

Minutes of the SOCIAL SERVICES CO-ORDINATING TEAM held on MONDAY 12 JULY 1999 at 5.30 pm

Present: Councillors Lloyd, Long (in the Chair), Swepston and Turnbull

Officers: D Jones (Strategic Director Neighbourhood Services), A Farr (Children's Services Manager) and S Heap (Members' Services Manager)

1.0 MINUTES

1.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 1999 were agreed.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

2.1 It was noted that 46 Performance Indicators were contained in the Government publication 'A New Approach to Social Services Performance' which was currently out to consultation. It was reported that all Social Services Authorities would be required to report against these designated Performance Indicators.

2.2 It was also noted that the Leader of the Council was to hold regular meetings with Strategic Directors, where he would review a range of key Performance Indicators.

2.3 With regard to Children's Services, it was reported that:

- (a) new Government guidance was expected on Referrals and Assessment which would require Social Services Authorities to report on a number of Performance Indicators. In advance of the guidance, the Council was introducing its own pilot reporting process;
- (b) statistics on children looked after not in school, were to be collected;
- (c) improved reporting, including an analysis of reasons and resource implications on children looked after, was being developed; and
- (d) better information on adoptions was also being developed.

2.4 It was recognised that it was important to only collect a small number of key meaningful indicators, as these would be useful not only for the management of the service, but also for promoting debate amongst staff.

2.5 It was suggested that additional Performance Indicators on the number of joint assessments and the usage of the new Social Services Database by staff, would be useful.

2.6 It was also suggested that any Performance Indicators relating to the Council's housing

stock should be area based and reported on a monthly basis.

2.7 The Team received the Social Care Key Performance Indicators as at 1 July 1999, which would be circulated to all Members of the Council. It was reported that there was no significant change since last month, all child protection cases had remained allocated and it was hoped that all looked after children would also be shortly allocated to a Social Worker, as a number of new staff members had been appointed. In the meantime, it was suggested that cases which were held by the Team Leaders in the absence of an allocated Social Worker should be reported as such in the monthly Performance Indicators.

2.8 It was recognised that while the monthly figures were useful, it was also necessary to consider trends over a longer period.

3.0 REGULATION AND INSPECTION ADVISORY PANELS AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 It was noted that Minutes of the Panels would, in future, be reported to the appropriate Committee, either Children's and Youth or Neighbourhood Services. It was recognised that it was important that Members should have the opportunity to ask questions on the Minutes.

3.2 It was also noted that the Children's Panel had not been quorate and attempts were being made at getting persons involved and that this issue would be considered at its next meeting.

4.0 INTER-AUTHORITY SPOKESPERSONS MEETING - 30 JULY 1999

4.1 It was noted that the Council would be represented by Councillors Barton and Turnbull.

4.2 Councillor Long expressed some surprise at the number of elected Members who attended meetings of Primary Care Groups, but recognised that they could only attend as lay persons.

4.3 It was reported that when the Groups became Trusts, Members could then be Members.

5.0 SOCIAL SERVICES CONFERENCE - 26 TO 29 OCTOBER 1999

5.1 It was suggested that three members should attend in the ratio 2:1. The Labour Group would be represented by Councillors Long and Turnbull.

5.2 It was noted that Councillor K Wilson would also be attending in his own right.

6.0 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

6.1 It was noted that the Quality Protects Action Plan was now being reviewed at Section and Divisional Management meetings.

6.2 It was also noted that meetings had been recommenced with the Parents Fight Back Group with the intention of giving the Group the chance to feedback/comment on services.

6.3 It was reported that the Council would receive a performance assessment visit from the Social Services Inspectorate on 13 July 1999, with a further visit in October 1999.

7.0 ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

7.1 The incident involving a stabbing of a service user last month, was noted. It was reported that a case review had been commissioned and the Terms of Reference agreed. Further supported living schemes were to be developed, which must be based on robust procedures and policies. It was recognised that some reassurance for staff would be necessary.

7.2 It was suggested that a seminar under the heading 'Modernisation of Social Services' should be held in August 1999 and concentrate on working with health. It was noted that a report on this issue would be submitted to the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee. It was also suggested that the seminar could be widened to include children's issues and the links with housing issues.

7.3 It was asked that the issues arising from the Royal Commission on Long Term Care should be reported to the appropriate body and not forgotten.

7.4 The lack of eligibility criteria was noted. The importance was recognised together with the need to come forward with a timetable and process as a matter of urgency.

7.5 It was noted that the Best Value Study into Home Care was not due to report to the Best Value/CCT Sub-Committee until September 1999. However, the action plan was considered by the Neighbourhood Services Committee, last week.

8.0 HEATHERCROFT

8.1 It was suggested that a decision was needed on the long term future of the site.

8.2 It was noted that talks were currently underway with English Partnerships with regard to any pre-emption clauses and an options paper would be brought to the appropriate Committee of the Council in due course, in conjunction with Councillors Long and Turnbull.

9.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 9 August 1999 when the following items would be discussed:

- (a) Best Value in Social Care; and

- (b) Children's Advisory Panel

9.2 It was suggested that the following items should be considered at the September meeting:

- (a) Budgets; and
- (b) A Press Protocol

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6.47 PM