

Social Work Committee  
24 February 1999

**Irvine, 24 February 1999** - At a Meeting of the Social Work Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

James Jennings, Margaret Munn, Elliot Gray, James Clements, David Gallagher, Jane Gorman, Elizabeth McLardy, Robert Reilly, Gena Seales, George Steven, Samuel Taylor and Richard Wilkinson.

**In Attendance**

The Corporate Director (Social Services), Head of Service Management, Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) and S. Paxton, Administration Officer (Chief Executive's).

**Chair**

Mr Jennings in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Jack Carson, Ian Clarkson and John Donn.

**1. Minutes Confirmed**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 January 1999, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**2. Implementation of Ayrshire and Arran Mental Health Strategy**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the final version of the Ayrshire and Arran Mental Health Strategy, together with proposals for its implementation.

In October 1998 the Committee had agreed to the publication of "The Mental Health Strategy" and "A Strategy for People with Dementia and Older People with Mental Disabilities" which had been prepared by the three Ayrshire Councils, Ayrshire and Arran Health Board and the Ayrshire and Arran Community Health Care Trust. A number of comments had been received and amendments made to the Strategies.

Ayrshire and Arran Health Board, in accordance with the Health Improvement Programme (HIP) 1999-2004, intend to allocate an additional budget in 1999/2000 to commence implementation of the Strategies. The additional money will be shared between adult services, dementia sufferers/older people and child and adolescent services. The potential budget when the strategies are fully operational is £4 million. The report gave details of the new recommendations within the Strategies which included (a) the provision of support in the community to people who might otherwise be in hospital; (b) issues associated with the re-settlement of persons in the community; (c) the creation of a development post for Mental Health in each local authority area; and (d) the expansion of advocacy services. Ayrshire and Arran Health Board have established a Monitoring Group which includes representatives from all partner agencies to oversee the implementation of the Strategies. North Ayrshire Council will be represented on the Group.

The achievement of a significant number of the recommendations is, however, dependent upon additional Social Worker posts. It is proposed, subject to the identification of resources, to create three additional posts to be deployed across North Ayrshire to underpin Health Service developments. This should be at no additional cost to the Council.

The Committee agreed (i) to adopt the Mental Health Strategy and the Strategy for People with Dementia and Older People with Mental Health Disabilities as the basis for future service development in North Ayrshire; (ii) to authorise officers to attend the Monitoring Group established by Ayrshire and Arran Health Board; (iii) that the Corporate Director (Social Services) submit proposals for additional posts within Social Work Services to the appropriate Committee subject to the identification of resources; and (iv) that a further report be considered by the Council by December 1999 on the progress of implementing the Strategies.

### **3. Capital Programme 1999/2000**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the proposed Social Work Capital Programme 1999/2000.

The proposals totalling £452,000 are in priority order and include (a) upgrading the Social Work Information System (SWIS); and (b) the provision of new respite provision at Kiln Court Linked Residential Unit, Irvine. The development of the Garnock Valley Area Social Work Office is already committed and ongoing and will be phased over a period of two years, the cost in 1999/2000 being £865,000.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (i) to approve the items contained in the Corporate Director's report; and (ii) to remit the proposals to the Corporate Strategy Committee for consideration.

### **4. Registration and Inspection of Day Care Services**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on new Procedural Guidelines for Registration in terms of Section 61 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 as amended by the Registered Establishments (Scotland) Act 1987.

The Council is now required to inspect day care services and Draft Guidelines have been produced, a copy of which was attached to the report. The new Guidelines will replace Section 1.4 of the Guidelines for Registration of Adult Care Establishments which had been approved by Strathclyde Regional Council and adopted by North Ayrshire Council in 1996. The new Guidelines provide advice and guidance on day care registration standards and requirements to persons who are considering applying for registration and to those already engaged in providing registrable day care.

The staffing implications of implementing the Guidelines will require to be considered by the Council once the appropriate budgetary provision has been made. It is anticipated that the registration of day care services will commence on 1 July 1999.

The Committee approved the Registration Guidelines for day care services.

