

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 14 MAY 2015.

Present – Councillors Danny Logue (Chair), Frank Toner, Tony Boyle, Diane Calder, Angela Moohan and John Muir

Apologies – Maureen Finlay, Senior People's Forum Representative.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Toner declared a general non-financial interest arising from his position as a Non-Executive member of NHS Lothian and as a council appointee to West Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership Board.

2. MINUTE

The Panel confirmed the Minute of the meeting held on 12 March 2015 as being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the Minute.

3. SOCIAL POLICY CONTRACT ACTIVITY UPDATE

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy (Interim) providing an update on the contracting activity for the provision of care and support services for the period 1 October 2014 to 31 March 2015.

The Senior Manager, Communities and Information, advised the Panel that under the council's Health, Care and Support Services Procurement Procedures the Head of Social Policy was required to report bi-annually to the Social Policy PDSP on the care and support contracts awarded to or extended within this period and any general update on contract activity.

In response to a question from members in relation to how prices compared to previous years contracts, the Senior Manager undertook to provide members with a comparison of prices from providers of care and support services for contracts offering similar services over the previous years.

The Panel was asked to note the contracting activity from 1 October 2014 to 31 March 2015 and recognise the on-going development of clear contractual agreements between the council and providers of care and support services.

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report; and
2. Noted that the Senior Manager undertook to provide members with price comparisons relating to providers offering similar services from

previous years.

4. AREA SERVICES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015/16

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services providing a copy of the 2015/16 Management Plan for Area Services.

The Management Plan outlined the main activities and actions to be delivered by the service in 2015/16 and would be used by the management team and stakeholders to monitor performance and improvement.

The Acting Advice Shop and ABE Manager advised the Panel that the area of service of most direct relevance to the remit of the Social Policy PDSP was the Advice Shop. The Panel was then provided with an update on the Advice Shop and Adult Basic Education activities. The work of the Advice Shop contributed to the Community Planning Partnership's priority of "Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality".

During the question and answer session members requested information relating to the number of people previously employed by VION who had successfully gained employment after receiving support from the Advice Shop and Adult Basic Education service, which the Acting Advice Shop and ABE Manager undertook to provide.

The Panel was asked to note the terms of the report and the attached management plan.

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report; and
2. Noted that members requested information relating to the number of people previously employed by VION who successfully gained employment following the support of the Advice Shop.

5. WEST LOTHIAN ACTIVITY - NATIONAL SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT AWARENESS WEEK 30TH MARCH TO 3RD APRIL 2015

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy (Interim) providing details of the activity undertaken in West Lothian as part of the first National Self-directed Support (SDS) Awareness Week held from 30 March to 3 April 2015. A copy of the SDS in West Lothian Newsletter produced to coincide with the National SDS Awareness Week was attached as an appendix to the report.

The report explained that the range and level of activity undertaken in West Lothian as part of the SDS National Awareness Week 2015 further promoted and developed local awareness of SDS and what it meant for

the local delivery of care and support.

The Senior Manager, Community Care Assessment and Prevention, advised the Panel that the event provided service users and carers with the opportunity to be involved in local events. Publications and service user and carer engagement and involvement would continue as part of the ongoing development and delivery of SDS in West Lothian.

The Panel was asked to note the local activity undertaken during National SDS Awareness Week and the contents of the West Lothian SDS Newsletter.

Decision

Noted the contents of the report.

6. ALCOHOL DIVERSIONARY ACTIVITIES

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy (Interim) which provided details of three applications submitted for Alcohol Diversionary Funding. The three applications for consideration were attached as appendices to the report and received from:

- Armadale Youth Space;
- Booze You Looze; and
- Craigshill Offbeat.

The Senior Manager, Community Care Support and Services, advised the Panel that the applications had proceeded through their Local Area Committees and met the West Lothian Alcohol & Drug Partnership (WLADP) Joint Commissioning Plan outcomes as assessed by the WLADP Sub-group Panel on 16 April 2015.

The Senior Manager, Community Care Support and Services, then responded to questions from members of the Panel. In response to a request from members the Senior Manager undertook to provide details of “good news stories” from groups who had previously received funding from the Alcohol Diversionary fund.

The Panel was asked to consider the applications submitted for Alcohol Diversionary Funding and agree to their submission to the Council Executive.

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report and considered the applications;
2. Agreed that the three applications for funding be submitted to the Council Executive for approval; and

3. Noted that the Senior Manager undertook to provide members with “good news stories”.

7. REPORT ON PROJECT SEARCH

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy (Interim) providing details of the implementation of Project Search, a new work-based training programme for young people with a learning disability or autism in West Lothian.

