

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE - 18 MARCH 2004

PROGRESS WITH COMPLEXITY – CHIEF SOCIAL WORK INSPECTOR'S 3RD ANNUAL REPORT

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform elected members of the content of the above report, with particular reference to the reported performance of East Ayrshire Council Social Work Services.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. On 29 January 2004, Social Work Services Inspectorate (SWSI) published its third annual report, "*Progress with Complexity*", which aimed to establish a picture of social work services across Scotland.
- 2.2. The report is in two parts:
- (i) an overview of social work services across Scotland as a whole;
 - (ii) short reviews of social work services in each of the 32 local authorities in Scotland.
- 2.3. The report was based on analysis of existing data, plans, reports and reviews; and discussions with senior officials in all local authorities undertaken by a small team who visited all 32 authorities during the first half of 2003.

3. THE SWSI REVIEW OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES IN EAST AYRSHIRE

- 3.1. The report states that the East Ayrshire spend on social work in 2001-2002 was £227 per person which remained below the national average (£268), despite a significant increase in community care funding on the previous year.
- 3.2. The report makes reference to some under-reporting of Social Work activity in 2001-2002 due to the transition to a new information management system. It also identifies the delivery of more intensive services to some Community Care service users.
- 3.3. The Council's achievements were identified as:
- Increases in the number of older people receiving more than 10 hours home care each week;
 - A thorough and cost-effective rapid response service;
 - An intermediate care initiative to provide intensive and effective rehabilitation for older people;

- An Ayrshire-wide Healthy Living Initiative to support people with learning disabilities;
- Growing uptake of Direct Payments;
- New approaches to give more control to carers to design their own services;
- An active approach to tackling absences;
- Successfully introducing Free Personal Care.

3.4 Areas that were identified as requiring attention were:

- Raising educational attainment for looked after children, making sure that all children and young people looked after receive full-time education and have care plans;
- Improving low performance in relation to Standard 3 (Criminal Justice Standards) to make sure that 75% of reports are sent in on time, and improve information on Standard 2 so they can monitor performance to meet the targets set as soon as possible.
- Making sure that the Council gathers and uses information on employment, education and accommodation status of all young people who receive throughcare and aftercare services;
- Upgrading existing campaigns to recruit more foster carers to meet local needs
- Preparing a strategy for developing services for people with sensory impairment and plan for its introduction;
- With NHS Ayrshire and Arran, preparing a joint plan for putting the new Mental Health Act into practice, based on local needs;
- Speeding up the pace of joint working arrangements with health.

3.5 A copy of the full SWSI report is lodged in the Members Information Point.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The recommendations for action outlined within the report are being addressed through existing management action and impose no additional or new obligations upon the Council.

5. FINANCIAL /PERSONNEL/ LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Nil

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Committee is requested to :

- (i) note the considerable progress made in the delivery of Social Work services in East Ayrshire set out in para. 3.3 above;
- (ii) agree the areas for further attention set out in para. 3.4 above; and
- (iii) otherwise, note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Social Work
5 March 2004

Background papers:

“Progress with Complexity – The Chief Social Work Inspector’s 3rd Annual Report”
Jan 2004.

For further information, please contact John Alexander, Principal Officer
(Quality and Planning) on extension 6978.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER – JACKIE DONNELLY, HEAD OF SOCIAL WORK