

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 29 JANUARY 2004 AT 1000 HOURS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Councillors Eric Jackson, Jim O'Neill, Stephanie Young, Douglas Reid, Gordon Cree, John Weir, Drew McIntyre, Harry Wilson, Ray Murray, John Knapp, Stuart Finlayson, Robert McDill, Jimmy Kelly, Tommy Farrell, Neil McGhee, William Crawford and Elaine Stewart.

ATTENDING: David Montgomery, Chief Executive; John Mulgrew, Director of Educational and Social Services; Jackie Donnelly, Head of Social Work; David Mitchell, Head of Administrative and Legal Services; Graham Short, Head of Quality Improvement; Alex McPhee, Financial Services Manager, Educational and Social Services; John Alexander, Principal Officer (Quality and Planning); Bill Eadie, Principal Officer (Children, Families and Criminal Justice); Eddie Fraser, Acting Principal Officer (Community Care); and Melanie Anderson, Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Isabella Macrae, Iain Linton, Jim Raymond and William Menzies.

CHAIR: Eric Jackson, Chair.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

1. The Chair welcomed a student of St Joseph's Academy, Natalie Keys, who was attending the meeting as part of a work experience placement with Administration and Legal Services.

He also referred to the launch following the Social Work Committee of the Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2002-2003 and issued an invitation to all elected Members to attend the event.

BUDGETARY PROGRESS REPORT – SOCIAL WORK TO 16 NOVEMBER 2003 (PERIOD 8)

2. There was submitted and noted a joint report dated 20 January 2004 (circulated) by the Directors of Finance and of Educational and Social Services on the current budgetary control position and the projected out-turn for the year for Social Work for the period ended 16 November 2003 (Period 8).

AWARDING OF CONTRACTS

3. There was submitted and noted a report dated 9 December 2003 (circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources which provided, for information, details of a tender which had been accepted, as follows:-

CONTRACT	SUCCESSFUL CONTRACTOR	AMOUNT
Auchinleck Care Home Project	CC Care Ltd, Kilmarnock	Schedule of Rates

POSITION STATEMENT ON BEST VALUE

4. There was submitted a report dated 12 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on progress made by the Department towards the implementation of Best Value.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Director of Educational and Social Services provide further reports on initiatives related to Best Value;
- (ii) to note that the report would also be presented to the Education Committee for consideration; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME (Item 8, Page 386, 03/07)

5. There was submitted and noted a joint report dated 5 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Homes and Technical Services and the Director of Education and Social Services on the implementation of this Scottish Executive initiative and its operation in East Ayrshire Council since April 2003.

COMMUNITY SERVICE BY OFFENDERS

6. There was submitted a report dated 5 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on additional resources being made available to increase the staffing level for the Community Service by Offenders Scheme and which sought approval to refer the matter to the Corporate Governance Committee.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the proposed increase in Community Service Officers from two to three;
- (ii) to refer the staffing implications to the Corporate Governance Committee for its consideration; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

EAST AYRSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2002-2003

7. There was submitted a report dated 9 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on the content of the East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2002-2003 and on arrangements for its public launch.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note that the report would also be presented to the Education Committee at its next meeting; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

REPORT OF THE CALEB NESS INQUIRY – IMPLICATIONS FOR EAST AYRSHIRE

8. There was submitted a report dated 5 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on the recommendations made about child

protection practice detailed in the report of the Caleb Ness Inquiry and advised of the position in East Ayrshire in respect of each recommendation.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the implications for East Ayrshire arising from the Caleb Ness Inquiry report and the progress being made in addressing these implications;
- (ii) to note that the report would also be considered by the Education Committee at its next meeting;
- (iii) that the Director of Educational and Social Services present further progress reports to Committee as appropriate; and
- (iv) that the Director of Educational and Social Services circulate, for the information of members, contact details for the Child Protection Co-ordinator, Child Protection Reviewing Officer, and Child Protection Adviser;
- (v) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE (Item 7, Page 408, 99/03)

