

**MINUTES of MEETING of SOCIAL AFFAIRS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE GROUP held in
the MEMBERS ROOM, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on MONDAY, 9 MARCH 2009**

- Present:** Councillor Vivien Dance (Chair)
- Councillor Mary Jean Devon Councillor Neil Mackay
Councillor David Kinniburgh Councillor James McQueen
Councillor Roderick McCuish
- Attending:** Alison Younger, Area Corporate Services Manager
Douglas Hendry, Director of Community Services
Malcolm MacFadyen, Head of Community Regeneration
Donald MacVicar, Head of Planning and Performance
Allen Stevenson, Service Manager – Mental Health
Rodger Wilson, Service Manager – Resources
Chris Carr, Research Associate
Eileen Wilson, Community Planning Manager
- Apologies:** Councillor Anne Horn Douglas Mackie, Union Rep

The Chair ruled, and the Group agreed, to vary the order of business to allow Officers to attend other meetings later in the day.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

2. MINUTES

(a) SOCIAL AFFAIRS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE GROUP 17 NOVEMBER 2008

The Minutes of the Social Affairs Policy and Performance Group meeting held on 17 November 2008 were approved as a correct record.

(b) SOCIAL AFFAIRS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE GROUP 6 JANUARY 2009

The Minutes of the Social Affairs Policy and Performance Group meeting held on 6 January 2009 were approved as a correct record.

3. SOCIAL WORK INSPECTION AGENCY

The Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) undertook a Performance Inspection in respect of Social Work services in Argyll and Bute from February to June 2007 and a report of this inspection had been published on 26 October 2007. In order to address the improvement identified necessary an Improvement Plan had been agreed between the Council and SWIA and formed the basis of an ongoing improvement agenda.

The Director of Community Services advised Members it had been his intention to table the formal report from SWIA following their visit to Argyll and Bute in January 2009 but that this had yet to be received. He confirmed that there has been ongoing dialogue with SWIA since the visit and that SWIA have indicated that progress has been made across the board. It was also possible that the formal report may make

recommendations for a 'lighter touch' in terms of future inspection regime.

Decision

1. To note the Director's comments;
2. To note that a copy of SWIA's report will be circulated to the PPG and that the Chair of the PPG will arrange to meet with the Director to decide whether or not a special meeting of the PPG is required to address any issues prior to report going to the Executive; and
3. To request the PPG to feed any comments on the Report to the Chair prior to her meeting with the Director.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services, submitted)

4. EARLY YEARS FRAMEWORK

The Government, in partnership with COSLA, have developed a new national Early Years Framework for children from pre-birth to eight years of age. The framework is in two parts. The first establishes the case for change in Early Years provision and identified elements of change and priorities for action. The second part examines the change elements in greater detail. A report summarising the analysis and key recommendations contained within the Government's newly published Early Years Framework was considered.

Decision

1. To note the content of the new national Early Years Framework;
2. To note that local implementation of this should be taken forward by Community Planning Partners as part of the development of the local Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP) for 2009-2012;
3. To refer the report to the Executive for further consideration at its meeting in April 2009; and
4. To note that a report on a Review of the Council's Early Years Service will be brought to the PPG in May 2009.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated January 2009, submitted)

5. SKILLS FOR WORK AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

Last year Community Services: Education identified an area for development relating to Curriculum for Excellence and the Skills Strategy outlined by Scottish Government focussing on vocational education provision and Skills for Work courses designed by the Scottish Qualifications Authority placing emphasis on learning through practical experience and development of a range of generic employability skills and abilities. A report providing an update on what Education has achieved in the development of Skills for Work and Vocational Education and highlighting future developments in this area was considered.

Decision

1. To note progress made to date and the proposed future direction of Skills for Work and Vocational Education;
2. To request Officers to make sure that current initiatives going on in different areas are not lost and that they are integrated within the new system to avoid duplication;
3. To endorse the strategic direction being taken and the more practical tailored approach to individual and local needs; and
4. To note that a progress report will be prepared for the first meeting of the PPG in 2010.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated 29 January 2009, submitted)

6. ARMED FORCES VISITS TO SCHOOLS

Following a motion submitted to the Council on 2 October 2008, the PPG were asked to consider, what, if any, guidelines should be put in place to govern goodwill visits by the Armed Services to Council premises, particularly schools. A report providing information on this matter was considered.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To note Councillor Kinniburgh's concerns and his preference for guidelines to be implemented but, on balance, to agree that no guidelines are necessary to govern goodwill visits by the Armed Services to Council premises, particularly schools.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated 4 February 2009, submitted)

7. FAIRER ARGYLL AND BUTE PLAN: RESULTS FROM NEEDS ANALYSIS

Chris Carr, Research Associate, gave a presentation on the results of a Needs Analysis carried out to help inform the Fair Argyll and Bute Plan which aims to tackle deprivation and health inequalities in particular.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the presentation and to request Chris Carr to provide the Members of the Social Affairs PPG with a copy of the presentation slides and a copy of the Fairer Argyll and Bute Needs Analysis Report; and
2. To note that if Members have questions in relation to the Report that they will contact Chris Carr direct.

