

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE - 15 March 2004

REPORT ON: PROVISION OF FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE SOUTH WEST OF DUNDEE BY CHARLESTON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE, LOCHEE CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE AND WOODLEA CHILDREN'S CENTRE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 219 - 2003

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report proposes the relocation of the Family Support Team, which is currently based at Woodlea Children's Centre, to an alternative base at Charleston Primary School. It also proposes the reconfiguration into two larger teams of the existing three Family Support Teams with responsibility for meeting the need for family support services in the south west of the city. The proposal is being put forward in response to the significant demographic changes, which have taken place in the Beechwood, Charleston and Menzieshill areas in recent years, and with a view to improving access to family support services for all children in need and their families living in the south west of the city.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Social Work Committee approve the proposal to relocate the Woodlea Family Support Team to Charleston Primary School and to create two larger Family Support Teams to be based at Lochee Child and Family Centre and Charleston Primary School.

2.2 It is also recommended that the Social Work Committee instruct the Director of Social Work and Assistant Chief Executive (Management) to continue to consult employees at Woodlea and Charleston Child and Family Centre and their Trade Unions regarding relocation and redeployment within the Social Work Department.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There will be no additional ongoing costs arising from these proposals. The Sure Start monies currently allocated to the staffing budgets of the existing Woodlea and Charleston Family Support Teams will continue to fund these posts in the new merged Family Support Team at Charleston Child and Family Centre. There will be some property related expenditure required to create new office accommodation at Charleston Primary School. It is estimated that this will cost £3000 and will be met from within existing Social Work Department budgets.

4.0 PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In order to provide for the office accommodation needs of the larger Family Support Team to be based at Charleston Primary School, some minor capital works will be required. No alterations will be necessary for any other accommodation within the building, as the team will have access to existing facilities to be made available for their use throughout the school.

5.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 These proposals have been driven by the recognition that there is currently an inequity in the provision and in the targeting of family support services to communities in the south west of Dundee. The proposed changes will directly address this issue by redistributing family support resources and this will improve access to services for children in greatest need and their families living in local areas across the south west of the city.

7.0 BACKGROUND

CURRENT FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE IN THE SOUTH WEST OF DUNDEE

- 7.1 At the present time there are three Family Support Teams based in the south west of the city. These are the teams working in:

- Lochee Child and Family Centre, which is a stand alone centre
- Charleston Child and Family Centre, which is co-located with pre-school education provision in Charleston Primary School, but is managed from Lochee Child and Family Centre
- Woodlea Children's Centre, which provides integrated family support services and pre-school education provision under one management structure

The services provided by these Centres have been developed during the past few years to meet the need for family support, which has existed in the local communities, which they serve. In particular the provision of additional monies by the Scottish Executive through the Sure Start Programme has allowed the opportunity to test out the new, more integrated models of education and family support provision which are now in operation at Woodlea and at Charleston Child and Family Centre (Committee Reports:211/2000, 644/2000).

- 7.2 However over a number of years since the re-development of the Beechwood area there has been a steady fall in the size of the local population and in the numbers of children living in the Woodlea catchment area. Mid year child population estimates for 2001 do not show exact demographic figures for this community, as the information is presented against postcode areas, and the relevant postcode also includes the Ardler area. However it is significant to note that the total number of children under 5 living in the combined Ardler and Foggyley/Beechwood areas is only 315. This compares with 667 who live in Lochee/Charleston and 346 in Menziesshill. It is also anticipated that with the recent plans to demolish the Foggyley multis there will be a further fall in the number of children and families living in the Beechwood/Foggyley area in the near future.

7.3 In addition there is evidence from other statistical sources that there is a significant and growing 'in need' population in the Lochee/Charleston and Menzieshill areas. Lochee and Charleston Child and Family Centres provide services to children and families living in these communities, but they do not have the capacity to meet all presenting need. The Charleston Child and Family Centre Team in particular has limited potential for further growth or development as it is very small with only three Children Workers and no on-site management. The Team's resources are fully stretched trying to meet the significant need for family support services, which exists in the Charleston area itself. At the same time the Lochee Team's resources are very heavily concentrated on the high level of need in Lochee, particularly because of the significant level of drugs and alcohol misuse, which is prevalent in the area.

7.4 In the Menzieshill area there is no local Child and Family Centre. An Outreach Worker is attached to Lochee Child and Family Centre and it is her role to identify unmet need amongst Menzieshill's population of young children and families. However at present because of the demands for family support services from the Lochee and Charleston areas, there are insufficient staffing resources within the Lochee and Charleston Teams to respond fully to these service development needs in Menzieshill.

7.5 User statistics for the Family Support Team at Woodlea collated in February 2004 show that of the total of 70 children currently receiving a family support service:

Only one tenth of the children live in the Foggyley/Beechwood area itself
Another tenth of the children live in areas outwith the south west of the city
Four fifths of the children live elsewhere in the south west of the city ie in Dryburgh, Lochee, Charleston and Menzieshill

This evidence shows that there is now a significantly reduced need for the Woodlea Family Support Team's resources within the Beechwood/Foggyley area itself. It is argued therefore that the resources of the Woodlea Family Support Team should be retargeted at meeting need in the Lochee, Charleston and Menzieshill neighbourhoods in support of the Lochee and Charleston Family Support Teams.

