

**This report accompanies the Regulation and Inspection Unit Annual Report 1998/99 which is item 8 on the Policy and Resources Committee News for Members.**

**Pages 5 - 10 should be removed.**

## **REGULATION AND INSPECTION ANNUAL REPORT**

Accountable Officer and Author: David Jones (Strategic Director Neighbourhood Services)  
MK 253357

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To fulfill the statutory requirement that every Regulation and Inspection Unit must report on an annual basis to its "Social Services Committee".

### **2. Summary**

- 2.1 The annex contains the Unit's Annual Report 1998/99. The report also contains information on recent management developments and a summary of work being undertaken to address the information technology needs of the Unit.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 There is a statutory requirement for every Regulation and Inspection Unit to report on an annual basis to its Social Services Committee, in Milton Keynes case, the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 3.2 The Annual Report 1998/99 of the Regulation and Inspection Unit is attached as an annex to this report. An earlier draft was discussed by both Advisory Panels and their comments have been incorporated.
- 3.3 The last Unit report was presented in November 1998, together with the Chief Executive's report. It was decided that in future they would be produced at different times of the year, i.e. April and October.
- 3.4 The report will be circulated to both Advisory Panels.

### **4. Issues and Choices**

- 4.1 **Management** – From August 1998 to March 1999 management support to the Unit was provided by Northamptonshire Social Services.

- 4.2 In April 1999, David Moore was appointed Principal Manager, Regulation and Commissioning. The management of the Unit will be amongst his responsibilities. He is currently Head of the Inspection Unit of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and will join Milton Keynes Council on 2 August.
- 4.3 The arrival of a new and very experienced Manager will enable the service to meet the various developmental requirements which have been identified.
- 4.4 **Advisory Panels** – Both Advisory Panels are now meeting on a regular basis. The Children’s Panel met on 9 February 1999 and 25 May 1999 and the Adults’ Panel met on 26 January 1999 and 17 May 1999. Meetings for early autumn have already been scheduled, prior to which further work will be undertaken to broaden the membership in line with the recently agreed changes.
- 4.5 **Information Technology** continues to be a very high priority.
- 4.6 The Regulation and Inspection Unit’s Administrator visited Surrey County Hall in February to see its ACCESS database.
- 4.7 The other system – Registration Plus – was demonstrated at the Unit in March.
- 4.8 A second meeting regarding the Unit’s IT situation was also convened in March. The meeting was chaired by David Jones, attended by the Head of IT with one other IT officer, the Head of Policy and Support Services (NSD) with a representative, and Lesley Holmes from the Regulation and Inspection Unit.
- 4.9 Sheridan has now stated that they will not be developing the registration and inspection part of SSID. The Head of Policy and Support Services and Head of IT at the IT meeting confirmed this.
- 4.10 It was agreed at this meeting that SSID would not therefore be viable to pursue as a tool for the Regulation and Inspection Unit.
- 4.11 The Regulation and Inspection Unit favour Registration Plus over ACCESS. Feedback from the IT Department is that Microsoft ACCESS is not designed to run as a fully integrated information service.
- 4.12 It is not able to set-up a contract with Software Division (who sell Registration Plus) however, as according to the Council’s guidelines, the IT Department have to go out to tender for this package.
- 4.13 Advertisement has been inserted in national press inviting prospective system suppliers to express an interest.
- 4.14 A Questionnaire was produced and issued to all companies who responded to the advertisement. The completed Questionnaires were returned to Milton Keynes Council and were used to select a shortlist of suppliers who will receive the full Invitation to Tender.

4.15 A Outline Project Plan has been written to cover the tender and system specification period. A further plan will be needed to cover the system installation and implementation period once a system has been selected.

4.16 A draft functional specification has now been written.

## 5. **Implications**

### 5.1 Environmental

Environmental Health Officers play an important part in their work with the Unit.

### 5.2 Equalities

Equalities must have a central place in tasks undertaken.

### 5.3 Financial

The current work and developments detailed in the report will be contained within the existing budget.

### 5.4 Legal

The legal requirements are detailed in the Annual Report.

### 5.5 Staff and Accommodation

The Staffing and accommodation requirements will be reviewed as part of the recently agreed work programme.

## 6. **Conclusions**

6.1 The Unit has fulfilled its statutory requirement to inspect providers of residential care homes and children's day care since April 1997. The lack of a Unit Manager has affected its recent development, but the plans detailed in the report should assist the aim of moving the work forward.

Background Papers: Report by Felicity Pettifer: October 1998