

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Social Work Committee held within the Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday 27th March, 1996.

Present: Councillor Duncan Mills (LAB), Councillor James McElhill (SNP), Councillor Mary Campbell (LAB), Councillor John Syme (LAB), Councillor Andrew White (LAB), Councillor Anthony Devine (LAB), Councillor Patricia Rice (LAB), Councillor William Kemp (IND), Councillor John Wailes (SNP), Councillor Margaret McGregor (SNP), Councillor William Mackechnie (SNP - substituting for Councillor Craig McLaughlin)

Attending: Ian Leitch, Depute Chief Executive & Solicitor to the Council, Tim Huntingford, Director of Social Work and Mary Cullen, Head of Corporate Policy and Public Relations.

Apology for Absence: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Geoffrey Calvert.

Councillor Duncan Mills in the Chair

Before dealing with the items of business on the agenda, the Chairman welcomed Mrs Valerie Fisher, Chairman of the Children's Panel for the West Dunbartonshire area who was in attendance.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Social Work Committee held on 31st January, 1996 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

LOMOND HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of this Committee held on 31st January, 1996 (page 273 refers) there was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work providing an update on contact with the Lomond Healthcare NHS Trust.

It was noted that Mr Stephen Hayes, Chief Executive of the Trust had been invited to attend today's meeting of the Committee but Mr Hayes was presently on leave. It was further noted that a letter had been received from Mr Hayes, dated 15th March, 1996, inviting Members of the Social Work Committee to visit the Vale of Leven Hospital to discuss issues of concern.

Notwithstanding the invitation to Members of the Committee to visit the Vale of Leven Hospital, it was agreed that the Director of Social Work be requested to write again to the Director of the Trust inviting representatives to attend the next meeting of the Social Work Committee.

NOMINATION OF ELECTED MEMBERS FOR PANELS AND REVIEW GROUPS

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work requesting the nomination of four elected members to form an Adoption and Fostering Panel and Review Group and an Access to Personal Files Review Group and making recommendations on the role of the Social Work Committee in the consideration of applications to assume parental rights.

It was agreed that Councillor Duncan Mills, Councillor Anthony Devine, Councillor Patricia Rice and one Member of the Opposition Group be nominated to serve on the Adoption and Fostering Panel and Review Group and the Access to Personal Files Review Group. It was noted that the Opposition Member who would serve on the above Groups would be Councillor Margaret McGregor.

It was also agreed that the role of the Social Work Committee in the consideration of applications to assume parental rights be approved on an interim basis pending the implementation of the Children Act (Scotland) 1995 in the next year which will shift this legal responsibility to the Courts.

FOSTERING ALLOWANCES 1996/97

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work seeking approval to increase fostering allowances which are paid to carers in line with COSLA recommendations.

The Committee agreed to approve the rates recommended by COSLA as undernoted:-

<u>Ages</u>	<u>Current Rates 1995/96</u>	<u>Proposed Rates 1996/97</u>
0-4	51.38	51.79
5-10	63.70	64.21
11-15	79.31	79.94
16-18	102.69	103.51

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT BUDGET 1996/97

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work giving further information on the cuts proposed for Social Work and the implications for service delivery.

After hearing the Director of Social Work in response to various questions which were raised by Councillor McGregor in relation to the decision to recommend the closure of Crannog Cottage Old Peoples Home it was noted (a) that the Director of Social Work would provide Members with details of the occupancy rates in percentage terms of all homes run by the department, and (b) that Members would be kept fully informed of any enquiries which are received with respect to the Crannog Cottage property. It was further noted, after hearing the Depute Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council, that the proper procedure for

disposal of property would be strictly adhered to and any relevant proposals would be the subject of a full report to the Committee.

It was agreed that the report by the Director of Social Work be otherwise noted.

TRANSFER OF SHELTERED HOUSING WARDENS FROM SOCIAL WORK TO HOUSING

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work and the Director of Housing Services on the Departments' consideration of the savings proposal for the transfer of Sheltered Housing Wardens from the Social Work Department to the Housing Department.

It was agreed that the initial findings of a Joint Staff Group which had been established to examine the technical aspects of implementing the savings proposal be noted as detailed in the report. It was also agreed that a further report be prepared by the Directors of Social Work and Housing Services for submission to the Committee once consideration of the various issues is complete.

CAPITAL LIMITS FOR RESIDENTIAL CARE

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work outlining changes in capital limits for residential care and highlighting the financial implications for the Council.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

CARERS (RECOGNITION AND SERVICES) ACT 1995

There was submitted a report by the Director of Social Work on the implementation of the above Act and the resulting responsibilities for local authorities.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PANEL OF SAFEGUARDERS

There was submitted a report by the Depute Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council on arrangements for the appointment of safeguarders.

It having been noted that it was necessary for the Council to have a panel of safeguarders in place by 1st April 1996, it was agreed:-

- (a) that the persons listed in Appendix 1 to the report be re-appointed for a period of one year to serve as safeguarders in West Dunbartonshire, and
- (b) that it be noted that a further report recommending new appointments to the list of safeguarders would be submitted to a future meeting.