The Senior Manager, Assessment and Prevention advised the Panel that Project Search would be used in West Lothian to support young people with a learning disability or autism into employment through work-based training with an employer. It would offer a one year programme of work training specifically for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. The project would work in partnership between a business, West Lothian College and West Lothian Council's supported employment team and would support up to twelve people at a time, normally at the point of transition. Individuals would be accepted through a selection process.

The report explained that the aim of Project Search was to obtain full-time paid employment for young people, or to ensure they left the programme ready for work and better placed to secure employment elsewhere. The programme was due to commence in September 2016. The report also outlined the anticipated benefits of the implementation of Project Search in West Lothian.

The Senior Manager then responded to questions from members of the Panel. A request was also made by members for a follow-up report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Social Policy PDSP when further information was available.

The Panel was asked to note the implementation of Project Search.

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report; and
2. Agreed that a follow-up report would be submitted to a future meeting when further information was available.

8. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE - OVERVIEW

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy (Interim) providing an overview of Looked After Children and Young People in West Lothian as well as providing an update on the components within the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 which related to Looked After Children and Young People.

The report explained that Looked After Children and Young People

represented one of the most vulnerable groups in our society. West Lothian Council, in conjunction with its partners, has a responsibility to act in the best interests of the child or young person to ensure their wellbeing.

The Senior Manager, Children & Early Intervention (Interim), advised the Panel that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 19 February 2014 and received Royal Assent on 27 March 2014. By facilitating a shift in public services towards the early years of a child's life and towards early intervention whenever a family or young person requires help, the legislation encourages preventative measures rather than crises responses.

The report then provided details of the number of important changes introduced by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 for looked after children and care leavers in Scotland. The key aim of the Act was to create a programme of change in the culture and practice of all services which affect the lives of children, young people and their families with a particular focus on ensuring that our Looked After Children and Young People have the opportunities to maximise their potential and are supported to achieve the best possible life outcomes.

The Senior Manager then responded to questions from members of the Panel. In response to issues raised the Senior Manager undertook to provide members with details of the number of additional children who were entitled to receive aftercare assistance since the eligibility for aftercare assistance was extended to the age of 25. The Senior Manager also undertook to provide members with a breakdown of the additional resources allocated to West Lothian from the Scottish Government to ensure continued revenue resources were available to implement the new parts of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The Panel was asked to:

- Note the contents of the report;
- Note the element of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 that seeks to improve outcomes for Looked After Children and Young People; and
- Asks that a report detailing the progress made in meeting the duties detailed within the Act be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel.

Decision

- Noted the contents of the report and agreed that a progress report be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel;
- Noted that the Senior Manager undertook to provide members with details of the number of additional children receiving aftercare assistance since the age increased to 25; and
- Noted that the Senior Manager undertook to provide members with a breakdown of the additional resources allocated to West Lothian from

the Scottish Government to implement the new parts of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

9. HEATHERFIELD NURSING HOME

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy (Interim) providing details of the removal of the penalty and reinstatement of full National Care Home Contract fee to Heatherfield Nursing Home. The Care Service Inspection report for Heatherfield Nursing Home was attached as an appendix to the report.

The report recalled that in February 2014, Heatherfield Nursing Home was awarded a Grade 2 in the category Quality of Care and Support and the reduction was applied under the terms and conditions of the National Care Home Contract 2014/2015. In February 2015 the Care Inspectorate awarded Heatherfield Nursing Home a Grade 3 in the category Quality of Care and Support therefore the full basic weekly fee was reinstated backdated to the inspection date of 4 February 2015.

The Panel was advised that the reduction of the quality payment was meant as a short term measure to facilitate improvement in the category Quality of Care and Support. The award by the Care Inspectorate of a Grade 3 indicated that the necessary improvements had been made to support reinstatement of the full fee under the terms and conditions of the National Care Home Contract.

The Panel was asked to note the reinstatement of the full National Care Home Contract fee to Heatherfield Nursing Home following the increase in their Quality Assurance Framework Grade.

Decision

Noted the contents of the report.

10. WORKPLAN 2015/2016

The Panel considered the contents of the workplan (copies of which had been circulated).

The Panel agreed the workplan subject to the following reports being included:

- Update on the implementation of Project Search; and
- Update on the progress made in meeting the duties detailed within the Looked After Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Decision

Noted the contents of the workplan subject to including the additional update reports.

11. TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2015-2016

The Panel considered the timetable of meetings for 2015-2016 (copies of which had been circulated).

Decision

Noted the timetable of meetings for 2015-2016.