

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 8 November 2006 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Denis Agnew, Gail Casey, James Flynn, Linda McColl, Marie McNair, Martin Rooney, James Bollan, Craig McLaughlin and Dennis Brogan.

Attending: David McMillan, Chief Executive; Bill Clark, Acting Director of Social Work Services; Irving Hodgson, Head of Regeneration Services; Margaret Caldwell, Manager of Housing Operations; James Pow, Manager of Finance, Department of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services; Jeff Stobo, Strategy Manager; Don Findlay, Manager of Technical Services, Stephen West, Manager of Resources, Department of Social Work Services; Martin McKendrick, Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator; Tom Jackson, Joint Manager, Addiction Services; Mike Foley, Strategy Officer – Mental Health, Tommy Gorman, Welfare Rights Officer, John Hepburn, Welfare Rights Officer, Lynne McKnight, Section Head – Home Care, Kelly Gainty, Contracts and Commissioning Officer, Vicky McGraw, Inclusion Officer, Department of Education and Cultural Services, Lewis Morrison, Policy Officer – Disability and Access, Valerie McIlhatton, Policy Officer, Sally Michael, Principal Solicitor and Nuala Borthwick, Administrative Assistant.

Councillor Marie McNair in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

10503 The Minutes of Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held on 13 September 2006 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME PROGRESS REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

10504 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information on the progress of the delivery of the Race Equality Scheme Action Plan 2005-2006 and seeking approval for the Race Equality Scheme Action Plan 2006-2007.

10505 **Having heard the Policy Officer, Disability and Access in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-**

- (1) **to acknowledge the progress made on the delivery of the Race Equality Action Plan to date; and**
- (2) to approve the new Action Plan to 2007.

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

- 10506 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting a draft West Dunbartonshire Council Disability Equality Scheme (DES) 2006-9 which included the West Dunbartonshire Education Authority DES 2006-9.
- 10507 Updated copies of the Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009 Section 19 – Disability Equality in Education and the Draft Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009: Action Plan Actions 24 – 33 were distributed for information.
- 10508 Having heard the Policy Officer, Disability and Access and the Inclusion Officer, Department of Education and Cultural Services in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed to approve the West Dunbartonshire Council Disability Equality Scheme 2006-9.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

- 10509 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information on the progress of the delivery of the Equality and Diversity Strategy Action Plan.
- 10510 After hearing the Policy Officer in answer to Members' questions and following discussion, Councillor McNair, seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved:-
- 10511 That the Committee agrees the recommendations of the report, as follows:-
- (1) to approve the Action Plan for 2006 – 2007; and
 - (2) to note the progress made on the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2005-2006.
- 10512 As an amendment Councillor Bollan, seconded by Councillor McLaughlin, moved:-
- 10513 That a report be submitted to the next meeting of Council on the issue of the appointment of the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services irrespective of any future report to Council on the Recruitment Committee
- 10514 On a vote being taken, 3 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion, which was accordingly declared carried.

- 10515 During consideration of this item, the Convener, Councillor McNair, required to call the meeting to Order following personal comments made by Councillor Bollan towards the Chief Executive.

SCOTTISH INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

- 10516 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the publication of the results of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2006 and noting the changes in deprivation in West Dunbartonshire from the previous results published in 2004.

- 10517 Following discussion and having heard the Policy Officer in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report;
- (2) to note the extent of deprivation within West Dunbartonshire;
- (3) to note the progress in reducing deprivation in 7 data zones; and
- (4) to note that 4 data zones had worsened so that they now fell into the 15% most deprived category.

NOTE: Having heard the Chief Executive, it was agreed that Officers who were no longer required to be heard in relation to a report could leave the meeting at this point in the proceedings.

INTEGRATED CARE PLANNING FOR ADDICTION SERVICES

- 10518 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing an overview of Care Planning for individuals with addiction issues and highlighting national recognition through the Scottish Executive's Improvement Service, including an investment of £50,000.

