

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Social Work Committee held within the Council Offices, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 5th August, 1998.

Present: Councillors Duncan Mills (LAB); James McElhill (SNP); John Syme (LAB); Andrew White (LAB); Anthony Devine (LAB); Patricia Rice (LAB); Geoffrey Calvert (LAB & CO-OP); William Mackechnie (SNP); Margaret McGregor (SNP); James Flynn (LAB) and James Chirrey (SNP).

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Director of Social Work and Housing; Iain M Murray, Resources Manager; Anne Ritchie, Operational Services Manager; William Clark, Planning and Development Manager and Stephen B Brown, Manager - Legal and Administrative Services.

Apology for Absence: An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Wailes (SNP).

Councillor Duncan Mills in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Social Work Committee held on 6th May, 1998 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICE - ANNUAL PLANNING STATEMENT

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing seeking the Committee's approval for the Criminal Justice Service - Annual Planning Statement for 1999/2000.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the planning statement for submission to the Scottish Office; and
- (2) to note the problematic nature of funding for criminal justice services both in relation to the level of funding awarded in previous years to West Dunbartonshire Council and in relation to the lack of consistency of grant funding across Scotland.

WOMEN OFFENDERS

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing the Committee of the content and conclusions of the Scottish Office Report entitled "Women Offenders - A Safer Way" (1998).

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing, the Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.

BUDGETARY PERFORMANCE 1997/98

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing the Committee of the Social Work budgetary performance during the financial year from 1st April, 1997 to 31st March, 1998.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing, the Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.

BUDGETARY POSITION AS AT 30TH JUNE, 1998

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing the Committee of the Social Work budgetary performance during the period 1st April to 30th June, 1998.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing, the Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.

BEST VALUE

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing advising the Committee of progress made by the Department of Social Work and Housing to implement the Council's Best Value plan.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that updated information on the Best Value programme would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee; and
- (2) otherwise to note the terms of the Report.

PPA PROJECTS

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing the Committee of the number of successful PPA applications supported by the Department and their impact on the strategic development of services.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing, the Committee agreed to welcome the development of new services and the additional resources and employment brought into the area through the West Dunbartonshire Partnership funding and commended those officers involved for all their effort and good work.

It was noted that a further Report updating Members on progress of the PPA projects would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

INCREASE IN MAINTENANCE RATES

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing requesting the Committee to approve revised maintenance rates for voluntary residential homes, day centres and schools applicable to West Dunbartonshire placements.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the revised maintenance rates as detailed in the Appendix to this Minute.

MENTAL HEALTH DEVELOPMENT FUND

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing the Committee of the Council's success in securing, with Health Board Partners, Scottish Office funding for mental health services.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing, the Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE FUNDING OF LONG TERM CARE OF THE ELDERLY

There was submitted a Report by the Director of Social Work and Housing:-

- (a) informing the Committee of the work of the Royal Commission on the Funding of Long Term Care of the Elderly;
- (b) highlighting the main submissions to the Commission from COSLA and Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW) reflecting local authority concerns; and
- (c) seeking the support of the Committee on the key conclusions from these submissions.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing, in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the Report as the basis of the Council's submission to the Royal Commission.

Furthermore, it was agreed that copies of the Rowntree Report, referred to within the Report, be made available to Members in each of the Group rooms.

PANEL OF SAFEGUARDERS

There was submitted a Report by the Depute Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council:-

- (a) requesting the Committee to consider and approve a recommendation in respect of a person who has applied to become a member of the Panel of Safeguards; and
- (b) informing the Committee that Mr. William McCall, Otters Lodge, StraidaCnoc, Barremman, Clynder Village, Argyll and Bute, has decided to resign from the Panel of Safeguards.

Having heard the Convener the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the appointment of Mrs Ishbel Robertson to the Panel of Safeguards for West Dunbartonshire, for the period up to and including 31st March, 1999;
- (2) to note the resignation of Mr William McCall, Otters Lodge, Straid-a-Cnoc, Barremman, Clynder Village, Argyll and Bute; and
- (3) that officers should continue to seek suitable candidates from within West Dunbartonshire Council's boundary and that advertisements be placed in the local press, if necessary.