

Runnymede Borough Council

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 10 September 2003 at 7.30 p.m.

in the Council Chamber

at the Civic Offices, Addlestone

**SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**

By reason of special circumstances, namely the need to consider this matter prior to the Annual General Meeting of DAIRS which takes place on 23 October prior to the next meeting of this Committee, the Chairman is asked to consider this item as a matter of urgency.

1. **DISABILITY ADVICE AND INFORMATION FOR RUNNYMEDE AND SPELTHORNE (DAIRS) - GRANT AID AND GRANT AGREEMENT (DHCS)**

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the level of grant aid funding and the Grant Agreement for DAIRS for the next 3 years.**

2. **Background Information**

2.1 DAIRS was established in 1993. It has become a core service providing free confidential advice and information to people with physical, sensory impairment and/or learning disabilities, and to people with mental health problems within the Boroughs of Runnymede and Spelthorne. It also provides assistance to carers, both formal and informal, relatives, friends and professionals. The extent and type of service provided is set out in Appendix 'A'.

2.2 DAIRS current grant aid funding and 3 year service level agreement expires on 31 March 2004. DAIRS is seeking to renew the arrangements.

2.3 The current level of grant aid was fixed 3 years ago, linked to the annual inflationary increases. The actual levels of grant over the 3 year period were:

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| 2001/02 | £5,750 |
| 2002/03 | £5,920 |
| 2003/04 | £6,050 |

3. **Report**

3.1 DAIRS have experienced a very significant growth in the demand for their services in both Runnymede and Spelthorne Boroughs, and comparing year on year, for the first 7 months to July, enquiries have risen by 36% to around 1,200 enquiries pa.

3.2 There were 286 enquiries in Runnymede from January to July 2002, and 355 enquiries from January to July 2003. The 2001 census has shown that the number of people with a long term limiting illness in Runnymede has increased to 13.5% of the population. In addition, the complexity of benefits has increased resulting in people needing more advice rather than just information.

3.3 Successful applications for Carers Allowance and Disability Living Allowance in the last 12 months totalled 27, a success rate of 71%, with an annual aggregate value to claimants of £80,000 p.a. DAIRS also provided advice on Finance and Benefits to a further 330 disabled people in the same period, including such things as statutory grants, incapacity benefit and income support, and NHS grants, but it is not possible to assess the clients' gross benefits in these cases.

3.4 Home visits form an essential part of DAIRS services. The work is intensive and time consuming, but the above mentioned outcomes demonstrate the quality of the service.

4. Grant Requirements

- 4.1 Attached at Exempt Appendix '1' is a financial statement for the year ending 31 March 2003, DAIRS projected income and expenditure for 2003/04 to 2005/06 and their Funding and Budget Forecast for 2003 to 2006. DAIRS are seeking an increase in their grant from £6,050 per annum to £7,500, plus inflation, for the next 3 years. Their Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2003 shows accumulated funds of £38,957, however, this will reduce to £20,930 (less than six months expenditure) at the end of 2003/04.
- 4.2 Since DAIRS made their last application for grant aid, they have experienced a 30% increase in enquiries. Enquiries have more than doubled since 1998, which indicates the success of the service.
- 4.3 DAIRS employ two staff, the Manager and an Office Coordinator. Both posts are part-time working 32 hours and 20 hours respectively per week. The salary bill is £25,000 p.a., which represents nearly 60% of the total costs. The DAIRS service is also reliant on six trained volunteers, some of whom are disabled.
- 4.4 The growth in demand for DAIRS' services has led to considerable workload pressures, and they are seeking additional volunteers, which will increase expenses.
- 4.5 It is anticipated that Spelthorne Borough Council and the North Surrey Primary Care Trust (PCT) will match the £7,500 contribution from Runnymede Borough Council. If this funding for Spelthorne is not forthcoming, then the service for the Spelthorne area will be reduced. The service to Runnymede will not be affected.
- 4.6 The Grant Agreement has recently been revised and the new agreement is attached at Appendix 'B'.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The current budget for grant aid for DAIRS in 2003/04 is £6,000. For 2004/05 the grant to DAIRS would normally be increased by inflation to around £6,200. The requested grant of £7,500 therefore, represents an additional £1,300 a year in real terms.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 DAIRS provide a valuable service to some of the most vulnerable people within Runnymede. Their grant application is above inflation but this is reflected by the growth in casework over the last 3 years. It is, therefore, felt appropriate to grant the level of funding requested.

**OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -**

- i) **the Grant Agreement with DAIRS, attached at Appendix 'B', be renewed for a further 3 years;**
- ii) **the level of annual grant aid awarded to DAIRS be increased to £7,500 plus inflation for the following 3 years; and**
- iii) **the Corporate Management Committee be informed of the proposed increase in grant aid.**

**(TO RESOLVE)**

Background Papers

None stated

By reason of special circumstances, namely the need to respond to the Surrey Local Government Association prior to the next meeting of this Committee, the Chairman is asked to consider this item as a matter of urgency.

2. APPOINTMENTS TO SURREY SUPPORTING PEOPLE (DAL)  
(Ref: Minutes of the External Appointments Sub-Committee, June 2003, page 3, number 38.)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To seek nominations for a Runnymede Borough Councillor to serve on the Surrey Supporting People Commissioning Body.**

2. Supporting People Commissioning Body

2.1 The Council has received a letter from the Surrey Local Government Association (SLGA) seeking District Council nominations for a vacancy on the Surrey Supporting People Commissioning body. There are a total of three District Councillor representatives on the Commissioning body. A vacancy has arisen, as Councillor Easton, former Chairman of the Housing and Community Services Committee, was required to stand down from this body when his term as Chairman of this Committee came to an end.

2.2 The Commissioning Body oversees the development of a Surrey wide strategy for housing related support services, and provides an environment for frank and challenging discussions about future funding priorities for Supporting People. The Body meets regularly throughout the year and its meetings take place during the daytime. This appointment is for a three year term ending in June 2006.

2.3 Members are accordingly asked to nominate a Member of this Committee to serve on the Supporting People Commissioning Body for a term of three years, in order that this nomination can be sent to the SLGA for consideration.

2.4 Normally, any appointments to outside bodies made by a Committee other than the Corporate Management Committee would require the approval of Full Council. However, the deadline for nominations to the SLGA is 22 September and Full Council does not meet again until after this date on 16 October. Accordingly, the Chairman is asked to treat this matter as urgent and therefore a delegated function under paragraph 1.3 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

3. Supporting People Advisory Body

3.1 In addition to the Commissioning body, there is also a Supporting People Advisory Body. This is a more informal group on which all Surrey Districts are represented. The Advisory Body meets approximately twice a year with meetings taking place during the daytime. In June this Council's External Appointments Sub-Committee appointed Councillor Waddell as this authority's representative on Surrey Supporting People and he has accordingly been given a seat on the Advisory Body.

**THE COMMITTEE IS ASKED –**

**to nominate a Member of the Housing and Community Services Committee to serve on the Supporting People Commissioning Body for a term of three years.**

**(TO RESOLVE)**

Background Papers

Letter from the SLGA dated 7 August 2003 on DAL's Representation on Other Bodies File no. 66.24

## DAIRS: TYPE OF SERVICE PROVIDED FOR THE DISABLED

### DISABILITY ADVICE & INFORMATION FOR RUNNYMEDE & SPELTHORNE

provides a free, confidential, Advice & Information service to people with physical, sensory & cognitive impairment and/or learning disabilities, to people with mental health problems, of all ages, their carers, both formal & informal, relatives, friends & professionals, within the boroughs of Runnymede & Spelthorne. DAIRS operates in accordance with its constitution adopted on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2000.

**There are seven methods by which DAIRS provides Advice and Information, categorised as follows:**

#### *METHOD OF ADVICE AND INFORMATION*

##### Category 1

Simple telephone enquiry: e.g. contact name and number of specific organisation or leaflet request.

##### Category 2

Prolonged telephone enquiry/Listening Ear: Time predominantly spent listening to client's problems and a small amount of advice or information is given.

##### Category 3

Information/advice within the office. This requires an understanding of the advice needs of the client but does not involve the adviser in negotiations outside the office on behalf of the client. It may however involve contact with outside bodies to check details relating to the client's case, or to consult specialist advice lines, e.g. for specific information relating to individual's need.

##### Category 4

Information/advice negotiation with outside bodies. Some negotiation carried out but it stops short of formal representation work. E.g. negotiating by letter or telephone with third party.

##### Category 5

Home Visits. Advisers from DAIRS will by arrangement visit the client at home when through illness, disability or lack of mobility, they are unable to visit the DAIRS office. Home visits are usually for the purpose of letter writing, form filling or in the majority of cases for assisting with disability benefit claims forms. Some particular clients will require visits to be made by a minimum of two DAIRS advisers, e.g. clients with mental health problems. These visits, by the nature of the client's disabilities, can take up to half a day or more, and occasionally a repeat visit will be necessary.

