

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE: 22 MARCH 2007

STRATEGIC SELF ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE AND EFQM – PROGRESS REPORT

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Committee on the progress made by the Social Work Service in addressing areas for improvement identified during the Strategic Self Assessments of performance and the outcomes of the recent round of EFQM assessments.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A key element of the Best Value and Community Planning Audit process involves a self assessment by the Council of its performance. The overall Strategic Self Assessment of Performance undertaken by the Corporate Management Team in preparation for the Best Value and Community Planning Audit of the council in 2006 was underpinned by Departmental self assessments carried out by Executive Directors for each of their respective service units. Each of these was informed by evidence gathered from EFQM assessments. Crucial to the process was the identification of areas for improvement.
- 2.2 This report seeks to outline to Committee progress made in responding to and addressing the areas for improvement identified in respect of Strategic Self Assessments undertaken of the five operational service units within the five operational service units within the Social Work Service:
- Older People's Services
 - Adult Services
 - Community Care Fieldwork and Commissioning Services
 - Criminal Justice Services
 - Children and Families Services
- 2.3 The annual round of EFQM assessments was carried out within the five operational service units during the period December 2006/February 2007. Outcomes from the resulting EFQM Action Plans are incorporated into the progress updates on the Strategic Self Assessments.
- 2.4 Copies of progress updates of Strategic Self Assessments and the most recent EFQM Action Plans are available at the members' information point.

3. PROGRESS UPDATE

3.1 A range of areas of progress and new actions have been identified. An illustrative selection of examples is provided below:

- Positive trends continue in statistical returns to Audit Scotland and the Scottish Executive and we are confident of meeting our national targets in April 2007.
- Our recent Joint Performance, Information and Assessment Framework (JPIAF) return to the Scottish Executive saw East Ayrshire become one of the 8 leading Joint Future Partnerships in Scotland.
- Services have continued to perform well in Care Commission inspections.
- Social Work Committee have agreed a Communication strategy for the Service.
- Through the Child Protection Committee a multi agency approach is in place to ensure that national standards are met in relation to Child Protection.
- A pilot initiative to promote the uptake of carers' assessments is being developed in partnership with the Carers Centre.
- All children and young people are routinely involved in care planning decisions through the Child Protection and Looked After and Accommodated Children processes. Children's Hearing reports allow children to complete a "Having Your Say Form" and a pilot form is in place to ensure children's views are captured at case conferences.
- All staff attended briefings by the Executive Head of Social Work on Performance (which along with Protection and Partnership is one of the three identified priorities for Social Work). At these sessions we consulted staff through the use of an electronic voting system.
- We have reviewed and updated our supervision policy.
- East Ayrshire staff will participate in training provided by the Scottish Executive in relation to new Criminal Justice assessment tools.
- A programme of training is in place to ensure managers achieve appropriate qualifications.
- Our strong performance in statutory performance indicators reflects the progress achieved.
- A forum between Community Care and Criminal Justice has been established to promote information sharing and staff development.
- All strategic planning documents are placed on Social Work intranet pages.

- Shared information systems across social care and health are being implemented as appropriate (e.g. Rapid Response service).
- Approaches to strengthening performance activity within service units will be addressed through the evolving process of the HMIe and Scottish Executive self evaluation quality indicator framework.
- All strategic planning activity is undertaken in such a way that it supports the community planning process. Reviews of community planning thematic action plans have in turn focused on areas of activity which reflect 'additionality' rather than routine activity.
- Service Review activity in 2006/07 has included sensory Impairment, sheltered housing and youth justice services. We are continuing to implement the findings of the review of services to Looked After and Accommodated Children.
- We have progressed with implementation of the Strategic Direction for Older Peoples' Services.
- Our care at home purchasing requirements were reviewed in 2006 and arrangements put in place for tendering for new contracts. New arrangements will commence in April 2007.
- Strong partnership working arrangements have been developed with independent sector partners through the hosting of regular meetings and forums.
- Arrangements are being put in place for gathering feedback from service users through a programme of quality surveys.

3.2 Good progress is being made across the Social Work Service. In those areas where actions remain outstanding, action will be taken by the Executive Head of Social Work to address the issues through the service planning process.

4. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 East Ayrshire Council has a statutory requirement under the Local Government in Scotland Act, 2003 to demonstrate delivery of Best Value.

4.2 The good progress in responding to areas of improvement identified during the Social Work Strategic Self Assessment of Performance clearly demonstrates our continued commitment to Best Value and the continuous improvement of service delivery through EFQM.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None arising directly from this report.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The improvements identified within Strategic Self-assessments of the five operational service units within the Social Work Service evidences the significant contribution made by the service to fulfilling the aims and aspirations set out for the citizens of East Ayrshire within the Community Plan.

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Effective Strategic Assessment and Management of services avoids the risk of service drift from Local and National priorities and the statutory requirements of the Council.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) notes the good progress made by the Social Work Service in responding to the areas for improvement identified in the Strategic Self Assessments of Performance;
- (ii) agree that any outstanding action points be incorporated into relevant service improvement/work plans as appropriate; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services
ADM
Encl (0)
5 March 2007

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Eddie Fraser, Senior Manager
Community Care, Tel 01563 554825

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JACKIE DONNELLY