9. There was submitted a report dated 12 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on the intention to conduct a review of the Community Meals Service in line with Best Value principles.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee the establishment of a short-life Member/Officer Working Group to review the Community Meals Service;
- (ii) to agree, in principle, the terms of reference for the Group as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report;
- (iii) that the Director of Educational and Social Services bring a report on the outcome of the review to a future Committee; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

REVIEW OF CHARGES FOR PROSPECTIVE ADOPTERS FOR HOME STUDY REPORTS (Item 5, Page 1332, 6/99)

10. There was submitted a report dated 12 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services which sought approval to increase charges to prospective adopters for Home Study Reports related to the adoption of children from overseas.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the increase from £1,000 to £3,500 to meet the actual costs involved in undertaking a Home Study Report and the associated tasks;
- (ii) that the new charges be implemented with immediate effect; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

THROUGH-CARE AND AFTERCARE SERVICES

11. There was submitted a report dated 24 December 2003 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on the implications of the proposed transfer of financial responsibility for relevant young persons looked after (both in accommodation and at home) from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to the local Authority and which outlined considerations which would ensure that the Department was in a position to meet the new standards sought by the Scottish Executive.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the proposals outlined in the report;
- (ii) to refer the staffing implications in respect of the additional administrative post to the Corporate Governance Committee for consideration; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

“DEALING WITH OFFENDING BY YOUNG PEOPLE: FOLLOW UP STUDY”

12. There was submitted a report dated 19 December 2003 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on the content of audit reports on aspects of services provided to young people referred on offence grounds and which sought approval for the action intended in response to identified areas for improvement contained within the auditor's report.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the management action outlined at paragraph 6 of the report;
- (ii) that the Director of Educational and Social Services provide a progress report to a later meeting of the Social Work Committee during 2004; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

SUPERVISED ATTENDANCE ORDERS – PILOT SCHEME

13. There was submitted a report dated 19 December 2003 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on a successful bid to pilot, in partnership with South Ayrshire Council, the provisions of Section 235(4) of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 in Ayr Sheriff Court and which sought approval to refer recruitment of additional staff to the Corporate Governance Committee for consideration.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to refer the staffing proposals, contained at paragraph 3.3 of the report, to the Corporate Governance Committee for consideration; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

IN-COURT ADVICE PILOT PROJECT

14. There was submitted a report dated 19 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on a Scottish Executive funded In-Court Advice Pilot Project proposed for Kilmarnock Sheriff Court and which sought approval for the project to be managed by the Council.

Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Murray moved that:-

- (i) the offer from the Scottish Executive to the Council to operate the Kilmarnock Sheriff Court In-court Advice Service Pilot Project be accepted;
- (ii) it be remitted to the Director of Educational and Social Services to bring forward further reports on the progress of the project, as appropriate; and
- (iii) the personnel implications of the report be referred to the Corporate Governance Committee, for consideration.

Councillor Weir seconded by Councillor Wilson, moved that the Council not accept the offer to operate the Kilmarnock Sheriff Court In-court Advice Service Pilot Project.

On a division by show of hands, the motion was carried by twelve votes to three.

Councillors Reid and Kelly left the meeting during discussion of this item.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

15. The Committee resolved that under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the Press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

STRENGTHENING FRONTLINE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES (Item 3, Page 2190, 99/03)

16. There was submitted a report dated 26 January 2004 (circulated) by the Director of Educational and Social Services on the proposed re-grading of key Social Work staff in the light of the national recruitment and retention crisis; the review of the Social Work Principal Officer responsibilities and consequential need to address the gradings as identified in the Mackintosh Review; and on proposed changes to the current structure which would both streamline and strengthen Social Work services to ensure more robust responses and reporting arrangements, whilst simultaneously creating greater capacity to complete the Social Work task at the frontline.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to endorse the proposal detailed in section 4 of the report;
- (ii) to refer the personnel implications at section 5 of the report to the Corporate Governance Committee for its consideration;
- (iii) to endorse the financial implications at section 6 of the report, subject to the 2004/2005 budget setting exercise; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

The meeting terminated at 1046 hours.