

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

ROY GRIFFITHS' REPORT ON COMMUNITY CARE

Mr. Moore has now forwarded to you Roy Griffiths' report on community care with his minute of 17 February. The Policy Unit have commented in their note of 18 February.

As predicted, Sir Roy has proposed an enhanced role for local authorities in the coordination of community care. As Mr. Moore points out, this presents a major dilemma; there is much internal logic in Sir Roy's package but it gives rise to clear political difficulties.

As a piece of analysis I think Sir Roy's report is a good one. He has made a compelling case for the need for more effective coordination of community care at local level. Chapter 4 of the report (pages 30-34) highlights just how many different bodies and institutions are involved in this area.

While Sir Roy stresses the need for more local coordination he is also at pains to stress the need for substantial central government control. He proposes a system of specific grants (which will not please the Treasury) and an enhanced Ministerial role in DHSS. The way through this may be along the lines Mr. Moore suggests of emphasising the purely enabling role of local authorities and tightening up the central framework within which they would operate. In parallel with that there seems a lot to be said for building on the part that family doctors could play in coordinating and directing community care provision (see paragraph 4.16 and the Policy Unit note).

The main issues are:

- should the report be published?
- how do you want to take Government consideration of the subject forward?

CONFIDENTIAL

Although community care is an important issue that needs to be tackled, and a growing one given the demographic trends, I would have thought the key priority at present is pressing ahead with the NHS review, concentrating on the hospital service. Given the slow start that exercise has made, we do not now want significant DHSS resources to be diverted on to community care.

Would you therefore be content:

- (i) To agree to early publication of the Griffiths Report on the basis proposed by Mr. Moore and the Policy Unit?
- (ii) To meet Sir Roy Griffiths and a small Ministerial group in about six weeks' time to discuss the handling of community care (by which time Sir Roy should be back in action and a good deal of the initial work on the NHS review should have been done?)

*Recd.*

PAUL GRAY

19 February 1988

VC4AUK

*We need to know precisely what we are going to say about it - before publication. Vague generalities could arouse the wrong expectations*