

Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership	Strategic Planning Advisory Group		
Held on:	19th December 2023		
Agenda Item:	12		
Title:	Strategic Advocacy Plan - Development		
Summary:			
<p>The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the recommencement of a Strategic Advocacy Plan for South Ayrshire HSCP.</p>			
Author:	Aaron Cyr – Carers Policy Implementation Officer Planning and Performance		
It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Advisory Group:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Consider the recommencement of the Strategic Advocacy Plan. ii. Agree to proposed strategic timeline. 			
Route to meeting:			
<p>The Strategic Advocacy Plan had initially started with wider agreement in 2018 and progressed alongside national Advocacy Developments. Progress appears to have been intermittent from 2020 and stalled in 2022, prior to being reexplored now in 2023.</p> <p>A discussion meeting with a range of stakeholders was undertaken on the 22nd November 2023. The support generated for the plan and continued development from this meeting formed the basis of attending the DMT on 18th of December 2023. Following submission and approval from the DMT, it was recommended that the recommencement of development seek SPAG approval.</p>			
Directions:		Implications:	
1. No Directions Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Directions to NHS Ayrshire & Arran	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Directions to South Ayrshire Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Directions to both SAC & NHS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Equalities	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		ICT	<input type="checkbox"/>

SOUTH AYRSHIRE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC ADVOCACY PLAN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the recommencement of the Strategic Advocacy Plan's development.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Strategic Planning and Advisory Group:
- i. Consider the recommencement of the Strategic Advocacy Plan.
 - ii. Agree to proposed strategic timeline.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) is committed to ensuring people have their voice heard, can express their needs, make informed decisions and have their rights and interests protected. Advocacy and having access to advocacy is a key component of this commitment, as are both the commissioned and non-commissioned services tasked with ensuring this.
- 3.2 The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 imposed a duty on local authorities and health boards to collaborate to ensure the availability of independent advocacy services in their area. The Act gave everyone with mental illness, learning disability, dementia and related conditions the right to access independent advocacy support. The Mental Health (Scotland) Act 2015 built on the right in the 2003 Act to independent advocacy support, by requiring health boards and local authorities to tell the Mental Welfare Commission how they have ensured access to services up to now, and how they plan to do so in the future.
- 3.3 The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 informs that the HSCP must "have regard to the importance of the provision" of independent advocacy for adults at risk from harm.
- 3.4 The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that children under the age of 18 are entitled to have an advocate or other representative present at a Children's Hearing. In addition, the Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011 informs that the chairing person of a hearing must make the child/young person aware of available advocacy services.
- 3.5 The Scottish Government's expectation, set out in Independent Advocacy: Guide for Commissioners (published in December 2013), is that local strategic advocacy plans should be developed.

- 3.6 In 2018 The Mental Welfare Commission (MWC) produced their report 'The Right to Advocacy' which informed the national direction of travel for the development of advocacy policies.
- 3.7 Within this report the MWC made the following recommendations:
- *Ensure that there is clarity about which organisation will be responsible for coordinating the preparation of strategic advocacy plans for their area.*
 - *Ensure that Strategic advocacy plans are in place by the end of December 2018.*
 - *Ensure that strategic plans are developed based on local needs assessment and information about unmet demand and gaps in local provision. They should be developed in partnership with people who use or may use services, and with service providers. Barrier's people may be experiencing accessing advocacy support, including barriers created by prioritisation and people being placed out with their home areas, should be addressed in plans.*
 - *Ensure that advocacy planners carry out equality impact assessments and develop approaches to monitoring and enabling access to advocacy which cover all the protected characteristics.*
 - *Ensure there is clarity about where the responsibility lies for planning and commissioning independent advocacy services which are accessible for all children and young people under 18 with a mental disorder. This includes children and young people receiving care and treatment on an informal basis, or in placements in their home area.*
 - *Ensure that arrangements for planning the provision of independent advocacy services for children and young people include processes for assessing the projected need for these supports.*
- 3.8 South Ayrshire HSCP commenced the first stages of development of an advocacy strategy in 2018/19 and was delayed due to pressures from the Covid 19 Pandemic. The strategy was revisited again in 2022 but was not concluded due to capacity with the Planning and Performance team. This is something we now require to progress.
- 3.9 At present our commissioned services are Circles Advocacy (Independent), Hear4U (Barnardo's), WHO Cares? Scotland and Voice-ability to meet our statutory obligations. These are presently in place and reviewed by our commissioning team, guided by the national commissioning guidance for advocacy.
- 3.10 It is also recognised the valuable role that non-commissioned services such as the Champions Board and Citizens Advice for example, carry out in respects of advocating on behalf of young people and adults. Many staff across the partnership also engage in advocating on behalf of residents and service users as part of their day-to-day work activities.