##### Category 6

Desk top publishing. DAIRS produces a booklet specifically for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities providing source data covering a full range of support services and contacts.

##### Category 7

Advertising and Publicity. DAIRS produces its own leaflets, newsletters and visiting cards to provide comprehensive information and contact details for its clients. The services offered by DAIRS are also advertised by showcasing the DAIRS display in places such as the acute hospitals, ShopMobility, Day Centres, and Shopping Centres, by talks and presentations by the DAIRS manager including to the Parent Carers Group at White Lodge and the Stroke Club at Shepperton, and by publicity in local volunteer bureau magazines.

## DAIRS: TYPE OF SERVICE PROVIDED FOR THE DISABLED

**This List of Topics of Enquiry is comprehensive but not exhaustive, detailing to some extent the enquiries received by DAIRS on which Advice & Information is given.**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Mobility, Access, Transport</b><br/> <i>Refer to Topic of Enquiry, Transport</i><br/>                     Motability<br/>                     Wheelchair Voucher Scheme<br/>                     Voluntary Car Driver Schemes<br/>                     Dial A Ride<br/>                     Spelride<br/>                     Community Transport<br/>                     Hospital Buses<br/>                     Accessible Taxis<br/>                     Public Transport<br/>                     Bus Passes<br/>                     Train Passes<br/>                     Assessment &amp; Training Centres<br/>                     Vehicle Excise Duty Exemption<br/>                     Congestion Charges<br/>                     Blue Badge Scheme<br/>                     Car Adaptations<br/>                     Accessibility Problems<br/>                     Disabled Parking Bays</p> <p><b>Welfare Benefits</b><br/> <i>Refer to Topic of Enquiry, Finance</i><br/>                     NHS Charges &amp; Optical Vouchers<br/>                     SSP<br/>                     Incapacity Benefit<br/>                     Jobseekers Allowance<br/>                     Carers Allowance<br/>                     Disability Living Allowance<br/>                     Attendance Allowance<br/>                     Income Support<br/>                     Housing Benefit<br/>                     Tax Credits<br/>                     Bereavement Allowance<br/>                     Social Fund<br/>                     Independent Living Fund<br/>                     Direct Payments<br/>                     Statutory Maternity Pay<br/>                     Child Benefit<br/>                     Industrial Injuries Benefit<br/>                     Working Families Tax Credits</p> | <p><b>Equipment</b><br/> <i>Refer to Topic of Enquiry, Equipment</i><br/>                     Loan<br/>                     Hire<br/>                     Purchase<br/>                     Used<br/>                     Maintenance<br/>                     Specialised<br/>                     Mail Order<br/>                     Adaptations</p> <p><b>Support Groups</b><br/> <i>Refer to Topic of Enquiry, Health &amp; Social</i><br/>                     Illnesses<br/>                     Disabilities<br/>                     Clubs<br/>                     Subscriptions<br/>                     Local Services</p> <p><b>Employment</b><br/> <i>Refer to Topic of Enquiry, Miscellaneous</i><br/>                     Voluntary Organisations<br/>                     Job Centres<br/>                     Job Clubs<br/>                     Work Trials<br/>                     Disabled Persons Register<br/>                     Discrimination<br/>                     Training</p> <p><b>Sport &amp; Leisure</b><br/> <i>Refer to Topic of Enquiry, Leisure &amp; Holidays</i><br/>                     Transport<br/>                     Clubs<br/>                     Local Societies<br/>                     Accessible Venues<br/>                     Day Centres<br/>                     Short Breaks<br/>                     Holidays UK or abroad</p> |
|---|---|

*Note: Reference is made to the DAIRS statistical analysis of Topics of Enquiry.*

**GRANT AGREEMENT**  
**BETWEEN RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL AND DISABILITY ADVICE**  
**AND INFORMATION FOR RUNNYMEDE AND SPELTHORNE**

**1. Services**

Disability Advice and Information for Runnymede and Spelthorne (DAIRS) provides a free confidential advice and information service to people with physical, sensory impairment and/or learning disabilities, and to people with mental health problems, of all ages, their carers, both formal and informal, relatives, friends and professionals, within the Boroughs of Runnymede and Spelthorne. DAIRS operates in accordance with its constitution adopted on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2000 (see ANNEXE 1).

