

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE : 25 MAY 2004

CHILD PROTECTION REFORM PROGRAMME – PROGRESS REPORT

Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise members of latest developments in the Scottish Executive's Child Protection Reform Programme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The report to Social Work Committee of 18 March 2004 – Development in Child Protection- Progress Report, noted the priority workload for the programme, the main elements being:

- Preparation of a Children's Charter
- Development of National Standards for Child Protection
- Issuing of revised guidance on the role, remit and structure of Child Protection Committees

- 2.2 Social Work Committee of 6 November 2003 had previously approved the Council's response to the consultation on these items.

- 2.3 On 11 November 2003, Ministers wrote to all Local Authorities in Scotland requiring the submission of a *Joint Statement of Assurance* about Child Protection arrangements in their area.

3. CHILDREN'S CHARTER

- 3.1 The charter was launched by the Scottish Executive on 22 March 2004 and represents a clear statement of what children and young people can expect when they are in need of protection. The Charter was developed by Save the Children and was prepared with the involvement of children and young people. The charter is described as:-

- The voice of children and young people;
- What they can expect to feel safe and supported;
- A reminder of the importance of relationships rather than process ; and
- A tool to reflect on what those who have a role in the protection of children actually do.

- 3.2 A copy of the Charter is available at the Members' Information Point.

4. FRAMEWORK FOR STANDARDS

4.1 Following extensive and focused consultation, the Framework for Standards was also published on 22 March 2004 and launched at a Ministerial Child Protection Summit which was addressed by the First Minister.

4.2 The Framework is designed as a means of translating the commitments made to children in the Charter into practice and sets out what each child can expect from professionals and agencies to ensure that they are adequately protected and their needs met. The 8 standards are:

1. Children get the help they need when they need it;
2. Professionals take timely and effective action to protect children;
3. Professionals ensure children are listened to and respected;
4. Agencies and professionals share information about children where this is necessary to protect them;
5. Agencies and professionals work together to assess needs and risks and develop effective plans;
6. Professionals are competent and confident;
7. Agencies work in partnership with members of the community to protect children;
8. Agencies, individually and collectively, demonstrate leadership and accountability for their work and its effectiveness.

4.3 A copy of the Framework for Standards is available at the Members Information Point.

5. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

5.1 The Joint Statement of Assurance requires to be lodged with the Scottish Executive in May 2004.

5.2 Partner agencies under the auspices of the Child Protection Committee are currently developing the East Ayrshire Joint Statement of Assurance. A draft statement is attached for information.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil.

7. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Nil.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Education Committee:-

- (i) requests the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services produce further updates on the progress of the Child Protection Reform Programme;
- (ii) note that this report was considered at Social Work Committee on the 20th May 2004; and
- (ii) otherwise note the content of this report.

John Mulgrew
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services
28 April 2004

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. Children's Charter
- 2. Framework for Standards

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