8. CPP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership Draft Community Engagement

Strategy was before the PPG for consideration. Community Engagement is all about communities and service providers working together to improve services and this Strategy recognises the vast amount of good community involvement activity that is happening all the area and seeks to harness, improve and better co-ordinate this work and make community involvement a positive, inclusive and effective experience for all those involved.

Decision

To note the draft Strategy and that an Action Plan will be brought the PPG in May 2009.

(Reference: Argyll and Bute CPP Draft Community Engagement Strategy dated 3 February 2009, submitted)

9. CHILDREN'S CHAMPION

A report advising on progress with the establishment of a Children's Champion to further enhance the lives of looked after and accommodated children and young people was considered.

Decision

To note that progress has been slower than originally planned and that a further progress report will be brought to the PPG in May 2009 which will move this project to the final stage of the implementation of this Policy.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services, submitted)

10. CORPORATE PARENTING - ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT - CHILDREN AND FAMILIES 2007/08

A report providing an analysis of the Scotland wide statistical returns for Looked After Children and Child Protection Services for the period 2007/2008 was considered.

Decision

1. To note the position in respect of the national statistics for looked after children and for children in need of protection;
2. To note the comparative position of children within Argyll and Bute in relation to this information; and
3. To note that the Area Corporate Services Manager will discuss with the Head of Children and Families the possibility of bringing a report to the PPG on how the Council are progressing with protocols identified within the Getting it Right for Every Child report regarding information sharing.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services, submitted)

11. COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP'S CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

An extensive Service Review and work on developing options for the future of Mental

Health Services has been progress in Argyll and Bute since 2007. A draft response on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council to the consultation along with a copy of the consultation document "Mental Health Services in Argyll and Bute – Redesign and Modernisation" from NHS Highland was before Members for consideration.

An amended report summarising the main points within the consultation document was also tabled at the meeting.

Decision

1. To agree the draft response to the consultation and to support Option 3 subject to the following amendments:-
 - (a) The importance of crisis beds being area based within the Community Hospitals should be included within the response;
 - (b) The importance of the development of the future configuration and management of Community Mental Health Teams should be stressed within the response;
 - (c) That in supporting Option 3, to make clear that this option should be made available to clients across the whole of Argyll and Bute including Helensburgh and Lomond; and
2. To note that the response will be redrafted to take account of the above amendments and forwarded to the Executive for their endorsement.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated 27 February 2009, issued and Amended Report by Director of Community Services dated 27 February 2009, tabled)

12. SERVICES FOR CLIENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

A report providing details and progress with an options appraisal being progressed by the Project Team for the Future use of Disability Support Services and details of the timescales involved was considered.

Decision

To note progress and that a further report will be brought to the PPG in August 2009.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services, submitted)

13. EDUCATION AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND QUARTERLY REPORTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2008

The Community Services Quarterly report for 1 October – 31 December 2008 was before the Group for consideration. The Head of Planning and Performance highlighted points within the report and responded to various questions from Members.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report and that this will be last time it will be presented to the PPG in this format;
2. To note that the Head of Planning and Performance will arrange for background information on what the reasons are for the low number of care staff with appropriate qualifications for the level of post held; and
3. To note that the Community Services performance scorecard within Pyramid will be viewed electronically at future meetings of the PPG.

(Reference: Community Services Quarterly Report 1 October – 31 December 2008, submitted)

14. SPORT AND LEISURE PROGRESS REPORT

A report providing an update on the review of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategic was considered.

Decision

1. To note the achievements produced through the targets contained in the 2005 – 2008 Sport and Physical Activity Strategy as evidenced in the interim findings;
2. To note that the evaluation report will be finalised and circulated by late March 2009;
3. To note the progress made towards the development of a new Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and that the final draft will be brought to the PPG in May 2009;
4. To note that the Sport and Leisure Service and Facilities Services are working in partnership with sportscotland to develop updated strategies for sport facilities and pitches which will sit within the overall Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and that a copy of these updated strategies will be brought to the first meeting of the PPG in 2010; and
5. To note that Stramash have been commissioned to provide outdoor education to Aberdeenshire schools.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated 25 February 2009, submitted)

15. GLASGOW 2014 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The PPG considered a request from the Executive to look at presenting a case for the use of sports facilities within Argyll and Bute at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Decision

The Members welcomed this initiative and noted that the Head of Community Regeneration will liaise with the Depute Spokesperson for Arts, Culture, Leisure and Sport and bring a scoping paper for discussion at the next PPG meeting in May 2009.

(Reference: Extract from Minutes of Executive 19 February 2009 and Extract from

Report by Depute Spokesperson for Arts, Culture, Leisure and Sport, submitted)

16. SCHOOL TRANSPORT - TENDERING OF IN-HOUSE ROUTES

A report advising on the proposal to re-visit the tender evaluation criteria in respect of school transport was considered at the Council's Executive on 18 September 2008 and it was agreed at that meeting that revised tender evaluation criteria should be brought to the Social Affairs PPG in the first instance for consideration. A report advising on the way forward with this matter was considered.

Decision

To agree the revised tender evaluation criteria as set out in the report and to refer the report to the Executive for further consideration at its meeting in April 2009.

(Reference: Joint Report by Director of Community Services and Director of Development Services dated 27 February 2009, submitted)