

## ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 26 February 2004 at 4.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillors GLENNIS MIDDLETON, BILL ROBERTON, IAIN GAUL, IAN MACKINTOSH, The Hon R J LESLIE MELVILLE MBE, Provost BILL MIDDLETON, JOY MOWATT, PETER MURPHY, STEWART McGLYNN (substituting for ROB MURRAY), GEORGE NORRIE MBE, HELEN OSWALD, KITTY RITCHIE, RON SCRIMGEOUR, RICHARD SPEIRS and TERRY WOOD.

**Apology:** An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor ROB MURRAY.

Councillor GLENNIS MIDDLETON, Convener, in the Chair.

\* The Convener referred to the name of the Committee, and advised that it was proposed that there should be standardisation. Under this proposal, therefore, the Director would be renamed the Director of Social Work and Health.

### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Committee agreed to note that no declarations of interest were made.

### 2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee resolved, in terms of Standing Order 27(2), that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of items 3 and 4 below so as to avoid the disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

### 3. SOCIAL WORK COMPLAINTS REVIEW COMMITTEE - COMPLAINT NO. ACO/004/003

There was submitted [Report No 215/04](#) by the Director of Law and Administration presenting, in accordance with Scottish Office Guidelines, the findings of the meeting of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee in relation to Complaint No. ACO/004/003. A copy of the minute of the meeting held on 9 February 2004 was attached to the Report for information.

The Committee agreed to note the minute of meeting of the Complaints Review Committee of 9 February 2004.

### 4. PROVISION OF DIRECT PAYMENTS SUPPORT SERVICE

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 13 January 2004, there was submitted [Report No 212/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison advising the Committee that no tenders had been received for the provision of a Direct Payments Support Service and requesting that approval be given to him to investigate other options for the provision of the service and to report back to a future meeting of the Committee with proposals.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note that no tenders had been received for the provision of the Direct Payments Support Service; and
- (iii) to instruct the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison to investigate the other options for procuring the service and to report back to a future meeting of the Committee.

## 5. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 13 January 2004](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

## 6. REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES 2004/2005

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work Committee of 25 February 2003, there was submitted [Report No 217/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison proposing a revision of Angus Council's fees and charges in relation to Community Care Services for the financial year 2004/2005.

The Report indicated that each year the fees and charges for Community Care Services were revised, to allow contractual arrangements with service users and providers to be updated. The charging policy for non-residential care packages had been revised in February 2003 (Report No 249/03 refers) to reflect guidance from COSLA and to take account of the introduction of Supporting People. The transitional protection that had been established for existing service users meant that there were effectively two schemes of charges in operation and these were reflected in the rates proposed in the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the revised rates for non-residential charges as contained in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) to approve the income disregards and tariff income arrangements for non-residential charging, as contained in Appendix 2 to the Report;
- (iii) to approve the standard charges for local authority residential homes, as contained in Appendix 3 to the Report;
- (iv) to note that rates for services associated with Supporting People would be reported to Committee to due course; and
- (v) to note that a Report would be submitted regarding rates for independent sector provision of residential and nursing home care, when information was available from the national negotiations between COSLA, Scottish Care (representing the service providers) and the Scottish Executive.

## 7. REVIEW OF FEES AND ALLOWANCES WITHIN CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2004/2005

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work Committee of 25 February 2003, there was submitted [Report No 220/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison setting out proposals for the fees and allowances within Children's Services for 2004/2005.

The Report indicated that the Social Work Department had revised the fees and allowances for specific services in line with statutory requirements, guidance and Angus Council policy. The rates proposed, details of which were appended to the Report, would ensure that Angus Council rates were marginally higher than the recommended rates issued by COSLA.

The Committee agreed to approve the rates set out in the Appendix to the Report, with effect from 5 April 2004.

## 8. DEVELOPMENT OF THROUGH-CARE AND AFTERCARE SERVICES

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of the Education Committee of 19 February 2004, there was submitted [Joint Report No 210/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison, the Director of Housing and the Director of Education advising the Committee of the development of new services for young people who had been in care and seeking approval for the establishment of new posts associated with this development.

The Report concluded that the proposed developments of the throughcare and aftercare service, which were detailed in the Report, would enable the Council to meet its responsibilities under the new legislation, regulation and guidance. The developments would also make a major contribution to improving outcomes for young people leaving care by supporting them to make a successful transition to independent living.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the establishment of the following posts:-
  - One Senior Community Assessment and Review Officer (AP8)
  - One Community Assessment and Review Officer (Throughcare and Aftercare) (0.5 FTE) (AP5/6)
  - Four Support Workers (Throughcare and Aftercare) (AP1-all inclusive)
  - Two Clerical Assistants (0.5 FTE each) (SCP 3-12); and
- (iii) to approve the deletion of one Community Assessment and Review Officer post (AP5/6).

