

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by Director of Social Work Services

Social Justice Committee: 17 January 2007

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**Subject: Social Work Budgetary Position 2006/07 as at Period 7 to 15 November 2006**

### 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the performance of the Social Work budget for the period to 15 November 2006.

### 2. Background

2.1 Attached as Appendix 1 is the budgetary control statement for the Social Work Services Department.

2.2 It should be noted that this report compares the actual expenditure to 15 November to the phased budget as at 15 November.

### 3. Main Issues

3.1 The overall variance for the service to period 7 is £276,256 favourable. The main variances to date are as follows:

3.2 **Operations and Servicing** is shown as £39,728 adverse. This is due to client transport costs and welfare payments being higher than budgeted.

3.3 **Residential Accommodation for Young People** is shown as adverse by £135,198. This is mainly due to fostering costs being higher than budgeted as a result of requiring to use fostering agencies due to a shortage of foster parents at present. This trend may continue through the year and will be kept closely monitored. Employee costs are overspent due to the costs of sickness cover.

3.4 **Residential Schools** costs are shown as overspent due to increases in the prices of places in such establishments increasing at a significantly higher rate than the rate of inflation budgeted. This has been partially offset by a lower number of children being placed. Transport costs are also overspent due to the budget being under-estimated.

3.5 **Other Services Young People** is shown as being overspent by £235,862 – this is primarily due to expenditure being incurred which is funded by additional government funding for Youth Justice. This income is not shown as income to Social Work due to the method of payment chosen by the Scottish Executive. An adjustment is shown in the attached summary sheet “below the line” in recognition

of the additional income being received corporately. The underlying variance here is therefore an underspend of around £35,000 which is due to vacant post savings.

- 3.6 **Residential Accommodation – Learning Disability** is shown as underspent by £65,992 which is mainly due to vacant post savings.
- 3.7 **Residential Accommodation – Physical Disability** is shown as overspent by £25,570 due to increased numbers of clients, which is higher than was budgeted.
- 3.8 **Supplementation – Mental Health** is underspent by £44,269 due to vacant posts and delays in placements of expected new clients.
- 3.9 **Other Services – Disability** is underspent by £43,454 due to vacant post savings and delays in placements of expected new clients.
- 3.10 **The Home Help Service** is shown as underspent by £382,773. Of this £335,000 is due to a provision made for previous year debt to Argyll and Bute Council not actually being required. There is also a small underspend in employee costs due to vacant post savings.

#### 4. **Personnel Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct personnel implications of the budgetary control report.

#### 5. **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 Other than the financial position noted above there are no financial implications of the budgetary control report. Management will continue to monitor the financial position closely.

#### 6. **Risk Analysis**

- 6.1 The main financial risks to the ongoing financial position relate to unforeseen client needs being identified between now and the end of the financial year which may result in increased costs from expensive service provision.

#### 7. **Recommendation**

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

William W Clark  
Director of Social Work Services

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**Person to Contact:** Stephen West, Manager of Resources -Tel. No. 01389 737705

**Background papers:** None

**Wards affected:** All