which are even further away from the policy objectives of change.

There is also concern about integrating people with functional and organic (dementia) mental illness and offering an appropriate response for ethnic elders. Training for staff, guidelines for what older people's day care could offer should be developed across statutory, independent not for profit and voluntary sectors and social services should tackle this as a matter of urgency.

2. Introduction

The Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 18 July 2000 agreed that the issue of the Implementation of the Day Care Review should be scheduled into the Scrutiny Commission timetable. At its meeting on 5 September 2000, the Commission agreed that this item would be a matter for policy review and was passed to the Policy Review Scrutiny Panel for Care Services, Housing Management and Support.

The Panel met 7 times between October 2000 and July 2001 and Officers from Housing and Social Services attended various meetings to assist in giving further information to the Panel. Members from voluntary organisation were also asked to provide written evidence and to attend meetings to assist the panel with its work. The Panel Members also undertook visits to various in-house and voluntary day care providers.

3. Background

In April 2000 a report by the Social Services Committee made proposals for a new model of day services for older people in Merton. The changes included a revised eligibility criteria that would identify older people with High, Medium and Low intensity needs. The point made by the review's aims was not closure, but provision of more integrated activities in society as a whole, i.e. inclusion not exclusion. Funds to facilitate these changes would be made available from the Prevention Grant and from the closure of Taylor Road Day Centre, Carter House Day Centre and eventually Pollards Hill Day Centre

4. Current Position

At the Panel's first meeting, Officers from Social Services gave the panel an update on the Implementation of the Day Care Review. Taylor Road Day Centre had closed and the building at present remains empty. The needs of clients from Taylor Road were reassessed and were then transferred to groups within the voluntary sector with the majority being placed with Age Concern.

Bids had been submitted from Merton African Caribbean Organisation (MACO) and the *Asian Elderly Group of Merton (AEGM)* for the use of Taylor Road. AEGM has now been offered two days use of Taylor Road, but has still not moved in. (MACO sadly has now ceased to function). However money from the

closure of Taylor Road that had originally been made available for the Implementation of the Day Care Review, had been significantly depleted as funds had been used to reduce the Social Services budget overspend. Funds from the prevention grant were still available although it had been decided not to spend all the funds in that financial year 2000/2001. The Panel acknowledged that this had placed officers in a difficult situation as they were trying to implement plans that were based on funds no longer available.

The Panel examined details of 13 low intensity bids that had been received from community groups but were concerned that the activities offered were not expanding on the services already offered within traditional day care, but were more of the same. 3 Low intensity bids had been accepted at this point as follows

St Marks Family Centre (Mitcham)	£2392
The Lantern Centre (Raynes Park)	£ 720
Friends in St Helier (Morden)	£5500
Total	£8612

5. The Panel's Visits to Day Centres

In order to find out how day care is operating and to hear the views of those who attend, the Panel decided to visit day centres within the borough and experience first hand the quality and quantity of services being provided. Each Panel Member visited between 1 and 3 day centres and spent time at the centres observing activities, talking with users of the centres to gauge their opinions and talking to staff who are providing the services. During December 2000 the Members of the Panel visited the following day centres.

Age Concern
St. Marks
MACO
Woodland Day Centre
Lantern Centre
Wimbledon Guild
Eastway Day Centre
Friends in St Helier (FISH)
Merton & Morden Guild
Pollards Hill Day Centre

The Panel found that differing degrees of service were being provided throughout the borough. The main areas of concerns highlighted are shown in the Panels conclusions.

6. Representatives from Voluntary Sector Day Centres

The Panel invited representatives from voluntary sector day centres in Merton to attend its meeting on 11 April 2001 to share their views and experiences of the Implementation of the Day Care Review. The following representatives attended the meeting.

Rosemary Snell - Wimbledon Guild

Hamish Duncan - Merton and Morden Guild
Anne Donaghy

Brenda Stacey - Friends in St Helier
Rev. Bill Muncey

Age Concern were also invited to attend but were unfortunately unable to send a representative on this occasion.

