

## **SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE**

At a Meeting of the Social Work Committee held within the Municipal Buildings, Station Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 4 August 1999.

**Present:** Councillors John Trainer (LAB); James McElhill (SNP); Andrew White (LAB); Anthony Devine (LAB)\*; Mary Collins (LAB); James Bolland (IND); Ronald McColl (SNP); Margaret McGregor (SNP); James Flynn (LAB) and Connie O'Sullivan (LAB).

\*Arrived later in the meeting.

**Attending:** Tim Huntingford, Director of Social Work and Housing; Iain M Murray, Resources Manager; William Clark, Strategy Manager, Raymond McQuillan, Principal Officer (Criminal Justice), Colin Meehan, Principal Officer (Learning Disabilities) and Stephen B Brown, Manager - Legal and Administrative Services.

**Apologies for absence:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Geoffrey Calvert (LAB & CO-OP) and John Syme (LAB).

### **Councillor John Trainer in the Chair**

#### **CONVENER'S REMARKS**

Councillor Trainer, Convener, informed the Committee that Councillor Calvert's father had died and understandably he was not able to attend this meeting. The Committee agreed that a letter of condolence be sent to Councillor Calvert.

#### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Social Work Committee held on 2 June 1999 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

Councillor Devine entered the meeting during discussion on the following item.

#### **NOMINATION OF ELECTED MEMBERS AND LAY MEMBERS FOR PANELS AND REVIEW GROUPS**

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Social Work Committee held on 2 June 1999 (pages 4736/4737 refer), there was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing requesting the Committee to make nominations in respect of membership of Panels and Review Groups.

Having heard the Convener, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that those Members previously nominated to serve on the Complaints Review Sub-Committee namely Councillors Geoffrey Calvert, John Syme, Anthony Devine, Mary Collins, Ronald McColl and Margaret McGregor together with Councillors James McCallum, Linda McColl and two members from the SNP Group (to be named later) be appointed to serve on the Access to Personal Files Review Group;
- (2) that Councillors John Trainer and Connie O’Sullivan and two members from the SNP Group (to be named later) be nominated to serve on the Adoption and Fostering Panel;
- (3) that Mr. Joe McCormack and Ms Charlotte Lee be re-appointed to serve on the Complaints Review Sub-Committee as lay members; and
- (4) that Dr Stewart Harper, Vale of Leven Health Promotion Project, be appointed to serve on the Complaints Review Sub-Committee as a lay member.

### **MODERNISING COMMUNITY CARE: BASELINE INFORMATION**

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Social Work Committee held on 2 June 1999 (page 4739 refers), there was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing of a further stage in the Government’s document “Modernising Community Care - An Action Plan”.

Following discussion and having heard the Director and the Strategy Manager in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed to note the further progress being made to achieve the targets set out in the aforesaid Action Plan.

### **J & B REDUNDANCIES - SUPPORT BY WELFARE RIGHTS**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing providing information on the assistance which has been offered to the J & B workforce by the Welfare Rights Service.

Having heard the Convener the Committee agreed to note the terms of the report.

### **ELDERLY BENEFITS HELPLINE**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing Members of progress made in respect of the Elderly Benefits Helpline.

Having heard the Director and the Strategy Manager in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee providing an analysis of the calls made to the helpline during the first three months of its operation; and
- (2) otherwise to note the terms of the report.

**PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AND ABLE BODIED (PHAB)  
DUMBARTON/VALE OF LEVEN**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing recommending payment of a grant to help the PHAB group provide a respite holiday for their members.

The Committee agreed to award the PHAB group the sum of £3,300 (costs to be met from Social Work Section 10 Grants budget) towards the cost of a respite holiday for their members.

**REPROVISIONING OF SERVICE TO THE FORMER RESIDENTS OF A KEY  
HOUSING PROPERTY IN PATTISON STREET, CLYDEBANK**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing advising of a review of service to a group of people with learning disabilities and making recommendations thereon.

Having heard the Convener, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the reprovision of service to the former tenants of the Key Housing service in Pattison Street, Clydebank; and
- (2) to approve the revised financial arrangements required to support the new service, as detailed within the Appendix to the aforesaid report.

**BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEWS - CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing advising of progress made to review criminal justice services in accordance with the requirements of Best Value and seeking approval for the review outcomes to date.

Having heard the Principal Officer (Criminal Justice) in further explanation of the report and the Director in answer to Members' questions, on the motion of Councillor Trainer, seconded by Councillor White, it was agreed:-

- “(1) that the Committee should accept the proposed service improvements (set out in paragraph 7.1 of the report) and acknowledge the work carried out by the review group;

- (2) that this Council fully endorses the retention of the criminal justice services by local authorities and the development of shared practices with other local authorities, where appropriate; and
- (3) that the Convener invites Angus Mackay, Depute Minister of Justice, Scottish Executive, to visit West Dunbartonshire to see the positive work being carried out by the Social Work Criminal Justice section.”

Councillor Bollan asked that his dissent be recorded.

### **BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEWS - RESIDENTIAL SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing advising of progress made to review residential services and accommodation for adults with learning disabilities in accordance with the requirements of Best Value and seeking approval for review outcomes to date.

Councillor Trainer informed the Committee that he had visited Braehead House (hostel) and met with staff, service users and residents and would like to thank them all formally for giving him the opportunity to see the service in operation.

Having heard the Principal Officer (Learning Disability) in further explanation of the report and the Director in answer to members' questions, Councillor Trainer, seconded by Councillor O'Sullivan, moved that the Committee approve the proposed service improvements as detailed in paragraph 6.1 of the aforesaid report.

By way of amendment Councillor McColl, seconded by Councillor McGregor, moved that the service improvements outlined in paragraph 6.1 of the report be approved with the exception of the reference to the words "Close Braehead House (Hostel)" at bullet point 2, which should be amended to read "Continue the matter regarding the proposed closure of Braehead House (Hostel) until full consultation has taken place and the hostel has been visited by the Committee".

Councillor Trainer informed the Committee that if any member wished to visit Braehead House while the 8 residents were still there, a request should be made via the Director who would consult the residents about any visit.

On a vote being taken, 3 members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion which was accordingly carried.

### **BUDGETARY PERFORMANCE - 1998/99**

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing advising of the Department's budgetary performance during the financial year from 1 April 1998 to 31 March 1999.

### **BUDGETARY POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 1999**

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing Members of the Department's budgetary performance during the period from 1 April 1999 to 30 June 1999.

### **INCREASE IN MAINTENANCE RATES FOR ESTABLISHMENTS LOCATED OUTWITH WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing making recommendations in respect of revised maintenance rates for voluntary residential homes and a local authority residential home and day care centre applicable to West Dunbartonshire placements.

The Committee agreed to approve the increase in maintenance rates for establishments located outwith West Dunbartonshire as detailed in the Appendix to these Minutes.

### **CARERS' DAY**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and Housing informing the Committee of the recent Carers' Conference held on 11 June 1999 in the Burgh Hall, Dumbarton.

Following discussion the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the positive work in partnership with carers in West Dunbartonshire; and
- (2) that officers should consider holding a similar event in Clydebank.