3.11 Whilst a draft version of the strategy was started, it now requires revision and further consideration for completion following several described delays. To achieve this, it is recommended that robust consultations with stakeholders are now taken forward by a proposed steering group from January 2024. This will ensure that the completed works of development are fully reflective of the Mental Welfare Commission 2018 recommendations.

4. REPORT

4.1 This report will outline below the proposed recommencement of the Advocacy Strategic Plan.

4.2 A review of the Advocacy Strategy landscape was completed to understand what Partnerships elsewhere are providing in terms of strategy and how we can better position South Ayrshire. This review offered that in line with MWC recommendations, all were developed around stakeholder consultations. This displaying how their Advocacy Plan would meet the needs identified from stakeholder consultations. The plans also highlighted gaps in present provisions, plans to address these and to forecast possible future needs. There were differences noted in respects of allocated budgets with many reporting challenges due to differences in resources with comparative partnerships. This in consideration of the possible need for increased national funding due to prevailing population trends such as aging and related long term health conditions.

4.3 Discussions with East Ayrshire Officers identified their new Strategic Advocacy Plan is due for Integrated Joint Board approval early next year (February 2024).

4.4 In consideration of the strategy comparisons and MWC recommendations, the future development of the strategic plan will have to encompass wide ranging stakeholder consultation within a set time frame. A robust feedback loop will be required alongside overview of the returns to ensure the most accurate and present data informs our development.

4.5 As we are in possession of the previous written works of the 2019-22 developments, it is expected that we can update this body of work with planned consultations. This allowing the forthcoming focus to be on the consultation and analytical processes that will shape the future direction of the strategic plan.

4.6 Given the scope of consultations, the recommendation is for a multi-disciplinary Steering Group including stakeholders to be formed. The objective of each group member will be to carry out consultations in their respective areas and report back to the steering group on a monthly basis. There will be a separate writing/development group much smaller in size, who under the leads oversight, will be continually informed by the consultation process to complete the written policy.

4.7 Gary Hoey, Chief Social Work Officer, has agreed to sponsor the development and chair the steering group, providing lead and oversight of the plan's strategic development. Planning and Performance will support in all aspects while leading in co-ordination of the strategy and writing group to ensure the plans completion.

- 4.8 The first meeting of the steering group will take place in January 2024. It is expected this meeting will aim to define the types and areas of consultation that will take place. There is also the opportunity for a diverse range of consultation types to take place within this, however time considerations will be paramount given the significant previous delays in the strategic development.
- 4.8 Appendix 1 is the proposed Strategic Timeline provided for consideration of the proposed development. Consideration however will need to be given to additional time required for understanding and attributing the data that is collected, also considering any previously unknown needs that may be collected. While not expecting significant deviation from national trends and awareness, it is possible a unique to South Ayrshire need or situation may be identified that requires additional time allocation.
- 4.10 Appendix 2&3 are the initial Equality Impact Assessments that will be updated as consultations develop, and as new information is gathered. Given the strong human rights values that surround advocacy, it is not expected that the development of the strategic plan will impact negatively on any protected groups or characteristics. Equality of access to advocacy services is a particular area that will require ongoing attention to ensure no one is disadvantaged in this respect. An ongoing robust feedback loop will be in place via the steering group to help ensure that if any negative impact is identified, it can be communicated and assessed promptly.
- 4.11 Any changes required to the anticipated development will be reported as appropriate to the Directorate Management Team and governance groups.

5 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 5.1 The IJB Strategic Plan outlines seven key objectives, and the development of the strategic advocacy plan will align clearly with these:

- *We focus on prevention and tackling inequality*
- *We nurture and are part of communities that care for each other*
- *We work together to give you the right care in the right place*
- *We are transparent and listen to you*
- *We make a positive impact beyond the services we deliver*

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications

- 6.1.1 There are no financial implications to agreeing this report

6.2 Human Resource Implications

- 6.2.1 There are no HR implications to agreeing this report.

6.3 Legal Implications

- 6.3.1 There are no legal implications to agreeing this report.

6.4 Equalities implications

There are no equalities implications to agreeing this report

6.5 Sustainability implications

6.5.1 There are no sustainability implications to agreeing this report.

6.6 Clinical/professional assessment

6.6.1 The views of professional groups will be taken into close consideration as the strategic plan is developed.

7 CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

7.1 This report was prepared in consultation with appropriate HSCP Officers.

8 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 There is no risk associated with agreeing this report.

REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Proposed Strategic Timeline
Appendix 2 – UNCRC Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix 3 – SAHSCP Equality Impact Assessment