The representatives were welcomed to the meeting and asked to give frank comments about their experiences of how the Day Care Review had been implemented from their perspective. The representatives gave their comments and gave examples of how they are developing their own services. They explained that some consultation had taken place under the previous Social Services Committee but had been completed in a hurry and was felt to be flawed. Consequently, pressure had been placed on Social Workers to deal with referrals, who in turn placed pressure on day centres to accept clients, some of which were unsuitable for the centre they were allocated. Some clients are now receiving day care throughout the week at various centres, whilst others have slipped through the net, particularly those whose needs have been assessed down.

The biggest problem faced by the voluntary sector in providing day care is the need for adequate transport. Merton and Morden Guild have their own transport and do offer some services. The cost of using Merton's transport is very expensive at the present time. Some users of the service have complained about the length of the journey time to day centres and some clients have been put off by this. Some areas within the borough are disadvantaged, particularly those on the boundaries and journey times would be particularly lengthy if pick ups were made from these areas and in some instances individuals do not have access to the service.

The voluntary sector representatives felt that monitoring of the new services has not been clear and it was difficult to gauge how effective the change in services

had been. It was highlighted that some of Merton's day centres are still providing institutionalised day care and not promoting activity and quality of life

The voluntary sector representatives explained to the panel how they are trying different ways to provide day care to suit everyone. In particular Wimbledon Guild is promoting shorter sessions for people who do not like the more traditional day centre. This involves a separate morning and afternoon session with some activity or guest speaker. Each session will provide a hot meal. These sessions have proved very popular and successful. Clients are involved in discussion for change and will more readily accept changes if they have been involved and know why the change is happening. Clients are also regularly surveyed for their views. Examples were given of the positive activities being provided by the groups, which included some traditional ones such as bingo, at the clients' request.

7. Transport

Merton's Transport Manager attending a meeting at the invitation of the panel as the issue of transport and been raised on numerous occasions throughout the Panels visits and meeting with users and providers.

It was established that because of the closure of Carter House and Taylor Road, there is now spare capacity in the service and there is scope for remodelling the transport service to be more responsive to the needs of the users. Systems are already being purchased that would aid the booking and routing of the transport.

Discussions were held around providing more flexible hours for day care to reduce the intensive use of transport at peak times and combine social service use with education use. The Panel agreed that a questionnaire could be sent to users of the services to gauge their views on this and to ask for other suggestions that may have regarding trips they may wish to go on.

The cost of the service to organisations such as Friends in St Helier (FISH) and Wimbledon Guild has been highlighted as a concern. The transport service is not run for profit but because the vehicles are leased the cost of providing a service is expensive. If vehicles were purchased they would always have some residual value and there would be freedom to upgrade with no termination or lease costs involved. FISH in particular feels its activities are limited by the transport available.

8. Pollards Hill Day Centre

The issue of Pollards Hill Day Centre and the proposal from Commonsides Community Development Trust Community Centre to run medium and low intensity services was discussed at the one of the panel meetings. Members did express some concern over this issue but felt this would be an issue that should

dealt with through the scrutiny process but outside of the Policy Review Scrutiny Panel.

9. Recommendations

1. Transport facilities are crucial for many groups that want and can benefit from day care. Give consideration to unlocking the potential of Merton's transport fleet, by staggering activities within the day centres throughout the day, possibly allowing centres to stay open later and utilise the vehicles when they are not busy. The Transport Manager needs to be included from the beginning. The Panel would like to see progress on this issue in 6 month time. In fact, now well over one year later, no progress has been made.
2. Before any further plans are made, discussions should take place with users and carers and full proper and extensive consultation should take place with all involved including users and staff and preferably led by an independent team.
3. That no reduction in service takes place at Pollards Hill (quality or quantity) until Woodlands (Colliers wood) has returned from its temporary relocation at Carter House Raynes Park. An adequate service could not be provided when there are only two centres one in Raynes Park and one in Cannon Hill leading to very long journeys for older frail people in Mitcham.
4. That, following the Panel's report being made, consideration be given to a meeting /workshop being held, to which all those connected with day centres could be invited. These will facilitate an open dialogue between social services department and centres, to exchange ideas and practices to plan developments and create a joined up service between provider and staff. These meeting should continue on a regular basis at something like 6 monthly intervals.
5. That formal Monitoring should be introduced to gauge the quality and quantity of services provided. This monitoring should involve the users of the service.
6. That no facilities are withdrawn until all users are actually happily placed in new activities.
7. That there is an improvement in the services offered at Woodlands and no other changes take place until assessments are up to date (180 outstanding at the meeting this was discussed at) and an evaluation has been done as to how far high need is being met.
8. That a simple questionnaire, with a few suggestions for trips, together with an explanatory letter, be prepared and distributed to day centres including those

