

Personal Care Select CommitteeRequest for Information from Members Visiting BCC Children's HomesFeedback Received

18 February 2001

Further to the tasks allocated at the last meeting of the Select Committee, I have put questions to six of the seven Members who had either made scheduled visits to Homes in the period April 2000 to December 2000, or were due to make them between January and June of 2001. The seventh Member was myself. These questions were intended to ascertain whether Members were satisfied with the follow up to their comments and (any) concerns.

Including my own comments, I have had responses from three Members out of seven. I appreciate that these are small numbers – as confirmed on Appendices A and B – and one question was intended to discover if there were flaws in the follow up process which served to discourage Member involvement.

Questions:

- 1) Have you needed to register dissatisfaction as a result of a visit?
- 2) In general terms, what was the subject of dissatisfaction?
- 3) Have you felt it necessary to raise other matters, e.g., good practice, query on policy?
- 4) Did you receive an acknowledgement of your feedback form being received?
- 5) Were you advised that issues that you had raised would be looked into? Were you to be kept informed?
- 6) What was the eventual outcome of any issues that you raised? Did you have to pursue matters, and to what effect?
- 7) Do you feel that your comments on areas of dissatisfaction, or any other queries, have led to any improvements or a rethink of approach? Details, please.
- 8) Has your view regarding any of the above matters changed over time? How?
- 9) Are you aware of any other Member expressing views on any of the above matters? Details, please. Did this influence any decision to reduce or cease visits?

Responses of the three Members replying:

- 1) 2 replied they had registered dissatisfaction; 1 had registered concern.
- 2) 2 had been concerned about the pressures on staff; 1 had expressed concern as to the maintenance work on premises, and on the attitude of schools towards readmitting excluded pupils.
- 3) All 3 replied no.
- 4) 1 received acknowledgement – and always has; 1 had contacted the Assistant Director directly; 1 has only recently submitted their feedback form and is waiting acknowledgement, which has in the past always come.
- 5) 1 replied yes; 1 was advised that matters would be looked into, but was not to be kept informed; 1 is not yet able to comment.

- 6) I is unaware of outcomes, but comments that there are few easy solutions; I has pursued, and has had discussions with senior staff; I is unable to comment as yet.
- 7) I does not imagine so; I hopes so; I is waiting to see, but does not expect much.
- 8) All 3 replied no.
- 9) All 3 replied no.

Findings:

Whilst there was some divergence in views within the responses, there was also uniformity. Taken with the majority view, where there was one, the obviously tentative conclusions of Member's views from this sample would be:

- Members had not always been satisfied with what they found, but that this was not an adverse reflection upon Home staff.
- Members have not (knowingly) had any queries on policy resulting from their visits.
- Members had received acknowledgement of their comments, either as standard or by verbal communication.
- Members have no consensus, as yet, on their impact – if any – by way of feeding back comments from their visits. However, they (and, to their knowledge, others) have not been discouraged from visiting by this.

In the light of the small sampling base, and the lack of anything more in the way of hard conclusions, could I suggest that this Select Committee receive a further report on this subject, at some future date? Hopefully there will then be sufficiently greater information upon which it can base views.

Steven Kennell