

MINUTE of MEETING of the SOCIAL POLICY, POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 12 SEPTEMBER 2017.

Present – Councillors Angela Doran (Chair), George Paul, Charles Kennedy, Dave King, Sarah King, Dom McGuire and Damian Timson

Apologies – Bridget Meisak, Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor King declared a non-financial interest as an appointed member of West Lothian Integration Joint Board.

Councillor Paul declared a non-financial interest as an appointed member of West Lothian Integration Joint Board.

The clerk advised that there was a dispensation in the Councillors Code of Conduct for membership of Integration Joint Boards (IJB) so that councillors, as voting members of the IJB, did not have to declare an interest when discussion on general health and social care issues arose.

2. MINUTE

The Panel confirmed the minute of the Social Policy PDSP meeting held on 29 June 2017 as being a correct record. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. NATIONAL STATISTICS PUBLICATION: CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORK STATISTICS SCOTLAND 2015-16

A presentation was given by the Senior Manager, Young People and Public Protection providing information on the Children's Social Work Statistics which included children and young people who were formally looked after by the local authority, under child protection measures or in secure care.

The Panel was given information on how children became looked after or subject to Child Protection measures. Details of the types of placements available were provided and a breakdown given on the number of placements in West Lothian. The Corporate Parenting Plan in West Lothian sought to:

- improve the quality of care and care planning;
- improve health and wellbeing;
- support learning and raising attainment;
- support employment, training and positive destinations; and

- provide high quality through, continuing and after-care.

Following conclusion of the presentation the Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy providing details of the National Statistics Publication, Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland 2015-16, which was attached as an appendix to the report.

The Senior Manager then responded to questions from members of the Panel. In response to a question relating to the number of children on the Child Protection Register in West Lothian being lower than the national rate, he advised that this could be due to the early intervention work carried out to support and protect children and young people in West Lothian. More detailed information could be provided to a future meeting of the Panel if required. The Senior Manager undertook to provide members with information following the meeting relating to what was being done in West Lothian to reduce the length of time children were being looked after in the longer term. He also agreed to provide details of the number of referrals received for children from affluent areas compared to more deprived areas in West Lothian.

In conclusion, the Children's Social Work statistics for Scotland Bulletin highlighted that in many aspects the figures for West Lothian did not vary greatly from the national averages. West Lothian has adopted an early intervention and prevention approach and continues to work with partners to ensure that children and young people have the best start in life and ready to succeed.

It was recommended that the Panel notes the performance of West Lothian Council in comparison to national figures and the national statistics in relation to:

- children and young people who were looked after;
- child protection; and
- secure care.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To note that the Senior Manager undertook to provide information to members of the Panel following the meeting relating to the length of time children were being looked after in the longer term and information relating to the number of referrals received for children in affluent areas compared to more deprived areas in West Lothian.

4. ALCOHOL DIVERSIONARY ACTIVITIES

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy providing details of the applications submitted

for Alcohol Diversionary Funding. Five applications for funding were submitted for consideration, which were attached as appendices to the report, and were received from:

- Armadale Youth Space;
- Booze You Looze;
- Craigshill Off Beat;
- Blackburn Initiative; and
- Diversionary Football Project.

The Senior Manager, Community Care Support and Services, advised that the applications submitted have met the West Lothian Alcohol & Drug Partnership (ADP) Joint Commissioning Plan outcomes as assessed by the Alcohol Diversionary Fund (ADF) Subgroup meetings on 14 August and 23 August 2017.

The Senior Manager then responded to questions from members of the Panel.

The Panel was asked to note the applications submitted for Alcohol Diversionary Funding which were intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report and the applications submitted for Alcohol Diversionary Funding; and
2. Agreed that the report be forwarded to Council Executive for approval.

5. REPORT ON CARE INSPECTORATE INSPECTIONS FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES SERVICES APRIL 2016-MARCH 2017

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy providing details of the inspection grades achieved by Children & Family services during the period April 2016 to March 2017. A breakdown of the grades achieved by the services over the past year following their inspections was attached as an appendix to the report.