### **5. Increase in Charges**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) detailing revised charges for certain social work services from April 1999, e.g. Home Help/Homecare Services, Residential Accommodation for the Elderly and Learning Disabled.

The Department of Social Security has advised that National Insurance Benefits and premiums for 1999/2000 will increase by 3%, the same level as the Retail Price Index, with effect from 12 April 1999. Most recipients of Social Work services, especially the elderly, are in receipt of such benefits and it is proposed that charges for certain Social Work services also be increased by 3%. The cost of meals services will be increased following advice from Educational Services.

The Committee approved a 3% increase for those services detailed in the report with effect from April 1999.

## **6. Grants to Voluntary Organisations 1999/2000**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) regarding applications for funding from voluntary organisations in terms of Section 10 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, whose primary purpose is the promotion of social welfare. The proposed Section 10 budget for 1999/2000 is £30,000.

The Committee agreed subject to consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) that the grant awards be as proposed in Appendix SW1.

## **7. Arran: European Social Fund: Objective 1 Project**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) regarding the European Social Fund Objective 1 funded project on Arran which aims to increase the number of qualified social care staff on the island.

The Council, in partnership with the Arran Council for Voluntary Service and One Plus, a voluntary organisation for lone parents which is accredited to deliver SVQ training, was successful in securing a European Social Fund Objective 1 grant to implement the Project. Two Island residents are employed by One Plus to deliver training, support, guidance and the assessment of candidates. Over the last three years twenty-eight Island residents have been involved in the Project, twenty-two obtained SVQ qualifications in Social Care and a further four are likely to achieve Module Certificates. Nineteen are now in employment, either full or part-time and three are undertaking further education and training. Two others are involved in voluntary work.

The initiative accords with a recent appraisal of the use of European Funding on Arran, commissioned by the Council from Howard Brindley Consultants, which highlighted the need to develop employment opportunities not reliant on tourism and to develop the community care infrastructure on the island. It is proposed that the Council continue to support the Project for a further year by providing places for another ten Island residents to receive SVQ training. The total cost of the Project will be £56,302. The Council will meet £13,151 of the costs which will attract additional resources of £28,151 from the European Social Fund and £15,000 from Argyle and the Islands Enterprise. A further review of Social Work Services' involvement in such initiatives will be undertaken in the context of the new priorities set for the next round of Structural Funds 2000-2006.

The Committee agreed to continue to contribute to the Social Care Training Project on the Isle of Arran.

## **8. North Ayrshire Panel of Safeguarders: Appointment**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive advising on the appointment of Mrs Linda Chisholm to the North Ayrshire Panel of Safeguarders.

The Social Work Committee on 17 April 1996 agreed that the Chair and a Vice-Chair of the Committee be authorised to exercise, in consultation with the Chief Executive, the Powers conferred upon the Council regarding the appointment of Safeguarders.

Upon receipt of Mrs Chisholm's application to join the Panel of Safeguarders appropriate consultations were carried out. All consultees approved of her application and following interview it was agreed to appoint Mrs Chisholm to the North Ayrshire Panel of Safeguarders.

The demand for Safeguarders has increased since the implementation of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. It is anticipated, however, that use of Safeguarders by Children's Hearings and Courts will now continue at the present rate and this addition to the Panel of Safeguarders will assist with meeting the increased level of demand. Mrs Chisholm's appointment brings the total number of Safeguarders on North Ayrshire's Panel to thirteen.

Noted.

#### **9. Social Work Criminal Justice Services: Three Year Strategic Plan 1999-2002**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the Social Work Criminal Justice Services first Three Year Strategic Plan.

The Plan is linked to the Community Care and Children's Services Plans and will be reviewed and updated annually. A number of priorities, which are in accordance with those of the Scottish Office, are already being pursued by the Council. These include services for female offenders and young sex offenders.

Future service developments are detailed in the Plan which include (i) the provision of an information pack for offenders and families who attend court; and (ii) under the Diversion from Prosecution Scheme, the preparation and development of a programme for 16 to 18 year olds to bridge the gap between the Children's Hearing System and the Adult Criminal Justice System.

