

REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SOCIAL WORK (COMPLAINTS REVIEW) SUB-COMMITTEE - RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON
From: DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION		
Date: 25 February 1998	Ref: CA/SW/6/1 LD/CW	

1 Introduction

This report sets out a proposal for the appointment of an independent person 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.
- 2.2 In terms of the Social Work (Representation Procedures) Scotland (Directions) 1996, the Council 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.
- 2.3 The Council must have a pool of Independent Persons to serve with elected members on the Sub-Committee. 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 the means to implement, fully, the statutory complaints procedure.
- 2.4 The Social Work (Complaints Review) Sub-Committee (1) is appointed for the purpose of reviewing any matter in accordance with the procedure; (2) consists of three persons, a chairperson and two members. The chairperson requires to have knowledge of Social Work matters, and the conduct of proceedings before a review body of tribunal, and the members require to 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 members of the pool acting when required as members of such Committees.
- 2.5 An Independent Person may not be (1) a member of the political party forming the ruling group on the Council or an officer of any Local Authority and may not have been such a member or officer during the period of 1 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.

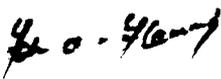
3 Appointment of Independent Person

- 3.1 The Social Work Committee, at its meeting on 25 November 1997, agreed to re-appoint Mr. George Bryson as an Independent Person and also to appoint Ms. Sadie Welsh and Mr. William Thomson as Independent Persons.
- 3.2 Ms. Welsh and Mr. Thomson, as new appointees, will require to undergo training before they can chair a Sub-Committee. Accordingly, Mr. Bryson is the only independent person at this stage who can chair the Sub-Committee.

In view of the need to add to the pool, it is proposed that Reverend Thomas Gibbons, St. Columbkille's, Rutherglen, as the nominee of the Diocese of Motherwell, be appointed as an Independent Person. Given that Reverend Fr. Gibbons has extensive experience in Social Services, he is eligible to chair a Sub-Committee immediately.

Recommendation

- 4 The Committee is asked to agree that Reverend Fr. Thomas Gibbons be appointed as an Independent Person for the purpose of serving on the Social Work (Complaints Review) Sub-Committee as and when required.


Director of Administration