

**Motherwell, 7 December 2004 at 11 am.**

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

**PRESENT**

Councillor Sullivan, Convener; Councillors Gemmell, Gordon, Gormill, Homer, Irvine, Lafferty, McAuley and Shaw.

**CHAIR**

Councillor Sullivan (Convener) presided.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

The Corporate Freedom of Information Officer; Head of Social Work Services; Manager, Children, Families and Justice; Manager Community Care (Adults); Manager, Community Care (Older People); Manager Strategy, Children's Rights Officer and Senior Child Care Officer (Family Placement).

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

L. Seaton, North Lanarkshire Carers Together.

**APOLOGIES**

Councillors Burrows, Chadha, M. Clark, J. Coyle, Fagan, McCabe, McElroy, H. McGuigan and McLaughlin.

**SUBSTITUTE FAMILY CARE**

1. The Senior Child Care Officer (Family Placement) provided a presentation on Substitute Family Care in North Lanarkshire and advised the Sub-Committee on
  - the history of family placement;
  - the types of family placement:-
    - Adoption
    - Fostering (both local authority and private provision)
    - Respite Carers
    - Shared Carers
    - Supported Carers, and
    - Link Carers;
  - the Assessments carried out in respect of foster carers and adoptive parents;
  - the current legislation and various initiatives which were due to come into force shortly or were under consideration, in relation to family placements;
  - the profile of adoption trends, and
  - the current and future challenges facing the service.

After responding to Members questions, the Convener thanked the Senior Child Care Officer for her informative presentation.

**Decided:** that the terms of the presentation be noted.

**MODERNISATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY RESIDENTIAL SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES: PROGRESS REPORT**

2. Reference having been made to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting of the Social Work Committee held on 11 March 2004, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 21 October 2004 by the Director of Social Work on the progress of the modernisation of local authority residential services for adults with a learning disability in North Lanarkshire (1) advising of the current position regarding the identification of appropriate accommodation to meet the needs of those residents of Craig Street, Airdrie, and Branchal House, Wishaw, who had requested (a) their own homes, assisted by a supported living provider; (b) accommodation shared with another person, or (c) an Adult Homeshare placement; (2) reporting that (a) two of the ten residents of Craig Street had moved into Adult Homeshare placements, and (b) one of the 12 residents of Branchal House had moved into a home of their own supported by a supported living provider; (3) indicating that seven other residents were due to move into their own homes in the next few months, and (4) intimating that it was expected that the remaining residents of Craig Street and Branchal House would be provided with accommodation within 12 to 18 months, based on the current timescale for the allocation of housing.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Director of Social Work bring forward a further report on the Modernisation of Local Authority Residential Services for People with Learning Disabilities, and
- (2) that the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

**GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD - PHASE ONE CONSULTATION ON REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S HEARING SYSTEM**

3. With reference to paragraph 17 of the Minute of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 15 June 2004, when the Chief Executive was authorised to submit a response to the Scottish Executive on the consultation document entitled "Getting it Right for Every Child - Review of the Children's Hearing System", there was submitted a report (docketed) dated November 2004 by the Director of Social Work on the content of the Summary Report on the responses to the Phase One Consultation on the Review of the Children's Hearing System (1) advising that 732 written responses had been received in respect of the consultation on the Review of the Children's Hearing System; (2) highlighting the key findings from the responses to the consultation, as detailed in paragraph 3 of the report, and (3) intimating that the second phase of the consultation exercise will involve further consultation on any detailed changes in structure or legislation necessary to develop and improve the Children's Hearing System.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Director of Social Work bring forward a further report following the completion of Phase Two of the Consultation on the Review of the Children's Hearing System, and
- (2) that the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

**AGE PROFILE OF VOLUNTEERS**

4. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 16 November 2004 by the Director of Social Work giving a statistical breakdown of the age profile of volunteers in North Lanarkshire based on information extracted from the Annual Report 2003/2004 of the Volunteer Centre North Lanarkshire and The Scottish Household Survey, as detailed in paragraph 4 of the report.

**Decided:** that the contents of the report be noted.

**MENTAL WELFARE COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND - ANNUAL REPORT 2003/2004**

5. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 16 November 2004 by the Director of Social Work regarding the contents of the Annual Report of the Mental Welfare Commission for 2003/2004 (1) outlining the responsibilities and functions of the Mental Welfare Commission; (2) setting out the contents of the Annual Report which had focused on (a) the implementation of the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) Act 2003 which the Commission had helped to develop, and which included a monitoring role for the Commission; (b) press claims that people living in Scotland were twice as likely to be detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act as those living in England and Wales, which the Commission had investigated and found the same rate of detention under the Act in Scotland, England and Wales, and (c) Inquiry Reports published by the Commission, including one which had highlighted the need, in some authorities, for improved procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults, and (3) advising that following consideration by the Commission in its report on the appropriateness of applying Welfare Guardianship and Intervention Orders, the Scottish Executive had issued guidance to local authorities recommending that they make their own decisions about individual situations, which endorses the existing practice guidance for staff in North Lanarkshire.

**Decided:** that the contents of the report be noted.

**ADULTS WITH INCAPACITY (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000: PROGRESS REPORT**

6. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 9 October 2004 by the Director of Social Work on a report published by the Scottish Executive entitled "The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000: Learning from Experience", which provided information on the implementation of the Act (1) intimating that implementation of the Act has had significant implications for local authorities; (2) advising that the Scottish Executive report highlights possible legislative, procedural and practice issues which impacted on the implementation of the Act and were presently being addressed with key stakeholders, and (3) outlining the position in North Lanarkshire with regard to statutory intervention orders.

**Decided:** that the contents of the report be noted.

**THE HOME SUPPORT WORKER HANDBOOK**

7. There was submitted a report dated 18 November 2004 by the Director of Social Work advising of the production of a handbook for Home Support Workers (1) indicating that, in view of the wide and varied tasks now undertaken by Home Support Workers, a handbook had been prepared to give clear guidance on key elements of their work; (2) outlining the contents of the handbook, and (3) advising that consideration was currently being given on the most suitable method of launching the handbook.

**Decided:** that the contents of the report be noted.

**DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE AND ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH CANCER**

8. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 15 November 2004 by the Director of Social Work advising of two leaflets which had been produced to assist people with cancer to claim Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance (1) advising that in view of difficulties experienced by people who had undergone laryngectomy operations in claiming social security benefits, the Speak Easy Group had contacted their Member of Parliament who had raised the matter with the Council's appropriate department; (2) indicating that in response, the Social Work Welfare Rights Service had produced leaflets on Disability Living Allowance, and Attendance Allowance, which had been launched on 3 December 2004 in the Pat Cullinan Centre, Motherwell, and (3) intimating that, in addition to the production of the two leaflets, a guidance note on the Allowances had also been prepared for distribution to medical personnel who may be involved with cancer sufferers.

**Decided:** that the contents of the report be noted.

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