

report



meeting ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

date 11^h May 2004

agenda item number

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

STAFF WORKING ABROAD

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval for 2 members of staff from Beeston Day Centre to travel to Europe. The duration of the travel is in excess of four days and therefore, in accordance with the Council's Travel and Conference Policy, Administration Committee approval is required.

2. Advice and Information

2.1 The Service

- 2.1.1 Beeston Day Centre is a Social Services adult mental health day centre that provides day service support and activity for clients who experience substantial and/or enduring mental health difficulties.

2.2 Benefits of proposal

- 2.2.1 Beeston Day Centre has a tradition of annual holidays for its membership. The reason for the proposal of a holiday abroad is to provide our clients with an opportunity of a group experience in a personally and culturally challenging environment. This would enable them to develop confidence, experience and skills in situations beyond their routine opportunities.

- 2.2.2 Clients with substantial mental health difficulties have successfully participated in past foreign holidays. We feel that with staff and group support, such members can cope with and thrive on challenges that are much richer than their normal experience. We find that the therapeutic value extends far beyond the holiday itself.

- 2.2.3 An important part of the holiday is the preparation. We build a program of group work designed to equip members with appropriate skills and

knowledge for the challenge. This would include looking at the Spanish language and culture.

2.3 Client Group

2.3.1 Ten current day centre members, being adults with mental health difficulties of mixed gender, subject to risk assessment. All participating clients live independently and are able to act as independent adults.

2.4 Staff support

2.4.1 Accompanied by two female staff, one qualified Mental Health Therapist and one unqualified Mental Health Worker. The staff to client ratio would be 1: 5.

2.5 Transport

2.5.1 Clients will be making their own way to and from Nottingham, East Midlands Airport. Flights and holiday transfers are part of the holiday package as provided by Ilkeston Co-op Travel, Beeston High Road.

2.6 Destination

2.6.1 Hotel Tagomago, a 2 star hotel in San Antonio Bay, Ibiza, Spain, offered through the tour operator Aspro (Airtours). This resort is chosen for its quiet and family orientated nature.

2.7 Insurance cover

2.7.1 Insurance cover is provided by Ilkeston Co-op, Mercian Close, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 8HG, Tel 08708 708708. Medical confirmation of fitness to travel has been provided by all members from GP's or RMO. All service users will carry E111, NHS reciprocal agreement.

2.8 Approval

2.8.1 This proposal has been discussed with and approved by the Programme Manager for Mental Health Services.

3. Statutory and Policy Implications

3.1 This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, crime and disorder and those using the service. Where such implications are material, they have been described in the text of the report. Members' attention is, however drawn to the following:

3.1.1 Financial Implications

Beeston Day Centre carries a budget for client holidays to cover staff costs. Service user costs are financed entirely from their own contributions. There will be no additional costs for the department.

Estimated staff costs are £750

Value for Money:

This particular foreign holiday option offers the best value identified by our staff in the available time scale. Perhaps surprisingly the foreign package holiday in Spain offers a much more economical service than its equivalent in the United Kingdom. It is our assessment that such holidays bring a disproportionate therapeutic value to participating service users.

3.1.2 Equal Opportunities Implications

The holiday is open to all current members, subject to a risk assessment being undertaken as appropriate to the staff:client: ratio of 5:1.

One of the objectives of the proposal is to enable client exposure to new and diverse cultural experiences, contributing to individual and communal growth in awareness.

3.1.3 Implications for Service Users

Customers:

This proposal originated from the client group through a consultation process with centre staff.

Social Inclusion/Improving Health and Well-being:

We feel this proposal would allow members an opportunity to experience challenging but safe activity and diverse cultural exposure, enhancing social inclusion and quality of life, leading to increased confidence and independence.

Carer Respite:

It is envisaged that a primary purpose of this proposal is to provide a break for a number of the participating members main carers.

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 It is recommended that approval be given for 2 members of staff at Beeston Day Centre to take 10 clients abroad to San Antonio Bay, Ibiza, Spain, on the 15th October to the 22nd October 2004.

5. **Head of Legal Services Comments** (DLS- 11.03.04)

5.1 The proposals are within the authority of the Administration Committee. There are no other legal issues arising from the report that require specific comment.

6 **Director of Resources' Financial Comments** (JM – 20.02.04)

6.1 The financial implications are contained within the report.

7 **Background Papers Available for Inspection**

7.1 None.

8 **Electoral Division(s) Affected**

8.1 Beeston South.

STUART BROOK
Director of Social Services

(COMM-MISC) PW/ AC3