in the voluntary sector, to take advantage of spare capacity within transport. In fact, this did not happen.

9. A suggestion has been made to consider that older people's day centres be renamed resource centres. This is a concept on how they are provided which should be explored with the users
10. To consider the lessons of what went wrong when plans are being considered for changes to Day Care for Other Adults.

10. Future Work of the Panel

The Panel will have another meeting in March/April next year to consider reports and to review how matters have progressed.

The Panel will continue its work on considering the Day Care for Other Adults within the borough.

11. Expressions of Thanks

The Scrutiny Panel would like to thank all the staff and members of Day Centres who welcomed us and answered our questions (and apologies even if one Bingo session had to be cancelled). We would also thank all those who came to the Panel meetings to share their experiences with us.

We would also particularly like to thank Simon Williams who came to most meetings, contributed and worked well with us all and who of course inherited this situation, as he had not been party to the original decisions, but who is now in the situation of having to find solutions to the general failure to implement the policy.

PART TWO

POLICY REVIEW SCRUTINY OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAY CARE REVIEW FOR OTHER ADULTS

SEPTEMBER 2002

C O N T E N T S

- 1. Introduction and Baseline Position**
- 2. Visits to Day Centres**
- 3. The Views of Service Providers/Service Users**
- 4. Key Issues Raised by the Panel**
- 5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

1. Introduction and Baseline Position

A scrutiny policy review was agreed, to examine the implementation of the Day Care Review and identify the extent to which its aims had been achieved and where there were any concerns to be addressed. Responsibility for the scrutiny review was passed to the Care Services and Housing Management Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The terms of reference for the original policy review focused on day care for older people and the Panel's findings relating to this area are found in Part 1 of this report. However, due to the Panel's findings that implementation of the older peoples' day care review had let older people down, in February 2001, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission agreed that the Terms of Reference should be widened to include day care for adults of all ages. This would ensure that a full overview of the implementation of the day care review across all the Authority's day centres was obtained. The Panel's work programme was subsequently amended to include this scrutiny.

2. Visits to Day Centres

Members of the Panel agreed that they would like to visit the day centres which cater for adults other than older people, to see the facilities offered, how these centres operated and to speak to clients and staff there.

In May 2001, letters were sent to the day centres, advising that Panel Members wished to make visits to the centres over the summer period, as they had done as part of the scrutiny review for older peoples' day care. Members agreed that it would be best if one or two of them visited each centre and reported back on the findings, rather than the whole Panel visit every centre.

Visits to Weir Road, All Saints, JMC, High Path, and the Guardian Centre were subsequently undertaken. Specific issues which arose from visits to Weir Road and All Saints Day Centres have emerged as follows:-

Weir Road

During an overview of the current work being undertaken at Weir Road, which houses the Learning Disabilities Employment Assessment Centre and which focuses on work activities, the discussion included a focus on the following key points:

- The critical issue is that people were already going outside of Weir Road into other activities, although the advice was that Weir Road would be closed to allow that to happen; older peoples' day centres had not taken this approach and therefore the closure of Weir Road was opposed;

