

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by the Executive Director of Social Work and Health

### Social Work and Health Improvement Committee

19 March 2008

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**Subject: "Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland: The Future of Mental Health Improvement in Scotland 2008–11"**

#### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the emerging future direction of mental health improvement in Scotland over the next three years.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The new mental health improvement discussion paper, "Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland" which builds on the National Programme for Mental Health Improvement in Scotland proposes a future direction for mental health improvement and population mental health for the next 3 years. A renewed focus on addressing inequalities is proposed across three key themes:
- **Promote** and improve mental health through a focus on increasing key protective factors and reducing key risk factors. The promotion of mental health is complementary to improved physical health, the prevention of mental illness and physical illness, and to achieving improvements in the quality of life of people experiencing mental and physical conditions and illnesses,
  - **Prevent** mental health problems, mental illness, co-morbidity and suicide, with a focus on key risk and protective factors. This should include a focus on the prevention of more common mental illnesses (such as depression and anxiety), on psychoses, and on the interaction between mental illness and other health conditions, such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes and other long-term physical conditions and
  - **Support** improvements in the quality of life, social inclusion, health, equality and recovery of people who experience mental illness, to include further work on addressing stigma and discrimination, recovery and on promoting equality of opportunity in areas such as employment, housing, education, cultural, sporting and recreational activities.

**2.2** The Scottish Government is facilitating national and local discussions during the Spring. The local discussions are being hosted by NHS Boards. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde organized a local discussion event on 7 February which was attended by 150 public and voluntary sector staff and voluntary group members from across the Board area. Twelve staff from West Dunbartonshire attended and included representation from the CHP, WDP and the Council. There was an opportunity to hear an outline of future directions and engage in round table discussions with local partners. The Scottish Government will issue a “Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland” action plan in the summer and local areas will be required to evidence a commitment to local action. It is fully expected that performance indicators will be put in place to monitor implementation and continuous improvement.

**2.2** Mental wellbeing refers to three main dimensions – emotional, social and psychological wellbeing. This includes our ability to cope with life’s problems and make the most of life’s opportunities, to cope in the face of adversity and to flourish in all our environments; to feel good and function well, both individually and collectively. Mental wellbeing ranges from good mental health, or flourishing, at one end of a continuum to poor mental health, or languishing, at the other end of the continuum and this conceptual approach is just as applicable to people with a clinical mental illness as it is to the general population.

### **3. Main Issues**

**3.1** Mental health improvement is an essential part of achieving the Scottish Government’s social, health, economic and cultural objectives and for addressing health and social inequalities. It is expected that by concentrating on mental health improvement, progress will also be made in addressing the growing range of problems that manifest themselves where poor mental health exists, for example in excessive drinking, substance misuse, violent and abusive behaviour, self harm and suicide, obesity and poor sexual health.

**3.2** The programme envisages broad based approaches across the general population such continuing positive mental health awareness campaigns, supporting good work place practices as well as targeting vulnerable community care and child care groups.

**3.3** The emerging national policy on mental health improvement is timely in that it complements other policy drivers being progressed not only by mental health services but also by other Council departments and community planning partners, particularly in the areas of health improvement, inequalities, poverty, employment and regeneration.

- 3.4** A key objective in future years is to extend the reach of mental health improvement knowledge and actions into policy and public service delivery, most notably outwith the healthcare system, as part of supporting improved public wellbeing. This complements the local authority power under section 20 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to advance wellbeing for individuals and the community by offering guidance on implementation.
- 3.5** This new policy direction on mental health improvement and wellbeing supplements and reinforces other similar legislation, policy and guidance such as 'With Inclusion in Mind – the local authority's role in promoting wellbeing and social development', Council's disability equality duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the implementation of the 'Same as You – Review of Services for People with a Learning Disability', and 'Healthy Working Lives – a plan for action'.
- 3.6** It is proposed that Social Work and Health Services lead for the Council on formulating a local implementation plan in association with other Council departments and community planning partners.

#### **4. Personnel Issues**

- 4.1** Local implementation will require inter-departmental cooperation and assistance will be required in gathering information and attendance at planning and development meetings to ensure a whole systems approach.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** Our understanding is that the Scottish Government is committing £6M annually for 3 years to advance the mental health and wellbeing programme and that funding may be available to support local initiatives. We await clarification on amounts and processes.
- 5.2** We anticipate that much of the groundwork, for example taking stock of where we are now and formulating an action plan, can be achieved within existing resources.

#### **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** Any risks that emerge will be fully analysed and taken into account during the action planning phase.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The proposed mental health improvement and wellbeing programme is timely and complements other policy initiatives directed at improving health, mental health and well being, and tackling inequalities.

## 8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The Social Work and Health Improvement Committee is asked to:
- i) note the discussion paper, “Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland: The Future of Mental Health Improvement in Scotland 2008 – 11’,
  - ii) approve Social Work and Health Services as the Council lead on formulating a local implementation plan in association with other Council departments and community planning partners.
  - iii) instruct the Director of Social Work and Health to bring forward progress reports.

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<b>Background papers:</b>	<p><b>“Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland:</b> The Future of Mental Health Improvement in Scotland 2008 – 11’ (Scottish Government, October 2007)</p> <p><b>With Inclusion in Mind</b> – the local authority’s role in promoting wellbeing and social development’ (Scottish Government 2007)</p> <p><b>Same As You</b> – Review of Services for People with Learning Disability and Healthy Working Lives. (Scottish Executive 2002)</p> <p><b>Healthy Working Lives</b> – an action plan (Scottish Executive, 2005)</p>
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All wards