

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held on Wednesday, 13 June 2007 in Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton at 11.30 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bollan, Gail Casey, William Hendrie, Jonathan McColl, Jim McElhill, Patrick McGlinchey, Craig McLaughlin, Marie McNair, Martin Rooney and May Smillie.

Attending: Bill Clark, Director of Social Work Services; Irving Hodgson, Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services); Lewis Morrison, Policy Officer – Disability and Access; Margaret Caldwell, Manager of Housing Operations; Jeff Stobo, Manager of Strategy; Martin McKendrick, Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator; Moira Swanson, Research and Information Manager; Kelly Gainty, Home Care Organiser; Sally Michael, Principal Solicitor and Lorraine Beveridge, Administrative Assistant.

Councillor Jonathan McColl in the Chair

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive on the progress of actions under the Disability Equality Scheme and making recommendations thereon.

After discussion and having heard the Policy Officer – Disability and Access in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the actions taken under the Disability Equality Scheme, as detailed in the Appendix to the report;
- (2) that further reporting should be part of a wider 'equalities' report; and
- (3) that a further 'equalities' report be submitted to a meeting of the Committee to be held in November 2007.

INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting an approach to integrated impact assessment which responded to the Council's obligations in respect of race, disability and gender equality, and to its role as a health improvement authority.

After discussion and having heard the Policy Officer – Disability and Access in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, particularly in relation to paragraph 3.5 of the report which stated that the assessment process may require consultation with representatives of the groups who may be affected by a policy or services, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor McElhill, moved:-

That the proposal to consult should go to the Community Participation Committee, or to whatever vehicle the Council intends to use for community consultation, which should act as a filter for whatever further consultation may be required.

As an amendment, Councillor Bolla, seconded by Councillor McGlinchey, moved:-

That as individual groups would not be represented on the Community Participation Committee the word 'may' within the first sentence in paragraph 3.5 of the report should read 'will' which would enable community groups to have an effect on policies.

On a vote being taken, 1 Member voted for the amendment and 7 for the motion with 1 Member abstaining. The motion was accordingly declared carried.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to approve the approach to integrated impact assessment, as detailed in the Appendix to the report.

ACCESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2006/2007 AND 2007/2008

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an account of the Access Improvement Programme for 2006/2007 and the proposed programme for 2007/2008.

After discussion and having heard the Policy Officer – Disability and Access in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the outline proposals for the access improvement programme for 2007/2008, as detailed in the Appendix to the report.

HOMELESS SERVICES CARE COMMISSION INSPECTION REPORT

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) providing information on the recent inspection report received from the Care Commission on the Homeless Housing Support service, managed by West Dunbartonshire Council and covering the period April 2006 to March 2007.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Housing Operations in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OUTCOME AGREEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2007

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) providing information on the West Dunbartonshire Anti Social Behaviour Outcome Agreement Annual Report 2007.

After discussion and having heard the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve, retrospectively, the submission of the Anti Social Behaviour Outcome Agreement Annual Report 2007, which had been submitted to the Scottish Executive; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

HOUSING, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) providing information on the performance of areas within the Housing Service, including:-

- (a) the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the fourth quarter of 2006/2007;
- (b) Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) for the fourth quarter of 2006/2007;
- (c) the programme of Best Value (BV) Reviews; and
- (d) the current status of Departmental Actions to meet Departmental Objectives for 2006/2007, i.e. the Service Plan Report.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Strategy in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION: WAITING LIST, VOIDS, LETS AND HOMELESS

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) providing statistical information in relation to the waiting list for West Dunbartonshire Council houses, the reasons for termination of tenancies and the void and lets position as at 31 March 2007.

After discussion and having heard the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) and the Manager of Housing Operations in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that a briefing note and progress report on the housing management services remedial plan and project plan would be issued to all elected members;
- (2) to note that there were three phases in the plan:- (i) information would be gathered from April to November 2007; (ii) Strategic Plan Preparation and Approvals from December 2007 to April 2008; and (iii) that the Action Plan would be implemented from April 2008;
- (3) that further reports to be submitted to the Committee on void housing would have a separate heading for the multi-storey flats in the 6 West Dunbartonshire Wards;
- (4) that Councillor Casey would be provided with a breakdown of homeless units for the Clydebank Waterfront Ward; and
- (5) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

HOUSE SALES

There was submitted a report by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) providing information on West Dunbartonshire Council houses sold under the Right to Buy scheme between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007 as detailed in the Appendices to the report.

It was agreed that the contents of the report be noted.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2006/2007 AND QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT – JANUARY TO MARCH 2007 – PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: SOCIAL WORK SERVICES FOR ADULTS AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT INFORMATION FOR ALL SOCIAL WORK

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services providing information on:-

- (a) the performance of Social Work Performance Indicators for Services for Adults for the period 1 January to 31 March 2007; and
- (b) work being undertaken by the department on continuous improvement, including Best Value Reviews and Performance Development Planning.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and the action initiated by the department to attempt to improve performance.

UPDATE ON SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE TELECARE DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services:-

- (a) providing details of West Dunbartonshire Council's bid for Telecare funding from the Scottish Executive; and
- (b) updating the Committee on the development of the Telecare funding for older people.

After discussion and having heard the Home Care Organiser in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress report on the use of the Telecare funding;
- (2) that further reports on the progress of the use of the Telecare equipment and its effect on service provision would be submitted to future meetings of the Committee; and
- (3) to congratulate all those involved within Social Work Services in the development of Telecare.

Note: Councillor McGlinchey left at this point in the meeting.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Jonathan McColl declared a non-financial interest in the following item of business.

APPROVED PROVIDERS LIST

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services providing an update on the Social Work Services Approved Providers List and making recommendations thereon.

After discussion and having heard the Director of Social Work Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that before placing an advertisement in the national press seeking new applicants to join the Approved Providers List, legal advice would be sought on Councillor Bollan's proposal that, in order to be accredited to the Approved Providers List, each organisation should demonstrate that it would recognise trades unions and encourage employees to be members of trades unions;
- (2) that thereafter the Director of Social Work Services would inform the Convener and Councillor Bollan of the legal position;

- (3) that the advert would also invite those providers already on the List to confirm that they wished to remain there; and
- (4) that those remaining or placed on the List would provide the Council with up to date financial, legal and regulatory information.

Councillor Bollan disagreed with the decision and requested that his dissent be recorded.

Note: Councillor Casey and Councillor McElhill left during discussion of the above item.

PERFORMANCE ON STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (SPIs) FOR SOCIAL WORK SERVICES FOR ADULTS

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services providing information on Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) where there was a downward trend in performance or where it fell short of targets set.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) that regular progress reports would be submitted to future meetings of the Committee; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

The Convener requested the Committee to consider a report by the Director of Social Work Services seeking approval of the draft Social Work Services Departmental Plan for the period 2007/2011.

After discussion the Committee agreed that the matter be continued to the next meeting of the Committee.

The meeting closed at 12.55 p.m.