

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE : 24 MARCH 2005

AUDIT SCOTLAND PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT: "COMPARING THE PERFORMANCE OF SCOTTISH COUNCILS SOCIAL WORK SERVICES 2003 - 2004"

Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Committee members of the Council's performance in 2003 - 2004 measured against Social Work statutory performance indicators audited by the Accounts Commission.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Audit Scotland publications "Comparing the Performance of Scottish Councils" are published annually and present analysis of the performance information provided by local authorities. The indicators for Adult Social Work are published under the title "Housing and Social Work" and the Social Work indicators relating to children are published alongside the education indicators under the title of "Education and Children's Services"
- 2.2 These Performance Indicators are a useful tool in benchmarking our services against other local authorities to demonstrate Best Value and continuous service improvement.
- 2.3 The adult Social Work performance indicators featured in the 2003-2004 report "Housing and Social Work" are;
- Home Care
 - The Use Of Qualified Staff In Care Homes
 - Social Enquiry Reports
 - Community Service
- 2.4 The children's Social Work indicators featured in "Children's Services " are
- Academic attainment of looked after children
 - The Use Of Qualified Staff In Care Homes
 - Privacy in Care Homes for Children
 - The Management of Supervision Orders
- 2.5 A copy of each of the Audit Scotland publications is lodged at the Members Information Point.

3. PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

3.1 East Ayrshire Council Performance in Relation to the Scottish Average and the Performance of Comparative Councils

3.1.1 The Council has performed above the Scottish average in respect of :

- Home care provision
- Qualified staff in residential accommodation
- The proportion of social enquiry reports reported to courts within target time
- The Management of Supervision Orders

3.1.2 The Council has performed below or at the Scottish average in respect of :

- The academic attainment of children ceasing to be looked after away from home. East Ayrshire is now almost in line with the Scottish average and has demonstrated an improvement in performance each year since this indicator was introduced.
- The average hours per week taken to complete community service orders was slightly below the Scottish average.

3.2 Home Care

3.2.1 The purpose of this indicator is to measure the flexibility of home care services in providing personal care, help with household tasks, and the provision of care outwith normal working hours. The indicator is based on a typical week's service provision and focuses on services to people aged 65 and over. The Audit Scotland publication identifies the following:

- In East Ayrshire 70% of homecare service users aged 65 and over received personal care, this was the 8th highest percentage rate in Scotland and well exceeded the Scottish average of 57%.
- Care at weekends was provided to 54% of service users aged 65 plus , ranking 6th amongst local authorities. Again East Ayrshire exceeded the national rate of 47%.
- East Ayrshire provided evening and overnight care to 30% of service users; this was the 7th highest rate in Scotland and exceeded the national average of 26%.

3.2.2 These statistics demonstrate that the home care service in East Ayrshire rates well in terms of flexibility and availability to meet need. They also indicate a focus of working with the most vulnerable in our community with personal care needs. These factors were aims of the Home Care Best Value Service Review, demonstrating progress in the actions we have taken in implementing the review.

3.3 The Use Of Qualified Staff In Care Homes

3.3.1 The extent to which care staff are qualified is a significant indicator of the quality of care provided. The Audit Scotland publication identifies the following:

- East Ayrshire ranked 3rd in terms of qualified staff in care homes for children in Scotland, with 78% of staff qualified ; the Scottish average was 52%
- East Ayrshire ranked 11th in terms of qualified staff in care homes for older people with 46% of staff qualified; the national average was 41%.
- East Ayrshire ranked 15th in terms of qualified staff in care homes for other adults, with 39% of staff qualified; the Scottish average was 38%.

3.4 Social Enquiry Reports

3.4.1 This indicator reports on the number and percentage of Social Enquiry Reports allocated to staff within two working days and submitted to the courts by the due date, in accordance with the National Objectives and Standards for Social Work in the Criminal Justice System. Although it is taking longer to allocate referrals to social workers the performance of the team has improved in the number of reports submitted on time.

- In East Ayrshire 99.8% of reports were submitted to court by the due date, thus outperforming the Scottish average of 95%.
- East Ayrshire's performance in relation to allocation of reports reduced from 91% in 2002-03 to 67% in 2003-04. This can be attributed to the impact of a 26% increase in the number of reports requested by and submitted to the courts from 754 to 954.

3.5 Community Service

3.5.1 This indicator reports on the number of hours per day for orders to be completed. The hours are determined by an assessment of each individuals availability for a placement and on the placements available.

- East Ayrshire at 3.3 hours was slightly below the national average of 3.6 hours but this more reflects placement availability and individually assessed needs than poor performance.

3.6 The Academic Attainment Of Looked After Children

3.6.1 This indicator reports on the percentage of children who moved from being looked after in the reporting year and who achieved Standard Grades in English and Maths or other subjects. The indicator reflects how well councils provided for the educational needs of children in their care who are looked after away from home, and the extent to which councils achieved the Scottish Executive's target for young people ceasing to be looked after to achieve Standard Grades in English and Maths.

- In East Ayrshire the percentage of children looked after away from home, who ceased to be looked after in the reporting year and who achieved standard grades in English and Maths, has increased from 19% in 2001-2002 to 29% in 2002-2003 and continued to increase to 40% in 2003-2004.
- East Ayrshire is now almost in line with the national average of 40.4%. In terms of ranking the position of East Ayrshire has improved from 24th in 2002-03 to 13th in 2003 -2004.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Nil.

5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/ IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS:

7.1 Committee is requested to:

- (i) note that the Council has performed well in respect of the majority of the reported performance indicators; and
- (ii) note that with regard to Best Value, officers will pursue continuous improvement in all aspects of Social Work performance.; and
- (iii) otherwise note the content of the report.

John Mulgrew
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services
4 March 2005
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. "Comparing the Performance of Scottish Councils Housing and Social Work Services 2003-2004": Audit Scotland, 2005.
2. "Comparing the Performance of Scottish Councils' Education and Children's Services 2003-2004" : Audit Scotland, 2005.

For further information regarding this report please contact:
 Eddie Fraser, Community Care Manager, telephone: 01563 554825

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JACKIE DONNELLY