

Council Review 2007 Children and Families Department Arrangements

The City of Edinburgh Council

27 January 2005

Purpose of report

- 1 To introduce the main report on the Children and Families Department on today's agenda.

Background

- 2 Members of Council are aware of the decision of 29 April 2004 to establish two new departments of Children and Families and Health and Social Care. In making that recommendation, I emphasised the need for an integrated education, children and families service as the way forward for Edinburgh in the 21st century. The Director's report on the organisation structure for the new Department is a major milestone towards achieving that aim.
- 3 I also believe that members should view the formation of the new Department within the context of the unprecedented level of change that the Council is currently undergoing. Establishing two new departments will also impact widely elsewhere on current Council structures. However, the scale of the change being faced does not end with the organisation and management of these two new departments. As part of the ongoing Council Review 2007, I am developing proposals and working towards:
 - the implications of new community planning and community health governance structures on the Council's emerging organisational arrangements for the delivery of neighbourhood services;
 - the implications of decisions to be taken in 2006 on the housing stock transfer proposals; and
 - increasing use of new technology in, for instance, the areas of finance and human resources.
- 4 The issues faced are, therefore, complex and warrant detailed consideration. It has not been possible to bring forward structure proposals for the Health and Social Care Department within the same timescale as the Children and Families Department. The arrangements for Health and Social Care are being developed with NHS Lothian and consequently the consultation arrangements have been extensive. In addition, there has been an understandable pressure

upon NHS Lothian to focus on their own internal changes and on the development of the Community Health Partnerships. Consequently, engagement with NHS Lothian has recently focused on developing proposals for and recruiting to the post of Director of Health and Social Care. I can now confirm that the Joint Appointments Panel has met and that the post of Director of Health and Social Care has been advertised. A report on the proposed Departmental structure for Health and Social Care will be submitted to the February Council meeting.

Issues arising

- 5 In my report of 29 April 2004 I discussed the role of the **Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO)**. I concluded that on balance the post should be located in the Health and Social Care Department. However, I also recommended that the Council should:

“receive a further report with final decisions with respect to the role, departmental location, reporting protocol and support for the Council’s designated Chief Social Work Officer”

- 6 Following an incident in the Scottish Borders and the subsequent publication of a report by the Social Work Services Inspectorate in April 2004, the Scottish Executive has initiated a fundamental review of social work services – *21st Century Social Work Review*. I understand that the group undertaking that review will address the role and future responsibilities of Chief Social Work Officers.
- 7 In the absence of the Scottish Executive’s review and taking account of the position outlined above on the structure of the Health and Social Care Department, I propose that the *status quo* be retained in the interim with the CSWO being located in that Department. I believe that this is consistent with the service pressures that the Health and Social Care Department will face in protecting vulnerable adults, in dealing with sex offenders, in discharging the Council’s responsibilities under the Mental Health Act and in managing the out-of-hours social work services for the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council and East Lothian Council. I have asked the interim Director of Social Work to prepare an annual report in his capacity of Chief Social Work Officer for consideration by the Executive of the Council in March 2005.
- 8 However, as indicated in my original report, there is also a need for the advice of the CSWO to be available on a day-to-day basis to the Director of Children and Families. The range of advice that is likely to be called for will, in my view, require more than one post to support the two departments. On an interim basis, therefore, I propose that a Deputy CSWO post should be created and located in the Children and Families Department. This post would report to the Director of Children and Families as indicated in Diagram 4 of the attached report. Protocols will be developed and reported to Council ensuring that the two posts can operate in an integrated fashion but with the necessary level of operational independence.
- 9 At its meeting of 18 January 2005, the Executive of the Council approved the report “Quality Assurance Arrangements within the New Children and Families Department”. A key element in that report was the approach to and responsibility for child protection services’ inspections. For members’ information, these will now be integrated into the processes developed for the other education and child-related inspections in the Department. Pilot inspections of child protection in Scotland will be undertaken in January and

March 2005 underlining the need for clarity on Departmental responsibility in carrying forward the inspection process.

Recommendations

- 10 I recommend to the Council that:
- a) on an interim basis, the post of Chief Social Work Officer remain in the Health and Social Care Department as proposed in my report of 29 April 2004; and
 - b) also on an interim basis, a post of Deputy Chief Social Work Officer be created in the Department of Children and Families.
- 11 Members should note that:
- a) the interim Director of Social Work, in his capacity as Chief Social Work Officer, will submit an annual report to the Executive of the Council in March 2005; and
 - b) child protection services' inspections will now be integrated into the processes developed for the other education and child related inspections in the new Department. Pilot inspections of child protection in Scotland will be undertaken in January and March 2005.



Tom Aitchison
Chief Executive

20/1/05

Appendices

Contact/tel

Wards affected

**Background
Papers**