

Motherwell, 6 August 2002 at 10 am AGENDA ITEM No. 2

A Meeting of the SOCIAL WORK (OPERATIONS AND SERVICES) SUB-COMMITTEE

PRESENT

Councillor Selfridge, Convener; Councillors Cassidy, Coyle, Gordon, Gormill, McCallum, McLaughlin and Robertson.

CHAIR

Councillor Selfridge (Convener) presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Committee Services Officer; Head of Social Work Services; Manager - Children and Families/Criminal Justice; Manager - Community Care/Adult Services; Manager - Community Care/Older People Services; Service Manager - Criminal Justice, and Senior Childcare Officer.

APOLOGIES

Councillors Chadha, Curley, Ross and Sullivan.

MENTAL WELFARE COMMISSION INQUIRY INTO THE CARE AND TREATMENT OF MR. M

1. There was submitted a report dated 1 July 2002 by the Director of Social Work (1) summarising the main findings of a report by the Mental Welfare Commission on a Deficiency in Care and Treatment Inquiry in respect of Mr. M. who had been a patient in a psychiatric hospital in North Lanarkshire for a period of seven years; (2) outlining the Commission's recommendations in relation to the procedures and guidance used by local authorities and local health authorities in the assessment, care and monitoring of people with mental health problems for long stay placement in psychiatric hospitals, and (3) advising that, in light of the Commission's recommendations, (a) a review of Departmental procedures in relation to social work services to long stay hospital patients and to services to those from ethnic minority backgrounds, irrespective of their location in hospital or in the community, was currently being carried out, and (b) a joint review of social work services to psychiatric hospitals would be carried out in association with Lanarkshire Primary Care Trust.

Decided:

- (1) that the terms of the report be noted, and
- (2) that the Director of Social Work prepare a report(s) on the findings of (a) the Departmental review on social work services to long stay hospital patients and to services to those from ethnic minority backgrounds, irrespective of their location in hospital or in the community, and (b) the joint review to be carried out in association with Lanarkshire Primary Care Trust on social work services to psychiatric hospitals, for submission to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.

ADOPTION POLICY REVIEW GROUP REPORT - PHASE 1 - SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE CONSULTATION

2. There was submitted a report dated 8 July 2002 by the Director of Social Work (1) advising that a consultation paper had been received from the Scottish Executive (1) regarding the recommendations of its Adoption Policy Review Group following the completion of the first phase of a review of Adoption Policy in Scotland, and (b) containing its response to the Group's recommendations; (2) indicating that

the first phase of the review had focused on (a) the place of adoption services within the spectrum of services for children and young people; (b) the quality of recruitment, selection and assessment procedures for prospective adopters; (c) the extent and quality of post adoption support, and (d) the feasibility of Scotland joining the proposed UK National Adoption Register, and (3) intimating that the Scottish Executive sought the Council's views by 30 September 2002.

Decided:

- (1) that following consultation with the Convener, the Director of Social Work be authorised to respond to the Scottish Executive on its consultation paper, and
- (2) that the Director of Social Work submit a report to a future meeting of this Sub-Committee advising of his response.

CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

3. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the meeting of this Sub-Committee held on 14 February 2002 when it had been noted that the Director of Social Work would report on the findings of a review by the Scottish Executive on child protection arrangements, there was submitted a report dated 16 July 2002 by the Director of Social Work (1) advising of steps which had been taken by the Council's Child Protection Committee to review current practice, inter-agency liaison and the performance of the Committee, pending the outcome of the Scottish Executive's review, and (2) intimating that the Committee had set up six sub-groups, comprising representatives of the relevant Council Departments and external agencies, to consider the main functions of the Committee.

Decided: that the terms of the report be noted.

PRIVATE FOSTERING OF CHILDREN

4. There was submitted a report dated 22 July 2002 by the Director of Social Work (1) intimating that the Scottish Executive had recently sought information from local authorities on their practice and procedures in relation to the private fostering of children; (2) advising that the Council had a statutory duty to vet and monitor private fostering arrangements; (3) indicating that a response had been forwarded to the Scottish Executive advising that this Council had no record of any private fostering arrangements in North Lanarkshire, and also that it had not taken forward any initiatives to raise awareness of private fostering, and (4) informing that a review of Departmental practice and procedure in relation to the private fostering of children would be carried out, pending the receipt of any guidance which may be issued by the Scottish Executive as a result of its consultation.

Decided:

- (1) that the action taken by the Director of Social Work in responding to the Scottish Executive's Consultation on the Council's practice and procedures in relation to the private fostering of children be homologated;
- (2) that the Director of Social Work's plans to review Departmental practice and procedures in relation to the private fostering of children be noted, and
- (3) that it be noted that the Director of Social Work would submit a report to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee on any legislative changes which may be implemented and/or on any guidance which may be issued by the Scottish Executive as a result of its consultation on private fostering.

ADULTS WITH INCAPACITY (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000 - GUIDANCE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

5. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of this Sub-Committee held on 10 May, 2001, there was submitted a report dated 17 July 2002 by the Director of Social Work (1) advising of
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the publication by the Scottish Executive of a "Briefing Paper for Local Authority Elected Members" which set out guidance on the new statutory duties for local authorities under and in terms of the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000, and (2) reiterating that the new legislation makes provision for local authorities to protect the welfare and the financial and property assets of adults incapacitated by reason of mental disorder or inability to communicate.

Decided:

- (1) that the publication by the Scottish Executive of a "Briefing Paper for Elected Members" in respect of the Implementation of the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 be noted, and
- (2) that it be noted that the Director of Social Work would issue a copy of the Briefing Paper to all Council Members.

ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL CONSULTATION ON, AND THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE TO, "REDUCING THE RISK: IMPROVING THE RESPONSE TO SEX OFFENDING", THE REPORT OF THE EXPERT PANEL ON SEX OFFENDING

6. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 7 August 2001 when comments by the Director of Social Work had been endorsed as the Council's formal response to the Scottish Executive on its consultation on the recommendations of the Expert Panel on Sex Offending as contained in its report entitled "Reducing the Risk : Improving Response to Sex Offending", there was submitted a report dated 17 July 2002 by the Director of Social Work (1) advising of the publication by the Scottish Executive of the Analysis of External Consultation on, and the Scottish Executive's response to the report by the Expert Panel, and (2) summarising the findings of the analysis in relation to (a) community and personal safety and prevention; (b) risk assessment, (c) access to personal change programmes; (d) Monitoring Sex Offenders; (e) Housing Provision for Sex Offenders, and (f) Information Management.

Decided:

- (1) that the publication by the Scottish Executive of the Analysis of the External Consultation on, and the Scottish Executive's Response to "Reducing the Risk: Improving the Response to Sex Offending", the report by the Expert Panel on Sex Offending be noted, and
- (2) that the terms of the report be otherwise noted.

PAROLE BOARD DECISIONS AND RELEASE OUTCOMES - SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE CENTRAL RESEARCH UNIT

7. There was submitted a report dated 12 July 2002 by the Director of Social Work (1) advising of the publication of a report by the Scottish Executive's Central Research Unit entitled "Parole Board Decisions and Release Outcomes" which set out its findings following a study of the effectiveness of Parole Board decision making in Scotland; (2) summarising and commenting on the key findings and of the implications thereof for the Council, and (3) intimating that the Research Unit had plans to extend the study in order to identify and validate the effectiveness of specific "predictors of risk".

Decided:

- (1) that the publication of the report by the Scottish Executive's Central Research Unit entitled "Parole Board Decisions and Release Outcomes" be noted, and
- (2) that the terms of the report be otherwise noted.