A number of longer-term initiatives are included in the Plan relating to the provision of bail services and supported accommodation which aims to reduce the number of offenders remanded in custody and the appointment of a Criminal Justice Addiction Services Officer. Proposals also cover joint working on new initiatives which will include the promotion of an Appropriate Adult Scheme with South and East Ayrshire Councils and Ayrshire and Arran Health Board to assist mentally ill and learning disabled people who are in the criminal justice system.

The Committee agreed the priorities for future service development and the proposed new initiatives as detailed in the report.

#### **10. Review of Services to Women Offenders**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on a Review of Services to Women Offenders which was undertaken in response to the publication of a Scottish Office report entitled "Women Offenders - A Safer Way".

The report provided details of the number of women offenders who were clients of Social Work Criminal Justice Services and the support and assistance offered to them which included (a) the successful diversion of women offenders from prosecution; (b) risk assessment procedures for those women sentenced to prison; and (c) the introduction of "all women" Community Service Order Scheme projects. Future development and service proposals include (i) the development of court information specific to women offenders; (ii) the introduction of information leaflets for women offenders and their families; and (iii) the development of other resources for women offenders, particularly those suffering from alcohol and drug abuse and mental health problems.

The Committee agreed the proposals for service development as detailed in the Director's report.

#### **11. Support Break Strategy**

Councillor Wilkinson declared an interest and took no part in the discussion on this item.

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on proposals in relation to respite provision for all care groups.

Since implementation of the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990, short-term care or "support breaks" have been promoted as a key component of community care provision and are now an increasingly common part of individual care packages. The proposed Support Break Strategy, full details of which were provided in the report provided (a) a profile of current service users and anticipated levels of demand; (b) an evaluation of current resources; (c) information on shortfalls in service provision; and (d) recommendations on future service delivery. The Strategy covers six

care groups:-

- children with special needs;
- adults with mental health problems;
- frail older people and those suffering from dementia;
- adults with learning disabilities;
- adults with brain injuries; and
- adults with physical disabilities and sensory impairments.

Short-life working groups, as part of the Community Care Implementation Plan, will continue to develop the proposals.

The Committee agreed the further development of the proposals as detailed in the report.

## **12. Customer Comments Scheme**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the handling of Customer Comments from October to December 1998.

In this period 29 compliments and 39 complaints were received and all have been addressed within the target timescales.

Noted.

## **13. Social Work Services: “The First Three Years”**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the achievements of the Social Work Service since its establishment in April 1996. These included resolving the unsatisfactory condition of office and residential accommodation and the introduction of a number of new and innovative services for the head injured, children and families and offenders. The community alarm waiting list had, for the first time, been cleared.

Members were also provided with copies of the full report.

Noted.

## **14. Valedictory**

The Chair and Leader of the Council paid tribute to the hard work and dedication of members and officers which had resulted in substantial developments in Social Work Service.

The meeting ended at 2.45 pm.

**Social Work Committee**  
**24/02/99**

Appendix No **SW**  
**1**

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE

GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 1999/2000

		£
1	British Retinitis Pigmentosa Society	100
2	Scottish Women's Aid	220
3	Scottish Care and Information on Miscarriage	250
4	North Ayrshire Cancer Care	400
5	Irvine Newtown Forum on Disability	400
6	Garnock Valley Disability Forum	400
7	Scottish Child Law Centre	500
8	Victim Support Scotland	4,000
9	Childline Scotland	530
10	Sense Scotland	750
11	Scottish Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (SACRO)	1,500
12	Strathclyde Elderly Forum	400
13	Family Mediation	2,000
14	One Plus	5,000
15	Scottish Marriage Care	300
16	PHACE West	500
17	Strathclyde Carers Forum	500
18	Who Cares? Scotland	11,250
19	Marriage Counselling Ayrshire	500

20	Kut-O-Lok Fu Chinese Elderly Group	500
21	Deafblind UK	Nil
22	One Parent Families	Nil
23	Dementia Services Development Centre, Stirling	Nil
24	Enable	Nil
25	Partners in Advocacy	Nil
26	Say Women	Nil
27	St Margaret of Scotland Adoption Society	Nil
28	Strathclyde Gay and Lesbian Switchboard	Nil
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>£30,000</u></b>