

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Executive Director of Social Work and Health

Social Work and Health Improvement Committee: 21 May 2008

**Subject: Inspection of Social Work Services by
the Social Work Inspection Agency**

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report provides Members with up-dated information on the revised timetable and our preparation for the forthcoming inspection of Social Work and Health by the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA).

2. Background

- 2.1** As reported to members in January 2008, SWIA will be carrying out a performance inspection later this year in West Dunbartonshire Council.
- 2.2** SWIA is responsible for inspecting all social work services throughout Scotland. Performance inspections are being rolled out across all 32 Scottish authorities on a three-year cycle and are required by law.
- 2.3** SWIA's aim is to drive up standards and improve the quality of social work services

3. Progress

- 3.1** SWIA have now confirmed the dates of the inspection which is now scheduled to begin in June 2008, slightly later than had been anticipated. The inspection will cover all our services including Criminal Justice.
- 3.2** The first meeting between the Lead Inspector and the Executive Director of Social Work and Health will take place in early June with the case file reading scheduled for the week beginning 15 September and the fieldwork for the weeks beginning 27 October and 3 November. The preliminary information is due to the inspectors for the week beginning 4 August followed by the advance information and completed self evaluation questionnaire (SEQ) by 18 August. There will be interim feedback in mid-October and headline feedback in mid-November. The draft report will be issued at the end of January with publication due in April 2009.
- 3.3** A project plan has been developed with the assistance of the consultants engaged to assist with our preparation. This is attached as an appendix. It sets out time scaled plans to ensure that we are on track to meet deadlines and to give sufficient time for thorough preparation. It includes a communication strategy and detailed plans to prepare for the case file reading and the fieldwork.

3.4 Our main focus of work at present is assembling the content and supporting evidence for the SEQ. This is wide ranging and extensive and involves staff from every section of the Department. It has been identified as priority work by the Director in order that we have time to consult on, revise and edit the final version. Of equal importance is the preliminary and advance information which includes collating data on all our staff, service users and carers, and other stakeholders so that SWIA can select samples of 500 in each category to whom they will send surveys.

3.5 The communication strategy is being implemented with a range of briefing meetings underway. Detailed work on planning the fieldwork programme has begun SWIA will expect to meet with a wide range of staff, service users and carers and stakeholders with in excess of 100 meetings likely to take place during the two week period. Elected members and other Council officials will be included in this programme.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 Over the next six months there will be competing demands on staff time which are currently being met within existing resources. Further resources may be required.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Any short term secondments will require to be met from within existing resources.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 A poor inspection report with a demanding action plan and close follow up would not be desirable in terms of the public perception of the Council.

7. Conclusion

7.1 This report is designed to keep members apprised of our preparation for SWIA and will be followed with further up-dates.

8. Recommendation

8.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report and the revised inspection timetable. Further briefings and up-dates will be provided.

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Appendices: Project Plan

Background: The information provided in from Care Commission Inspection Reports.

Wards Affected: All