



Report of the Director of Adult Social Services

Executive Board

Date: 12 March 2008

Subject: Deputation to Council - Relate

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In

(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In April 2005 the then Social Services Department undertook a service review of Relate as part of a wider review of all the key list organisations funded. At that time there were a number of organisations who had received such grant funding over a number of years without the Department being clear as to how the grant payment contributed to the achievement of the Departments priorities. The review report was considered by the Children's commissioning board that ultimately led to the recommendation that the Social Services Department cease the grant payment. This decision was made on the basis that no causal link could be made between the grant payment to Relate and the protection/support responsibilities and priorities within Children's social care.
2. In October 2005 the organisation was informed of the Social Services Department's intention to cease funding from the beginning of the following financial year and support was offered to identify other external funding sources. During 2006 Relate made representation on several occasions to the Executive Member for social care, Councillor Harrand. Those representations resulted in the award of a one off, non-recurrent £10k payment in September 2006 to allow the organisation additional time to identify alternative funding sources. Funding ceased at the commencement of the 2007/08 financial year.

1. **Background:**

- 1.1 In April 2005 the then Social Services Department undertook a service review of Relate as part of a wider review of all the key list organisations funded. At that time there were a number of organisations who had received such grant funding over a number of years without the Department being clear as to how the grant payment contributed to the achievement of the Departments priorities. The review report was considered by the Children's commissioning board that ultimately led to the recommendation that the Social Services Department cease the grant payment. This decision was made on the basis that no causal link could be made between the grant payment to Relate and the protection/support responsibilities and priorities within Children's social care.
- 1.2 In October 2005 the organisation was informed of the Social Services Department's intention to cease funding from the beginning of the following financial year and support was offered to identify other external funding sources. During 2006 Relate made representation on several occasions to the Executive Member for social care, Councillor Harrand. Those representations resulted in the award of a one off, non-recurrent £10k payment in September 2006 to allow the organisation additional time to identify alternative funding sources.
- 1.3 In December 2006 Relate submitted a further application for funding to Social Services. This request for funding was again considered by the Children's Commissioning Group and the same conclusion was reached as it had in October 2005. Although the application for funding was far from detailed it was clear that the intention behind the funding application would not significantly contribute to the achievement of the key priorities for Children's social care.

2. **Recent Events leading to this Report**

- 2.1 A further submission from the Relate organisation in Leeds was submitted in January 2008 setting out their reasons for grant payments to be reinstated. The organisation suggests that the grant monies would be used to defray charges the organisation is seemingly obliged to make for it's counselling services in cases where it appeared couples would be less able to pay.
- 2.2 Social Care services officers (Children and Adults services) were canvassed for their views in relation to the submission.

3.0 **Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The Relate organisation have asked for a grant worth £23,000 which it is assumed they would wish to be recurring. This sum is not included in either Adult or Children's social care services budget allocation and would therefore represent a budget pressure.

4.0 **Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Discussions with Children and Adult social care services identified that little, if any, referral was made to the services offered by the Relate organisation by statutory social care staff. It was felt that this was because the circumstances where statutory social care staff were engaged with families experiencing difficulties in relation to substance misuse, domestic violence and particularly where these factors impinged on the ability of parents to care for their Children, a significant range of structured therapeutic services had already been commissioned.
- 5.2 Within adult social care services, few, if any, adults were subject to referral for assessment in relation to difficulties experienced in their relationship outside of a safeguarding context, which again were very few in number. Once again, in those circumstances a significant range of intervention has been commissioned through statutory Health and Social Care agencies in the City.
- 5.3 It may be the case that some work undertaken by the Relate organisation might ultimately reduce overall demand for social care services, however, it is the view of Social Care Services officers that this effect is indistinct and it would not therefore be prioritised for funding support over other organisations whose impact can be more clearly discerned.
- 5.4 Within the wider community of interest, who generally never have recourse to a statutory social care service, the Relate organisation clearly provides a service which is used by the public, which they are willing to pay for and through which contributes to the overall fabric of support available for all Leeds citizens. Whilst it might be seen as desirable that social care services offered support to such activity, the finite nature of the resource available to support statutory intervention mitigates against this.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 It is not recommended that Adult or Children's social care services support the request for a recurring grant payment of £23,000. Officers have provided advice to the Relate organisation in relation to other sources of funding that they might access to support their initiative.