**2. Period**

This agreement will cover the three financial years 2004/5, 2005/6 and 2006/7. The financial year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March.

**3. Opening Hours**

Office 12-13 The Sainsbury Centre, Chertsey, Surrey KT15 9AG

Opening hours and telephone helpline  
9.30 am – 4.30pm Monday – Thursday  
9.30 am – 1.00pm Friday

An answer phone will take messages when an Adviser is not available to take calls. Out of hours callers will also be covered by an answer phone. Home visits by arrangement.

**4. Grant Guarantee**

Runnymede Borough Council will pay an annual grant in each of the three financial years of £7,500 by no later than 30<sup>th</sup> April of each year, in respect of the running costs of the service. The 2004/5 grant is deemed at outturn prices. The grant for the following two years will be adjusted in line with the annual change in the Retail Prices Index as at the commencement of the new financial year.

**5. Type of Service Provided for the Disabled**

DAIRS aims to provide a high quality advice and information service, and to increase the number of enquiries by the active promotion of the service across the Boroughs of Runnymede and Spelthorne. DAIRS encourages people with a disability to participate, as volunteers, in running the organisation and recruits candidates accordingly. DAIRS staff and volunteers receive up to date training to ensure the provision of a professional and encompassing service. Outreach sessions are run in both boroughs to extend the public awareness of the DAIRS specialist knowledge.

DAIRS provides up to date local and national information on many topics, including mobility, access and transport, special equipment, sport and leisure, employment, holidays, support services and local groups, and welfare benefits. A holistic approach is taken to an individual's benefits, for example, ensuring consideration is given to all of an individual's entitlement to all types of benefit (in addition to Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance), thus ensuring the maximisation of an individual's income and reducing social exclusion. Referrals are made to the CAB as appropriate.

The type of service provided and the method of delivery is shown at ANNEXE 2.

## **6. Quality of Service**

All enquiries are treated in confidence in accordance with the organization's policies relating to confidentiality and equal opportunities (see ANNEXES 3 and 4). DAIRS will offer unbiased and independent information. All enquiries are answered as quickly as possible, preferably within 24 hours.

DAIRS maintains awareness of current developments in the disability field.

The quality of the service provided will be evaluated annually by means of a questionnaire with a minimum coverage of 10% of clients. The completed questionnaires will be analysed and the results reported to the DAIRS Management Committee and Runnymede Borough Council annually.

The number and type of complaints will be reported to every DAIRS Management Committee meeting.

Any serious proven complaints shall be reported by the DAIRS Management Committee to the Council immediately so the council is aware of the situation.

A meeting will be held annually between both parties to review/monitor the service level agreement. In the event of any significant change in the circumstances of DAIRS, either party will call a meeting before the scheduled annual review.

Training will be procured from providers such as Surrey Welfare Rights, and joint training opportunities with Runnymede CAB will be pursued, to enable a high quality service to be provided.

## **7. Accounting and Reporting Arrangements**

A copy of the DAIRS Annual Accounts, duly audited, must be sent to the Director of Finance within four months of the end of the financial year. In addition, DAIRS will also provide copies of their annual report to the Director of Finance and the Community Partnership Officer.

The Borough Council will nominate a representative to sit on the Management Committee, attend periodic Management Committee meetings and receive all relevant management reports and accounts. The Borough Council

recommends a Runnymede CAB representative is included on the DAIRS Management Committee.

The DAIRS Trustees will run the financial affairs of the charity, in accordance with the good practice guidelines of the Charity Commission. In particular DAIRS will maintain a suitable level of balances, to meet its day to day needs, and provide a reasonable contingency sum.

### **8. Accommodation**

DAIRS will provide accommodation with disabled access and 'drop in' facilities.

### **9. Literature and Local Promotions**

DAIRS agree to recognise Runnymede Borough Council as a funding agency whenever possible, and in the appropriate promotions in the Borough.

### **10. Equal Opportunities**

People with disabilities will be actively encouraged to join DAIRS.

### **11. Dispute Resolution**

Both parties will endeavour to resolve disputes in a fair and equitable manner in the spirit of this agreement.

### **12. Legal Relations**

This document is a statement of the arrangements, which both parties intend to operate, but is not intended to create legally enforceable obligations between parties.

Signed on behalf of DAIRS \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of Runnymede Borough Council \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_