PROPOSED FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE IN THE SOUTH WEST OF DUNDEE

7.6 In order to best meet the family support needs of the communities living in the Beechwood/Foggyley, Charleston, Lochee and Menzieshill areas, it is proposed that a rationalisation of the staffing resources of the Lochee, Charleston and Woodlea Family Support Teams now takes place. This rationalisation will strengthen the delivery of services from Charleston and Lochee Child and Family Centres and facilitate more direct access to a range of family support provision within these Centres. By bringing together staff from the three existing Family Support Teams it will also strengthen the combined teams' capacity to provide family support services on an outreach basis to families living the Menzieshill area.

7.7 It is proposed that there be a reconfiguration of the three existing Family Support Teams into two strengthened larger teams. These two Teams will be based on the two separate existing sites at Lochee Child and Family Centre and in Charleston Primary School. On an outreach basis the two Teams will together provide family support services both for children attending Woodlea Children's Centre and for those attending other pre-school and primary school provision in the area. The teams will also develop outreach services for families living in the Menzieshill area and any other communities in the south west of the city who do not have ease of access to a local Child and Family Centre.

7.8 This reconfiguration will allow more appropriate management arrangements to be put in place for Charleston Child and Family Centre and will more appropriately balance up team numbers, as well as supervisory and management responsibilities between the current Woodlea and Lochee/Charleston Family Support Team senior staff.

- 7.9 The relocation of the Woodlea Family Support Team will also allow the Education Department to take forward plans in relation to the development of a new, universal 0-3 's service in the building at Woodlea. Although there will be a continued need for a level of family support service to be provided within Woodlea on an outreach basis by the new reconfigured Charleston Family Support Team, there will be space in the building to offer other services not currently available within Dundee. The Education Department are planning to develop a new model of service provision within Dundee and to offer open access services for children aged 0-3 linked to pre-school provision. The opportunity will now be available at Woodlea to develop an integrated model of universal pre-school education and childcare for children aged 0-5 living in the Beechwood /Foggyley areas. The Director of Education will be bringing forward a report later this year with a view to establishing this new service at Woodlea.
- 7.10 It is proposed that the newly reconfigured Charleston and Lochee Family Support Teams will work closely together and will share the responsibility for servicing the family support needs of the children under 12 and their families who live in all the local communities involved. This approach will ensure that the use of the family support services available from the existing teams can be maximised and that the new and strengthened teams can be developed together to offer a much more flexible, responsive and needs led family support service for the families who live in the south west of the city.
- 7.11 This approach to the provision of family support services in the south west of Dundee is taking place in the context of the wider review of family support service provision within Dundee currently being carried out by the Cross Party Child and Family Centre Working Group. The vision for the future Dundee wide Family Support Service includes an emphasis upon flexibility, responsiveness to need and the provision of services to families within their own communities. This proposal ensures that children in need and their families who live in south west Dundee will have access to family support services which are delivered and developed in accordance with these agreed principles.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILIES CURRENTLY RECEIVING A FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE FROM SOUTH WEST FAMILY SUPPORT TEAMS

- 8.1 For the families currently receiving a service from the existing Lochee and Charleston Family Support Teams, there will be little change in the way in which services are delivered to them. However careful consideration will be given to the needs of all children and families currently receiving a service from the Woodlea Family Support Team to ensure that the proposed changes do not affect the continuity, level, quality or range of services being delivered to them.
- 8.2 It is planned that family support services will still be provided within the Woodlea building itself, where this is considered to most appropriately meet the needs of individual families. The Social Work and Education Departments will work closely together to agree the basis on which family support services will continue to be delivered for local families within Woodlea and to ensure that the services provided by the staff from both Departments are fully integrated at the point of delivery.
- 8.3 For those families receiving a service who live outwith the Woodlea catchment area (for example, the significant numbers who live in the Charleston area itself) services will be provided in/from the Woodlea staff's new base at Charleston Child and Family Centre as appropriate.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR STAFF

- 9.1 The proposed merger of the existing Woodlea and Charleston Family Support Teams on the one site at Charleston Child and Family Centre will allow more appropriate support and management arrangements to be put in place for the staff of the Charleston Team. Under the new arrangements there will be a Centre Manager as well as two Centre Workers with supervisory responsibilities based with the merged Teams. Careful planning will be done with the staff of the Woodlea Team to prepare them for the move, and team building work will be undertaken with both groups of staff to prepare them for integration into the one larger team.
- 9.2 The Centre Manager at Lochee Child and Family Centre who will be freed up from the responsibility for managing the Charleston Team, will be able to give her full attention to the management and development of the team of staff at Lochee Child and Family Centre, who are providing services to a significant number of children affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse.
- 9.3 The Director of Social Work and the Assistant Chief Executive (Management) will continue to consult employees and their Trade Unions regarding relocation and redeployment opportunities for the staff involved.

10.0 CONSULTATION

This report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Assistant Chief Executive (Management). Consultation has also taken place with the Trade Unions involved, the staff groups at Woodlea, Charleston and Lochee Child and Family Centres and other staff within Child and Family Centres. The parents of children currently receiving services from the family support team at Woodlea have also been consulted regarding this report.

11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

12.0 SIGNATURE

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work

Date: 5 March 2004