- 10519 Following discussion and having heard the Joint Manager, Addiction Services the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the developments detailed in the report; and
- (2) that a further report on the outcomes for Addiction Services be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

CARE COMMISSION INSPECTION REPORTS

- 10520 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services summarising three inspection reports received from the Care Commission on Care Homes for Older People managed by West Dunbartonshire Council covering the period between April 2006 and July 2006.
- 10521 Having heard the Acting Director of Social Work Services in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS TO REDUCE THE FREQUENCY OF CARE COMMISSION INSPECTION

- 10522 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing information on the Care Commission's consultation paper which proposes a reduction in the minimum frequency of inspections for certain care services from 1 April 2007.
- 10523 Having heard the Acting Director of Social Work Services, in answer to Members' questions, Councillor Rooney, seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved the recommendations of the report as follows:-
- 10524 That the Committee agrees:-
- (1) to welcome the proposals referred to in the report which will go some way to reducing the regulatory and financial burden on providers where services are performing well, and which would still allow the targeting of those services which require to improve;
 - (2) to welcome a flexible approach based on an assessment of the performance of services, that supports continuous improvement in care services through a transparent, proportionate, accountable, targeting and consistent approach to regulation; and
 - (3) to note and agree the contents of the report and proposals.
- 10525 As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Bolla, moved:-
- 10526 That the number of inspection visits to care homes by the Care Commission is not reduced and that the status quo in relation to visits to care homes remain in place given that the facilities are provided for the most vulnerable members of the Community.
- 10527 On a vote being taken, 3 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion, which was accordingly declared carried.

SOCIAL WORK SERVICES QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

- 10528 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing information on the timescaled implementation plan for all social work services to be accredited with a recognised quality management scheme by December 2008, as approved in the Quality Management Systems Policy at the Social Justice Committee in October 2005.
- 10529 Having heard the Acting Director of Social Work Services the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

- 10530 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing information on the outcome of a key local conference to promote positive mental health and well being and to develop the concept of mental health recovery in West Dunbartonshire.
- 10531 Mike Foley, Strategy Officer – Mental Health introduced the hosts of the conference, Harry McCormack, Chairman, Dumbarton and District Mental Health Forum and Paul McToal, Chairman, Clydebank Mental Health Forum, to the Committee. He explained that the conference saw the launch of a key research study carried out by Outside of the Box Development Support Limited which looked at the key factors that keep people well and how services can support people's recovery.
- 10532 A booklet entitled 'Supporting People's Mental Health and Wellbeing' and a handout entitled "'Recovery" in Mental Health – Dalmuir Barclay Church Hall' were distributed to Members of the Committee.
- 10533 Councillor Agnew congratulated pupils of Clydebank High School Drama Group on their contribution at the conference.
- 10534 Having heard the Director of Social Work Services, in answer to Members' questions the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the extensive partnership work undertaken by consumers and staff in bringing this milestone event together;
 - (2) to note the contribution to community capacity building by the recovery approach; and
 - (3) to request the Director of Social Work Services to bring forward progress reports on further developments.

IMPROVED SERVICES FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND CARERS

10535 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing information on the work, completed and ongoing, carried out by Social Work Services in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support to address cancer poverty in West Dunbartonshire.

10536 Having heard the Welfare Rights Officer in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to support the aims of the partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support;
- (2) to note the project outcomes for the first year of the project;
- (3) to support the development of further initiatives as noted in the report; and
- (4) to commend the Acting Director of Social Work Services and Welfare Rights Officers for their work in driving the initiatives.

MACMILLAN CARERS SERVICE

10537 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing an update on the development of the Macmillan Carers Service and providing information on the decision of Macmillan Cancer Support to extend the funding of the service for a further 2 years.

10538 Having heard the Section Head - Homecare in elaboration of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to invite the Leader of the Council to write to the Chief Executive, Macmillan Cancer Support U.K. to record the Council's appreciation of Macmillan's Support and the unique partnership arrangement with the Council; and
- (2) to invite Macmillan representatives and carers to give a presentation on the partnership to the Council.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

10539 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing an update on the Departmental Continuing Professional Development policy.

