

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Social Work Committee held within the Council Chambers, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 8 March 2000 at 10.05 a.m.

Present: Councillors James McElhill (SNP), John Syme (LAB), Andrew White (LAB), Anthony Devine (LAB), Geoffrey Calvert (LAB & CO-OP), James Bolland (IND), Craig McLaughlin (SNP - substituting for Ronald McColl), Margaret McGregor (SNP), James Flynn (LAB) and Connie O'Sullivan (LAB).

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; Alexis Jay, Director of Social Work and Housing; Anne Ritchie, Operational Services Manager; Iain M Murray, Resources Manager; William Clark, Strategy Manager; Raymund McQuillan, Principal Officer (Criminal Justice); Beryl Middleton, Principal Officer, Registration and Inspection Unit; and Audrey Ritchie, Principal Solicitor.

Apologies

for Absence: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors John Trainer (LAB) and Mary Collins (LAB).

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Councillor John Trainer, Convener, the Principal Solicitor invited the Committee to nominate a member to chair the meeting.

Councillor Devine, seconded by Councillor Flynn, moved that Councillor White should chair the meeting.

By way of amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor McElhill, moved that Councillor Margaret McGregor should chair the meeting.

On a vote being taken, 4 members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion. Thereafter Councillor White took the chair.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

On behalf of the Committee, Councillor White welcomed Alexis Jay, Director of Social Work and Housing to this her first meeting of the Social Work Committee and took the opportunity to thank Anne Ritchie for her good work as Acting Head of Social Work.

VALE OF LEVEN HOSPITAL - PROPOSED CUTS IN SERVICES

Councillor White informed the Committee that representatives from the Argyll and Clyde Health Board and the Argyll and Clyde Acute Hospitals NHS Trust had been invited to the meeting to discuss recent press reports on possible cuts in services at the Vale of Leven Hospital.

Thereafter he invited Mr George Gibb, Chairman of the Argyll and Clyde Acute Hospitals NHS Trust; Rev Ian Miller, Non-Executive Trustee of the Argyll and Clyde Acute Hospitals NHS Trust; Mr David Silletto, Chief Executive, Argyll and Clyde Acute Hospitals NHS Trust; Mr Malcolm Jones, Chairman, Argyll and Health Clyde Health Board; and Mr Neil McConnachie, General Manager, Argyll and Clyde Health Board (all in attendance for this item only) to address the Committee on the issue.

During the course of the address the Committee was advised that:-

- (a) the future of the Vale of Leven Hospital was secure and that there was no question of its closure;
- (b) the 'Vale of Leven Project' proposals had not been implemented yet as they required approval by the Health Board and the Scottish Executive and would not be implemented without full and proper public consultation;
- (c) the "Recovery Plan" now referred to as the "Stability Plan", which was completely separate from the Vale of Leven Project, had arisen as a result of an estimated £6m deficit in funding for this financial year but that the estimated deficit had been reduced to £2.9m through efficiency savings; and
- (d) there had been no removal of equipment from the Vale of Leven Hospital as reported in the press and that it was not anticipated that there would be any staff redundancies.

Having heard the representatives from the NHS Trust and Health Board in answer to members' questions and following discussion, Councillor White emphasised the need for meaningful consultation with both the community and the Council on any proposals to change the level of services at the Vale of Leven Hospital. Thereafter it was agreed:-

- (1) that a further meeting be arranged with representatives from the Health Board, the NHS Trust and a cross-party group of elected members from this Council to discuss the situation;
- (2) that copies of all relevant documents be circulated directly to all elected members; and
- (3) that representatives from the Health Board and NHS Trust be invited to attend the public meeting being co-hosted by this Council and the Dumbarton and Vale of Leven Reporter, to be held on 28 March 2000.

Councillor White thanked the representatives from the Health Board and NHS Trust for their attendance and thereafter they left the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

It was agreed that the meeting be adjourned for a short period.

The meeting was reconvened at 11.35 a.m. with all members and officers on the Sederunt present with the exception of the Chief Executive. The business on the agenda was dealt with as follows.

SCOTTISH AMBULANCE SERVICE

With reference to the minutes of meeting of Council held on 22 December, 1999 (Volume Page 5403 refers), there was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work informing the Committee of the outcome of a recent meeting with the Scottish Ambulance Service and Argyll and Clyde Health Board to examine local concerns about ambulance services in the Vale of Leven area.

Having heard Councillor White and Councillor McLaughlin, both of whom had attended the meeting with the Scottish Ambulance Service, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the Partnership Links proposed within the report be approved and that the Scottish Ambulance Service be invited to a future Council meeting to discuss the matter further; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

PANEL OF SAFEGUARDERS

There was submitted a report by the Director of Corporate Services making recommendations in respect of the re-appointment of the existing Panel of Safeguarders in West Dunbartonshire and requesting the Committee to consider an application received from Mr John Harris.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to re-appoint for a period of one year, those persons wishing to serve as Safeguarders in West Dunbartonshire (as detailed in the Appendix I to these Minutes) with the exception of Mr Ross Brown;
- (2) to appoint Mr John Harris to the Panel of Safeguarders in West Dunbartonshire for the period up to and including 31 March 2001; and
- (3) to note that Officers would continue to monitor the work of the Panel and report back on progress to a future meeting of the Committee.

INSPECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work making recommendations in respect of additional nominations to the Inspection Advisory Committee.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve Ms Barrie, Mrs McKenzie, Mrs Tompkinson, Ms Tait and Ms Terrace as Lay Inspectors; and
- (2) that Ms Barrie, Mrs McKenzie and Mrs Tompkinson should also serve on the Inspection Advisory Committee.

INSPECTION STANDARDS

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work seeking approval of the three sets of standards used by the Registration and Inspection Unit to inspect Residential Services for Adults and Children and Day Care for Adults.

Having heard the Strategy Manager and the Principal Officer, Inspection & Registration Unit, in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed to adopt the standards for Residential Care for Adults; the standards for Residential Care for Children and the standards for Day Care for Adults as appended to the report.

AUTHORISED PROVIDERS LIST

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work requesting approval of an update to the Authorised Providers List.

The Committee agreed to approve the revised list of Authorised Providers, as appended to the report.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES: STRUCTURE PROPOSALS

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work seeking approval for the reorganisation of Criminal Justice Services in West Dunbartonshire.

Having heard the Principal Officer (Criminal Justice) in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the reorganisation of the Social Work Criminal Justice Services in West Dunbartonshire as follows:-
 - (a) an Assessment/Court Team be created within the Social Work Unit at McLean Place, Dumbarton; and
 - (b) staff delivering the community based Constructs Pack be located within a Community Supervision Team based in the West Dunbartonshire Probation Unit under the supervision of a Senior Social Worker; and
- (2) to note that the future use of the premises at Gavins Road, Hardgate, would be the subject of a report to the Committee in May.

BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEWS - DAY CARE SERVICE FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work advising of progress made to review Day Care Services for Elderly People in accordance with the requirements of Best Value and seeking approval for review outcomes to date.

Having heard the Operational Services Manager in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the service improvements set out in Section 7 of the report as follows:-
 - 1 Consultation with users and carers.
 - 2 Approve and Implement the Council's standards for day care.
 - 3 Define consistent models of assessment criteria to ensure equity of service throughout the Authority's area.
 - 4 Upgrade facilities in order that they meet the needs of elderly disabled people. (The work to improve facilities at Frank Downie Day Centre is in the capital budget and work has been carried out at Queen Mary Avenue).
 - 5 Determine the need for the feasibility of establishing a Day Care Centre for people with dementia in the Dumbarton/Vale of Leven area.
 - 6 Specific re-provisioning by re-location from Dalmuir Community Education Centre to Frank Downie Centre and Faifley Hub.
 - 7 Consultation with Health partners regarding the future community provision for people with dementia.
- (2) to note that progress reports on this matter would be submitted to future meetings of the Committee; and
- (3) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

REGULATING CARE AND THE SOCIAL SERVICES WORKFORCE (CONSULTATION)

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work:-

- (a) outlining the basis of the response to the Scottish Executive's consultation document "Regulating Care and the Social Services Workforce"; and
- (b) seeking approval for the draft response (as shown in Appendix 1 to the report) and the Department's proposals to prepare for the Government's plans to modernise Social Work Services in Scotland.

Having heard the Strategy Manager in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the terms of the report and accept the comments contained in the Appendix to the report as the basis for this Council's response to the consultation paper; and

- (2) to approve the actions outlined in Section 4 of the report to prepare for the implementation of Regulating Care and the Social Services Workforce.

INCREASE IN MAINTENANCE RATES FOR ESTABLISHMENTS LOCATED OUTWITH WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work recommending approval of revised maintenance rates for Voluntary Residential Homes and Day Centres applicable to West Dunbartonshire placements.

The Committee agreed to approve the Revised Maintenance Rates for Voluntary Residential Homes, Schools and Local Authority Residential Homes as detailed in Appendix II to these minutes.

UPRATING OF NURSING AND RESIDENTIAL HOME RATES

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work:-

- (a) seeking approval for an increase in the Council's rates for Voluntary and Private Sector Residential Care Homes and Nursing Homes, in line with the Benefit Agency uprating for 2000/2001; and
- (b) seeking approval for the increase in Standard Respite Care charges for Voluntary and Private Residential Care Homes, Nursing Homes and Local Authority Establishments.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the uprated levels of Benefit Agency Residential Care Allowances which would apply from April 2000, as shown in Appendix III to these minutes;
- (2) that for 2000/2001 the standard weekly charge to Council funded clients for respite care in Private and Voluntary Nursing Homes and Residential Homes should be increased from £111.40 to £113.35 (and increase of 1.75%); and
- (3) that the standard weekly charge to residents utilising Local Authority Homes for respite care should be increased from £32 to £32.05 (an increase of 0.10%).

BUDGETARY POSITION AT 31 JANUARY 2000

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work informing of the Department's budgetary performance during the period from 1 April 1999 to 31 January 2000.

Having heard the Resources Manager in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the terms of the report.

ACCOUNTS COMMISSION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 1998/1999

There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Social Work informing of the performance of the Department's Social Work Services in relation to the Accounts Commission's Annual Social Work Performance Indicators.

Having heard the Director of Social Work and Housing and the Principal Officer, Inspection & Registration Unit, in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that reports on the proposed Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care would be submitted to future meetings of the Committee; and
- (2) otherwise to note the terms of the report.

The meeting closed at 12.15 p.m.