

Council Review 2007: Organisation and Management of Social Work Services

City of Edinburgh Council

29 April 2004

Purpose of report

- 1 To refer the views of the Community Services and Social Justice and Older People Scrutiny Panels on the Organisation and Management of Social Work Services within the Council.

Main report

- 2 On 16 December 2003 the Executive considered a report, Council Review 2007: Organisation and Management of Social Work Services. The report detailed an initial review of the options for the organisation and management of social work services within the Council. The Executive agreed:
 - a) To recognise the need for change in the organisation and management of social work services within the authority.
 - b) To agree that there should be a period of consultation on the options.
 - c) To note that the Chief Executive would submit a further interim report to the Council within approximately six weeks and a more detailed report in approximately 10 weeks.
 - d) To ask the Chief Executive to liaise with COSLA and consult with all Scottish Councils on the possible development of a Scottish local government training facility.
 - e) To ask the Chief Executive to bring forward an early report on a new framework for joint working on children's services between Council and health services in Edinburgh. The report to address the need for formal and informal joint working and the scope for joint training of professionals.
- 3 As part of the consultation process the Community Services and Social Justice and Older People Scrutiny Panels met on 21 April 2004 to discuss the implications of the options for health, housing, criminal justice, older people and social justice.

- 4 The meeting which was chaired by Councillors Mrs MacLaren and Maginnis, heard from the Chief Executive, Acting Director of Social Work and the Directors of Corporate Services and Housing. The following agencies were also represented and gave evidence – NHS Lothian, Barnardos Scotland, Bethany Christian Trust, Lothian and Borders Police, Age Concern and UNISON. Councillor Sheila Gilmore (Executive Member for Community Safety and Housing) was also in attendance.
- 5 Discussion at the meeting focussed on:
- The current position of the review of the options for the organisation and management of social work services.
 - The need for improved joint working arrangements between the Council and partner agencies such as health, police and the voluntary sector.
 - Recognition by the Scottish Executive that there was a need for local authorities and health agencies to improve their joint working arrangements.
 - The likely impact of disaggregating the current structure with a particular focus on children and young people and criminal justice services.
 - The potential effect of structural change on the morale and motivation of staff.
 - The need for leadership, shared cultural values and well-trained staff and a focus on outcomes within an organisation.
 - The current national review of the criminal justice system.
 - The role of the Housing Department within joint planning arrangements.

Decision

- 1) To advise the Council that the Joint Scrutiny Panel –
 - a) supports the idea of joint working arrangements with agencies such as health, police and voluntary sector organisations;
 - b) believes that improved joint working arrangements can be achieved through leadership and shared values, together with well-trained, motivated staff with a strong focus on outcomes; and
 - c) believes that any substantial structural change should not impede service delivery.

2) To recommend that the Council –

- a) requests an early report on policy, resources and structure for the criminal justice system;
- b) seeks an urgent report on the central role of housing services within joint planning arrangements; and
- c) addresses as a critical issue the general public perception of the erosion of services and resources to older people.

Councillor Mrs Marilyne MacLaren
Convener
Community Services Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Elizabeth Maginnis
Convener
Social Justice and Older People
Scrutiny Panel

Appendices	None
Contact/tel	Brian Pirie Tel: 0131 529 4378 email: brian.pirie@edinburgh.gov.uk
Wards affected	City-wide
Background Papers	Minute of the Executive 16 December 2003