10540 Having heard Councillor Rooney, Service Spokesperson for Social Work Services and the Manager of Resources, Social Work Services, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

TELECARE BID – SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

- 10541 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing information on the Council's bid for telecare funding from the Scottish Executive.
- 10542 Having heard the Contracts and Commissioning Officer in elaboration of the report, the Committee noted the position regarding the submission of the telecare bid to the Scottish Executive.

BENEFITS TAKE-UP CAMPAIGN FOR OLDER PEOPLE

- 10543 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing information on the need for a Campaign to raise awareness of the importance of maximising income for older people through benefit up-take and, in particular, to help eliminate fuel poverty to ensure the lives of older people in West Dunbartonshire are more comfortable and secure.
- 10544 Having heard Mr Gorman, Welfare Rights Officer in elaboration of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to approve the proposal to run a benefit take-up campaign for older people as outlined in the report;
 - (2) that Elected Members participate in the campaign in order to widen its appeal to older people in our communities; and
 - (3) that a letter be sent to the Government on behalf of the Committee requesting that the Regulator's power be increased to force the fuel industry to limit their price increases.

DELAYED DISCHARGE POSITION

- 10545 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services:-
- (a) advising of performance improvements in the key target of reducing the number of West Dunbartonshire residents whose hospital discharge had been delayed at the point of the 15 September 2006 local census; and
 - (b) advising of the actions taken to sustain the current downward trend in line with national policy and locally agreed improvement targets.
- 10546 Having heard the Acting Director of Social Work Services in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the report.

**REPORT ON STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2005/2006 AND
QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2006 –
COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES**

- 10547 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing an update on Social Work Performance for the period 1 July to 30 September 2006.
- 10548 Having heard the Acting Director of Social Work Services in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

SOCIAL WORK BUDGETARY POSITION 2006/07 AS AT PERIOD 5

- 10549 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services advising of the performance of the Social Work budget for the period to 15 September 2006.
- 10550 Having heard Councillor Rooney, Service Spokesperson for Social Work Services, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

ADJOURNMENT

- 10551 After hearing the Convener, Councillor McNair, it was agreed that the meeting be adjourned for a period of 10 minutes.
- 10552 The meeting resumed at 11.55 a.m. with all Members on the sederunt being present.

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2006/2007 – BUDGETARY CONTROL
STATEMENT TO 15 SEPTEMBER 2006 (PERIOD 5)**

- 10553 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services updating the Committee on the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the period ended 15 September 2006.
- 10554 Having heard the Manager of Housing Operations and the Manager of Finance, Department of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the contents of the report;
 - (2) that the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services would provide information on the current backlog of repairs direct to Councillor Bollan; and

- (3) that the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services would provide information on the updated position in relation to lock ups direct to Councillor Brogan.

**HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2006/2007 – BUDGETARY CONTROL
REPORT TO 15 SEPTEMBER 2006 (PERIOD 5)**

- 10555 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services advising on the progress of the HRA Capital Programme 2006/2007.
- 10556 It was noted that Appendix D referred to in the report had been omitted from the papers and a copy was circulated to Members' for information.
- 10557 Having heard the Manager of Finance (Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services) and the Chief Executive in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**HOUSING – NON HRA REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETARY CONTROL
STATEMENT 2006/2007 TO 15 SEPTEMBER 2006 (PERIOD 5)**

- 10558 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services advising the Committee on the financial performance of the Housing – Non HRA Revenue Account to the period ended 15 September 2006.
- 10559 Having heard the Manager of Finance (Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services) in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) that a report on the breakdown of homeless units in each area be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

**HOUSING MAINTENANCE TRADING OPERATION 2006/2007
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE TO 15 SEPTEMBER 2006 (PERIOD 5)**

- 10560 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services presenting the Committee with the interim cumulative financial performance information for the period ending 15 September 2006.
- 10561 Having heard the Manager of Finance (Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services), the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION:
WAITING LIST, VOIDS, LETS & HOMELESS**

- 10562 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental 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 30 September 2006.
- 10563 Having heard the Chief Executive in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

HOUSE SALES

- 10564 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services providing information on West Dunbartonshire Council houses sold under the Right to Buy scheme between 1 April 2006 and 31 August 2006.
- 10565 Having heard from Councillor Flynn, Service Spokesperson for Housing Services, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**MEASURED TERM CONTRACT FOR REPAIRS AND PLANNED
MAINTENANCE OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL'S HOUSING
STOCK – 2007/2010**