- Client assessments – these are currently ongoing and no meetings will take place with carers until the assessments are completed, so that a full picture of need is available;
- Alternatives being considered – the majority of clients are interested in some form of work (sheltered, voluntary or paid); some are looking for a college placement. A lot of the work available would be supported work or work experience in sheltered workshops;
- The social aspect of Weir Road was emphasised as being important to a lot of clients;
- Weir Road has attempted to introduce a wider range of activities and the Best Value criticism is that the service needs to move more towards paid employment where possible;
- The current trend of fewer employment opportunities generally as compared with the 1970s and 1980s was emphasised as a problem when trying to secure work placements generally;
- It was regretted that Merton Social Services had decided not to work in partnership with National Mencap partners, who have particularly had much success in this field and who were very keen to enter into a partnership with Weir Road. After withdrawing, Merton Social Services has made no further moves in this direction until recent months in 2002.
- Weir Road has been careful not to push clients towards work when they feel they are not ready for it; so work experience and voluntary work can be a useful starting point; carers/clients have the final say; trust needs to be built up;
- Panel were advised that there are no targets set for paid employment, however there is benchmarking and within the London learning disability mapping, Merton comes low. It was confirmed that a decision on Weir Road would not be rushed into and when all assessments are completed, the results would be analysed, so that needs can be properly met, with new opportunities identified; there will possibly be a decision in November on where the service is to be taken – the current service will be maintained in the meantime.
- Clients' and carers' fear is that Weir Road could close without there being an alternative available;
- There was concern expressed over whether there was the staff and resources to carry out any change, if clients are to be in different situations and locations. Transport was also a factor to be considered as this had been a major problem with the older people day care review. Members were advised that transport provision had improved but there could sometimes be problems, although travel training was done with carers and clients. The Panel was advised that meetings on the Joint Investment Plan were still taking place and also meetings with health providers. There was some co-option of carers onto meetings. Any changed programme would need the appropriate resourcing;
- The issue of vacancies being sold to other authorities was raised, which brought in some income e.g. Sutton has purchased places in the JMC for

some years – there was concern that this might encourage sale of places rather than use by the home authority. However, it was emphasised that all social services establishments have to raise income in some way and Weir Road actually generates income of around £20,000 p.a. The Best Value Review of Learning Disabilities mentions the letting of buildings at evenings and weekends. There is already some voluntary organisations using Weir Road, but there is no charge made for this;

- There was concern over whether clients moving into community based activities would be welcome and whether full integration was likely to be achieved in any case. It was acknowledged that this could be a problem;
- The assessment exercise could be seen as valuable, in that it refocuses on the real needs of clients and helps to highlight the value of what is already in place;
- The importance of not changing just for changes' sake was emphasised; however the department had endeavoured to be honest to carers and clients, even though this may have caused some anxiety;
- The use of training agencies to provide courses was suggested and it was emphasised that the assessments are being undertaken in line with the agreed criteria. The Panel stressed the need for any service provision to be as fair and as imaginative as possible and there was also a need to take account of the value of respite aspect of care.

The Panel agreed that the discussion had been interesting and informative and the Chair thanked everyone for attending.

All Saints

During the Panel's discussion on facilities at All Saints Day Centre, which caters for adults with physical disabilities, the redundant top floor of the All Saints Day Centre, which is currently not of a sufficient standard to be used, was raised. Members were advised that options were being looked at, including new-build or transfer to another Council building. The possibilities for seeking external funding in order to develop and promote the building were also discussed, including the suggestion that the building could have a shared use with other organisations. The Panel also discussed the possibility of a Centre for Independent Living (CIL) being set up at this location.

It was acknowledged that a range of new activities is being explored. The need for more flexible transport provision was again highlighted, as was the need for suitable service provision for younger people. There was also the need to look at the issue of young peoples' transition from school to work or college. There was concern about the Centre's attraction for younger people, but that should not mean withdrawal of a service for those who do value All Saints.

The suggestion was made that a local forum could possibly be established for the sharing of issues between service users and providers.

3. The Views of Service Providers/Service Users

As part of the policy review, the views of various service providers were heard. These included the Head of Community Care, the Vocational Services Manager at Springfield Hospital, the Council's Transport Manager and the managers and staff of Weir Road and All Saints Day Centres.

