

I refer to your recent article (Daycare Centre future is in doubt, News, November 12th).

Once again the population of East Kilbride look set to suffer from yet another outrageous cost saving proposal from South Lanarkshire Council.

The proposal to terminate East Kilbride & District Dementia Carers Group (EKDC) long-standing contract for the provision of dementia daycare could mean closure of a facility that has been providing dementia daycare in East Kilbride since 1991.

It is nothing but a cost cutting panic measure that is in total disregard of the needs and choices of people with dementia and their carers.

Harry Stevenson, Executive Director of Social Work Resources stated “There will be no consultation with service users and carers until the proposed cost saving is approved by the council”.

Is this the same Harry Stevenson who was part of a team that worked on the Scottish Governments ‘**Changing Lives**’ review of Social Work that delivered three main messages and challenges?

- Social work services don't have all the answers, so there needs to be capacity to deliver personalised services
- Best use of social work skills is not made, so there needs to be capacity to develop the workforce
- Doing more of the same won't work, so there needs to be capacity to create sustainable change

Mr. Stevenson also states “South Lanarkshire Council have made significant investment in state of the art and modern care facilities within East Kilbride”.

Even after investing substantial amounts of money in building the new care centres, the Council seem to have failed on the most important issue of all by not providing their care staff with an infrastructure that is adequately funded and resourced to provide person centred care that meets the needs and choices of people with dementia and their carers.

East Kilbride & District Dementia Carers Group currently supplies in excess of 30% of the total dementia daycare provision available in East Kilbride, our staff are trained to at least the same level as the S.L.C. dementia care staff, and most importantly, people with dementia attending our daycare facility benefit from a staff to service user ratio 1:3 maximum. Does S.L.C. really believe that they can provide a quality daycare service for people with dementia with their current staff to service user ratios of between 1:4 and 1:8?

Perhaps the infrastructure & care culture we have is one of the reasons that our service users have had in excess of 100 (one hundred) trips/outings this year, we have also provided one to one and evening outings for our service users and carers.

How many trips/outings have people with dementia in a S.L.C. daycare facility been offered this year?

Our “Ring-round Service” ensures that even when we receive short notice cancellations, we consistently utilize every daycare place we have available. This practice has meant that to date this year, 104 daycare places have been given to Service Users who otherwise would have received no care that day.

How many S.L.C. daycare places were not utilised in East Kilbride this year?

If S.L.C. does not offer the opportunity for fair consultation and careful consideration of this proposal, then they are acting with complete disregard of expert opinion.

The carers of people with dementia are the real experts; you must offer them fair opportunity to challenge this proposal.

JohnVance
Chairman
East Kilbride & District Dementia Carers Group