- 10566 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services advising of tenders received for the Measured Term Contract for Repairs and Planned Maintenance of West Dunbartonshire Council's Housing Stock – 2007/2010 and seeking approval to accept the most economically advantageous tender
- 10567 Councillor Flynn, seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved:-
- 10568 This Council believes that it must strive at all times to provide high quality services to our tenants while securing value for money.
- 10569 The report before the Committee shows that we are committed to benchmarking our services through best value reviews.
- 10570 The Committee notes with satisfaction that the tender submitted by our Housing Repairs and Maintenance Services is considered to be the most economically advantageous tender received. In addition, the Committee is aware that the draft document "West Dunbartonshire Council The Audit of Best Value and Community Planning" criticises the Council.

- 10571 The document states – “there is very little evidence that the Council has systematically tested the competitiveness of its services”.
- 10572 The Committee notes with concern that this view has been endorsed by the Opposition and others.
- 10573 In light of this criticism and endorsement the Committee agrees to continue this report and call on the Audit Scotland review team and the Council’s external Auditors to review the process used to evaluate the tender documents.
- 10574 The review should ensure that the process and recommendations by Officers is in the interest of the rent payers and in line with a Council that endorses best value and continuous improvement.
- 10575 As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Bollan, moved:-
- 10576 That the Committee accepts the recommendations of the report that the Measured Term Contract be accepted and that the contract be awarded to DLO.
- 10577 That the Department of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services be instructed to prepare a report to look at other ways to offset the additional costs of the contract to the DLO such as the Garden Tidy Scheme and central allocation costs in order that rent payers of West Dunbartonshire are not penalised with additional costs of the DLO Contract.
- 10578 On a vote being taken, 3 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion, which was accordingly declared carried.

PARTNERING ARRANGEMENTS WITH MEASURED TERM CONTRACTORS

- 10579 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services updating and providing further information on the proposed implementation of partnering arrangements for specific measured term contracts.
- 10580 Having heard Councillor Flynn, Service Spokesperson for Housing Services in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to instruct the Director to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee outlining the progress of research and discussion into proposed partnering arrangements for specific measured term contracts; and
 - (2) to note the contents of the report.

**HOUSING, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES –
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

- 10581 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services providing information on the performance of areas within the Housing Service including:-
- (a) Statutory Performance Indicators for the second quarter of 2006/2007 and unaudited year end performance figures (Appendix 1 to the report); and
 - (b) the Department's programme of Best Value Reviews for the Housing Service (Appendix 2 to the report).
- 10582 Having heard the Manager of Housing Operations, in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents the report.

RENT HARMONISATION

- 10583 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services providing information on the progress made in the implementation of the fourth stage of the rent harmonisation programme.
- 10584 Having heard the Manager of Finance in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the implementation of the fourth stage of the rent harmonisation programme;
 - (2) that the fifth stage of the rent harmonisation programme be introduced in September 2007;
 - (3) to limit the increase to £1.00 per week;
 - (4) to instruct the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services to bring forward regular reports on progress; and
 - (5) that the Manager of Finance would provide figures on the financial impact of rent harmonisation since its introduction direct to Councillor McLaughlin.

**FULL EMPLOYMENT AREA INITIATIVE COMMUNITY RENEWAL -
WHITECROOK AND DRUMRY**

- 10585 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services seeking approval to let 51 Onslow Road, Clydebank to Community Renewal up to 31 March 2008

- 10586 Having heard the Strategy Manager, Department of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services in answer to Members' questions, the Committee approved the let of 51 Onslow Road, Clydebank to Community Renewal up to 31 March 2008 subject to planning consent being obtained.

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR FUNDING: STRATHCLYDE POLICE

- 10587 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services providing details of how the funding provided to Strathclyde Police under West Dunbartonshire Council's anti social behaviour budget is being spent.
- 10588 Having heard the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator in answer to Members' questions and following discussion, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

The meeting closed at 1.02 p.m.