

REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: SOCIAL WORK (COMPLAINTS REVIEW) SUB-COMMITTEE - RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS	
From: DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION		
Date: 7 November 1997	Ref: CA/SW/6/1/ LD/KH	

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the status of the recruitment of Independent Persons to serve on the Social Work (Complaints Review) Sub-Committee.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Social Work Committee, at its meeting on 4 March 1996, approved procedures for dealing with complaints regarding Social Work Services which have exhausted the Social Work departmental internal complaints procedures. The Committee, as an interim measure, appointed certain individuals from the pool of Independent Persons which had been adopted by the former Strathclyde Regional Council.
- 2.2 Subsequently, the Social Work (Planning and Administration) Sub-Committee, at its meeting on 22 May 1996, noted the report dated 13 May 1996 by the Director of Social Work commenting on Scottish Office Circular (SWSG/96) entitled "Local Authority Complaints Procedures" which contained new guidance and directions thereon.
- 2.3 In terms of Community Care legislation each local authority has a statutory responsibility to provide a Social Work Complaints System, the final part of which is a Hearing known as the Social Work (Complaints Review) Sub-Committee.
- 2.4 Each authority must have a pool of Independent Persons to serve with elected Members on these Sub-Committees. Whilst it is anticipated that the Social Work Department will be able to resolve complaints at an earlier stage, it is still incumbent on the Council to have in place a pool of Independent Persons.
- 2.5 The expression "Review Committee" means any responsible Committee of the Council which:-
- (1) is appointed for the purpose of reviewing any matter in accordance with the procedure;
 - (2) consists of three persons, that being a Chairperson and two Members (the Chairperson should have knowledge of Social Work matters, and the conduct of proceedings before a review body or tribunal, and the Members should have experience in at least one of these areas);
 - (3) has an Independent Person appointed as its Chairperson, and
 - (4) is drawn from a pool of persons (who may be Independent Persons or Members or Officers of the local authority, but not Officers of the Department responsible for Social Work matters) which is appointed by the local authority for the purpose of persons in the pool acting when required as Members of such Committees.

2.6 For the purpose of the above paragraph the expression "Independent Person" means a person who is not:-

- (1) a member of the political party forming the ruling group on the Council or an Officer of any local authority and who has not been such a member or Officer during the period of one year prior to being appointed to the Review Committee;
- (2) a person who is a member of, or employed by, an organisation to which the local authority has delegated any of its Social Work functions, or
- (3) a spouse of any such member, Officer or person.

3 Re-Appointment and Appointment of Independent Persons

3.1 A review of the existing pool of Independent Persons has recently been undertaken. Only one of the Independent Persons expressed an interest in being re-appointed, that being, George Bryson, 91 Lanark Road, Crossford. Accordingly, it is proposed that George Bryson be re-appointed as an Independent Person.

3.2 In view of the need to add to the pool, nominations have been sought from individuals and organisations who have a knowledge of social work matters and further efforts will be made to identify suitable independent persons.

3.3 Having had the opportunity to review the nominees, it is recommended that the following individuals be appointed as Independent Persons to serve on the Social Work (Complaints Review) Sub-Committee:

Sadie Welsh, 32 Allanton Grove, Wishaw
William Thomson, 57 Birrens Road, Motherwell

4 Recommendation

The Committee is asked to agree that:-

George Bryson be re-appointed as an Independent Person and that Ms. Sadie Welsh and Mr. William Thomson be appointed as Independent Persons for the purpose of serving on the Social Work (Complaints Review) Sub-Committee as and when required.


Director of Administration