

Social Services Committee  
14 January 2003

**IRVINE, 14 January 2003** - At a Meeting of the Social Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

Alan Munro, Ian Clarkson, Stewart Dewar, Drew Duncan, Jane Gorman, Alan Hill, Elisabeth Marshall, Margaret Munn, David O'Neill, Donald Reid, and Samuel Taylor.

**Also Present**

Thomas Barr.

**In Attendance**

B. Devine, Chief Executive; B. Docherty, Corporate Director, L. Skehal, Head of Service (Community Care), S. Paterson, Head of Service (Children, Families and Criminal Justice) and D. Brown, Principal Officer (Older People Services) (Social Services); A. Grossart, Finance Manager (Finance); M. Adams and M. McKeown, Corporate and Democratic Support Officers and J. Stevenston, Communications Officer (Chief Executive's).

**Chair**

Councillor Munro in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Jack Carson, John Donn, Margaret McDougall, John Moffat, and Robert Reilly.

**1. Presentation: Home Care**

The Committee received a presentation from the Principal Officer (Older People Services) on the work of the Home Care Services Unit and, in particular, on a new computer-based database in use within the Unit.

The information contained in the database will allow the Unit to monitor and evaluate existing Home Care Services and to prioritise services and resources to those most in need.

Noted.

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 November 2002, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**3. Day Care Services for Older People**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on developments within day care services since April 2002.

The main aim of day care services is to assist people to remain at home by offering social stimulation, therapeutic care and support as part of a planned package of care. To meet the needs of the older population in North Ayrshire, and to take account of new policy and legislative changes, the focus of day care services has been shifted to deliver a flexible and varied service which meets both the social and the care needs of this increasingly older and frail population. The report highlighted the main developments to upgrade existing premises and to expand the provision of day care services.

The Committee agreed to approve (a) the developments outlined in the report; and (b) the proposals to further develop day care services in areas with low levels of provision.

#### **4. Day Services (Older People) Eligibility Criteria**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the second set of eligibility criteria for Older People's Services.

The aim of the new eligibility criteria and priority system is to ensure that day services for older people are targeted at those most in need, and that the most vulnerable people have access to services which complement other home care services. In future, to access day services, individuals will have to satisfy one or more of the eligibility criteria and, following an assessment, will be prioritised based on the urgency of their need and their individual circumstances.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the proposed Eligibility Criteria as set out in the report; and (b) that the criteria be implemented from 20 January 2003.

#### **5. Summary of the Recommendations of "It's Everyone's Job to make sure I'm Alright": Report of the Child Protection Audit and Review**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the recommendations contained in the report of the Child Protection Audit and Review.

The Child Protection Audit and Review was established by the Scottish Executive following the high profile death of a child. The aim of the Review is to promote the reduction of abuse or neglect of children, and improve the services for children who experience abuse or neglect.

The report of the Child Protection Audit and Review found that whilst there are many instances where children were being protected well from harm or neglect, there were numerous cases where children were not being adequately protected. The Review acknowledged that its findings have to be set in context. There are currently no National Standards in relation to child protection, many local authorities are currently underfunded by the Executive in their allocation of funds for children's services, and there is a national shortage of qualified social workers. It was recognised that these issues will have to be addressed nationally by both the Scottish Executive and other agencies.

The 17 recommendations arising from the Review, as summarised in the report, will have major implications for the work to be carried forward by local authority Child Protection Committees and other agencies to protect children who are vulnerable. Within North Ayrshire the composition of the Child Protection Committee is currently being reviewed, and a Child Protection Co-ordinator has been appointed who will be able to assist the Committee in implementing the recommendations arising from the audit.

The Committee agreed that the recommendations contained in the report be addressed.

## **6. Auditor General Accounts Commission Performance Audit: Dealing with Offending by Young People**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the Performance Audit Report Main Findings and Recommendations.

Audit Scotland has undertaken a national study examining the structures and procedures that comprise the Youth Justice system in Scotland. The study concludes with 38 recommendations for action by the Scottish Executive and other national and local bodies, including local authorities. These recommendations, summarised in the report, include measures designed to reduce the time taken to process young people through the Children's Panel and Criminal Justice System, vary decisions in respect of proceedings, vary service provision, increase and target spending on youth justice and increase staffing in children's services.

The Committee agreed that the recommendations contained in the report be addressed.

## **7. Drug Treatment and Testing Orders**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on the introduction of a new community based sentencing disposal (a Drug Treatment and Testing Order) to Sheriff Courts in Kilmarnock and Ayr. Scottish Executive funding has been allocated to the Ayrshire Criminal Justice Social Work Services Partnership to implement the provision.

Drug Treatment and Testing Orders (DTTO's) are provided for within the Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 and will be targeted at specific drug users engaged in offending, with the expectation that there will be a reduction in both drug use and offending.

The Scottish Executive has indicated its intention to the Ayrshire Criminal Justice Social Work Partnership to provide funding for the specific purpose of implementing DTTO's within the jurisdictions of the two Sheriff Courts located within the Partnership area. Funding of £430,000 is being given for the financial year 2003-2004 to cover both social work and health resource requirements. It is expected that arrangements for the Courts to make use of DTTO's will be in place by no later than the end of 2003.

The Committee agreed to the implementation of the Drugs Treatment and Testing Orders Scheme.

#### **8. Revenue Budget 2002/2003: Budgetary Control**

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) on the budgetary control position for Social Services at the end of November 2002 and on projections for the financial year 2002/2003.

Noted.

The Meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.