The Senior Manager, Young People and Public Protection, explained that one of the ways the Care Inspectorate checks services was to carry out inspections. The inspector could visit without advising service's staff in advance or on a planned, announced basis.

The quality inspection reports from the Care Inspectorate of Services for Children and Young People showed that all areas assessed were awarded Grades of '4 Good' or above, with 50% of areas assessed awarded Grades of 5 'Very Good' and 14% awarded Grades of '6

Excellent’.

In conclusion, it was noted that this was a positive performance which demonstrated the continuing hard work and commitment on the part of staff delivering some of the most challenging services in social work.

It was recommended that the Panel notes the performance of Children and Families Services inspected by the Care Inspectorate between April 2016 and 2017 and recognised the high standards and positive inspection reports achieved.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

6. JOINT INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy providing details of the findings of the Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People by the Care Inspectorate. The Services for children and young people in West Lothian joint inspection report was attached as an appendix to the report.

The Senior Manager, Young People and Public Protection, advised that the inspection process that was undertaken in West Lothian was robust and intensive and had taken account of the full range of work undertaken with children, young people and families locally. As part of the inspection process the planning and delivery of services for children and young people were evaluated against nine quality indicators. The findings indicated that West Lothian has had a very positive inspection.

The Senior Manager then responded to questions from members of the Panel. In response to a question relating to the initial responses to concerns raised about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, he confirmed that plans to introduce a shared electronic system were expected to improve sharing information between police, social work and health services which would improve the inter-agency referral discussions process.

It was recommended that the Panel notes the findings of the recent joint inspection of services for children and young people in West Lothian.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

7. HEATHERFIELD NURSING HOME

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy advising of the application of an enhancement in the quality element of the National Care Home Contract Fee to

Heatherfield Nursing Home who has been awarded a Grade 5 by the Care Inspectorate in the category Quality of Care and Support. A copy of the care service inspection report for Heatherfield Nursing Home was attached as an appendix to the report.

The report recalled that in April 2007 the National Care Home Contract for Older People Care Home was implemented in West Lothian and across Scotland. The aim of the contract was to provide a consistent approach to the quality of care and a national fee for the provision of Older People Care Home beds in the private sector.

A key performance indicator in the contract for 2016-17 was the use of the quality assurance framework currently in use by The Care Inspectorate.

In June 2017, Heatherfield Nursing Home was awarded QAF Grade 5 in the category Quality of Care and Support, QAF Grade 4 in the category Quality of Environment, QAF Grade 4 in the category Quality of Management and Leadership and QAF Grade 5 in the category of Quality of Staffing. The National Care Home Contract required West Lothian Council to apply the enhancement under the quality element of the contract. The enhancement for Heatherfield Nursing Home calculated to an additional £3 per week per resident backdated to 26 June 2017, which was the date of the inspection.

The Panel was asked to note the application of enhancement in the quality element of the National Care Home Contract fee to the private provider.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

8. RESPONSE TO THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON DRAFT REGULATIONS UNDER THE CARERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2016

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy providing details of the proposed response by the Council to the Scottish Government's Consultation on draft regulations under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016:- Consultation on Draft Regulations was attached at appendix 2 to the report.

The report explained that The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 (the Act) would be effective from 1 April 2018 and contained a range of statutory duties in relation to supporting adult and young carers. The Act mainly imposes duties on local authorities and Integration Joint Boards but also imposes some on Health Boards. The Act applies to adults', older people's and children's services. The aim of the Act was to support adult carers to continue to care, if they so wished, and to have a life alongside caring and to enable young carers to have a childhood similar to their non-carer peers. Details of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 – Proposed Regulations were outlined within the report.

The Draft West Lothian Consultation Response was attached at appendix 1 to the report, which reflected the position outlined in the report and was required to be submitted by the closing date of 24 September 2017.

It was recommended that the Panel note and consider the proposed West Lothian Council response to the Scottish Government consultation on draft regulations under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 which was intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval and submission.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To agree that the report be forwarded to the Council Executive for approval.

9. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan was circulated which formed the basis of the Panel's work over the coming months.

Decision

To note the workplan.