During Panel Members' visits to the various day centres around the Borough, the views of service users were heard. One of the most common issues raised by the carers of people using Weir Road and other service users was the transport service provided, which was generally considered to be inflexible.

The Panel expressed its appreciation of all those who contributed to the scrutiny process, who responded to Members' questions and provided information.

4. Key Issues Raised by the Panel

Apart from the issues highlighted with regard to Weir Road and All Saints Day Centre as outlined above, other key concerns were highlighted by the Panel Members during the course of their work:-

▪ Transport .

This issue emerged as a major concern, particularly with regard to its lack of flexibility, as well as length of journey time and this is reflected in the Panel's final recommendations. As part of the discussion on this issue, the Panel was advised that there is a gap in transport schedules. Members therefore made various suggestions for increasing the use by day centres of the transport service. These included:-

- trips to shopping centres;
- trips to Merton Adult College or local libraries;
- visits to garden centres, both local and further afield, such as Wisley;
- drives around London;
- trips to Merton Abbey Mills;
- links with Greenwich Leisure on visits to swimming pools;
- introduction of a shopmobility scheme e.g. to Centre Court, Wimbledon.

The Panel suggested that a survey questionnaire be produced and circulated to day centre users, asking them to suggest trips they might wish to see introduced, such as those above, and this was subsequently done. However, at the time of writing this report, the Panel notes with regret that this initiative does not appear to have been progressed.

▪ **Chapel Orchard**

The Panel were advised on two issues regarding the future of Chapel Orchard Day Centre, which caters for people with mental health problems. These were

- a) a proposal being consulted on, to transfer management of Chapel Orchard to the Mental Health Trust, and
- b) a change in the emphasis of service provision to that of a more employment based service.

In considering these proposals, the Panel stressed the importance of continuing to meet the needs of those persons not able to work. The continuity of day care services needed to be based on focused treatment; structured activity; self-confidence building; support of drop-in and help into employment.

There was concern about the way this issue had been handled and it was acknowledged that there was considerable opposition to the proposals from staff and users, which could have been limited. The transfer had, as our experience with other day care policies, not adequately involved users or staff, which has created problems. However, the Panel did not oppose these plans.

5. Formal Recommendations

The Panel's report into implementation of the day care review for adults other than older people forms the second part of the overall scrutiny review of implementation of the Day Care Review, which is the culmination of many months of constructive deliberation by the Panel.

Members have listened to all the views expressed and have particularly enjoyed visiting the Borough's day centres and meeting clients and staff. There have been good quality roundtable discussions and the review has involved listening to carers who had previously never wanted their children to go to day centres when they grew up, but who would now rather they stayed there than sitting at home all day.

The following specific recommendations as a result of this part of the policy review were agreed by the Panel at its meeting on 19 September 2002, for linking with the recommendations arising from the policy review relating to older peoples' day care, prior to a report being presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for endorsement and then to Cabinet:-

- (a)** That the urgent need to review the issue of transport to day centres is made very clear to decision makers, as the need to reduce journey times and provide more flexibility in the days and times available for users and their carers is essential; also that issues surrounding Council-run transport should be a high priority when considering the Best Value Review Programme;

- (b)** That community and voluntary groups be invited to give their views on the programme of service provision offered at the Council's day centres, as service users and other people involved need to provide their comments, and that officers be requested to investigate the potential for external funding in support of service enhancements;
- (c)** That officers establish mechanisms to:
- facilitate communications between day centres themselves, and between day centres and Social Services; and
 - ensure opportunities for service users and providers to share and resolve issues; and
 - that the mechanisms established to achieve this are assessed in terms of what is actually provided and arranged. Suggestions include six monthly meetings for staff collectively, to avoid feelings of isolation and social events, such as an annual sports day.
- (d)** That, should the policy changes and actions recommended in this report be accepted by decision-makers, responsibility for implementing and monitoring these changes be agreed and assigned to designated officer(s) as appropriate;