## **9. ESTABLISHMENT OF POSTS FOR SUPPORTING PEOPLE**

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work Committee of 19 November 2002, there was submitted [Report No 261/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison seeking approval to establish permanent posts to take forward the Supporting People agenda.

The Report indicated that the focus of the work involved and the skills required to take forward Supporting People were now of a fundamentally different nature than had been the case at the inception of the Supporting People Team in 2001. As the Supporting People agenda had now become clearer, it was necessary to establish permanent posts to undertake all of the relevant duties. The proposals within the Report would not establish a separate Supporting People Team but rather the proposed posts would be integrated into the existing structure of the Joint Strategic Support Unit (and the Finance Section for the Accounting Technician). This arrangement would provide clearer lines of communication and would avoid any potential confusion over roles and responsibilities. The proposed staffing structure was outlined in Appendix 2 to the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the establishment of the following posts:-
  - Two Contracts Officers (AP5);
  - One Senior Financial Assessor (AP4);
  - Three Financial Assessors (AP1); and
  - One Accounting Technician (GS3/AP4).

## **10. PROGRESS WITH COMPLEXITY: THE CHIEF SOCIAL WORK INSPECTOR'S THIRD ANNUAL REPORT**

There was submitted [Report No 262/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison advising the Committee of the publication of the Chief Social Work Inspector's Third Annual Report which comprised a National Overview Report and local reports on each of the local authority areas. The Angus local report was appended to the Committee Report.

The Report indicated that the Annual Report highlighted some of the key issues facing Social Work at this time. The national issues highlighted in the Report were the same issues faced by Social Work in Angus. The local Angus report presented a good picture of Social Work

services in Angus although some areas were highlighted that should be given priority in the future. The Director would address these issues as the Department Service Plan was reviewed and updated and through the established multi-agency planning process.

Having heard the Convenor and a number of other members express their concerns regarding some of the inaccuracies in the Chief Social Work Inspector's Report, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to instruct the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison to progress the relevant actions and priorities arising from the Chief Social Work Inspector's Report.

#### **11. INDEPENDENT SUPPORTER FOR FOSTER CARERS SUBJECT TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

There was submitted [Report No 263/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison setting out proposals to establish an independent supporter for foster carers when allegations were made which resulted in a child protection investigation involving them or a member of their family.

It was proposed that an independent supporter be identified to provide support to foster carers with the remit as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report. The worker would not be an employee of the Social Work Department but would be paid an honorarium of £500 on 1 April each year. The independent supporter would need to be a well qualified and experienced individual to deal with this sensitive and demanding role and would also require to maintain contact with the Service by periodically attending the Carers Consultative Group and Family Placement Team meetings. The Report concluded that the establishment of an independent support worker would provide foster carers with valuable support in difficult circumstances and represented a significant improvement in the service available to Angus carers.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the establishment of a independent supporter who would be paid an honorarium of £500 on 1 April each year.

#### **12. ADDITIONS TO LIST OF APPROVED PROVIDERS OF CARE AT HOME SERVICES**

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work Committee of 14 January 2003, there was submitted [Report No 264/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison advising the Committee of the addition of three providers to the list of approved providers of Care at Home Services.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the addition of Crossroads (Angus), Real Life Options and Carewatch (Tayside) to the list of approved providers for Care at Home.

#### **13. CHOOSE LIFE: A NATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT SUICIDE IN SCOTLAND**

There was submitted [Report No 265/04](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison advising the Committee of the publication of "Choose Life: a National Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Scotland" and the local response to this agenda.

The Report indicated that in December 2002 the Scottish Executive had published the document "Choose Life: a National Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Scotland" which set out their commitment to address suicide in Scotland. The Strategy was the first phase of a ten year plan with the ultimate goal of reducing suicide rates in Scotland by 20% by 2013.

The Report outlined key elements of the National Strategy and indicated that it had identified a number of priority groups including children (especially looked after children); young people, in particular young men; people with mental health problems; people with attempted suicide; and people affected by aftermath suicidal behaviour or completed suicide.

The Report further indicated that a multi-agency steering group comprising representatives from health, social work and the police services had been convened in Angus to develop a local plan. A very successful multi-agency workshop had been held at the beginning of December when a range of broad themes had been identified and had subsequently been developed into the draft action plan, which was appended to the Report. This draft plan had been submitted to the Scottish Executive on 31 December 2003, with the proviso that it required to be signed off by the Partner Agencies following consideration by the Angus Healthy Safe and Caring Communities Partnership and this Committee.

The Report concluded that suicidal behaviour affected all aspects of society and required a combined and collective approach to address it. The local plan represented the outcome of joint working and would enhance a range of services available locally to support vulnerable people and their families where suicidal behaviour was an issue.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve, and welcome, the local plan for the use of additional resources to implement the National Strategy.