

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 26TH SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT ON: SOCIAL CARE AND SOCIAL WORK IMPROVEMENT SCOTLAND (SCSWIS) SCRUTINY REPORT

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 425 - 2011

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Committee of the findings from the SCSWIS performance inspection 2011 and to outline the next steps.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report and;

2.1 Instructs the Director of Social Work to produce an action plan to address the recommendations.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 Background

On 1st April 2011 the functions of the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA), the Care Commission and the section of her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) responsible for inspecting services to protect children were transferred to a new scrutiny body, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS).

This second performance report to be produced on Dundee City Council Social Work Department has been provided by SWIA/SCISWIS. The previous inspection findings were reported in Committee report 248-2008.

4.2 Report 2011

4.2.1 SCSWIS decides how much scrutiny a council's social work services will need by carrying out an Initial Scrutiny Level Assessment (ISLA). This considers potential areas of risk at strategic and service levels. This initial assessment of Dundee Council's Social Work Services was undertaken between December 2010 and April 2011. The process consisted of:

- analysing published national key performance and statistical data;
- examining 100 case records from across all care groups. Four staff from the department were co-opted onto the SCISWIS file reading team;
- analysing documents provided by the council or sourced by SWIA relating to the ISLA questions;
- noting the contents of SWIA's performance inspection report (November 2007) and follow-up report (April 2009) to track progress made on recommendations;
- noting the contents of HMIE report on the joint inspection of child protection (February 2010 and March 2011);

- noting the contents of Best Value 2 pathfinder audit completed by Audit Scotland in March 2010;
- analysing information provided by the Mental Welfare Commission and the then Care Commission during the scrutiny period, and
- participating in shared risk assessment activity led by Audit Scotland during 2010 and early 2011. This activity included all relevant scrutiny bodies.

4.2.2 The SCISWIS analysis of risk was based on nine questions.

- Is there evidence of effective governance including financial management?
- Is there effective management and support of staff?
- Is there evidence of positive outcomes for people who use services and carers across the care groups?
- Is there evidence of good quality assessment and care managements?
- Is there evidence of effective risk assessment and risk management for individual service users, both in terms of risk to self and public protection?
- Does the social work service undertake effective self-evaluation resulting in improvement planning and delivery?
- Is there effective partnership working?
- Do policies, procedures and practices comply with equality and human rights legislation and are there services, which seek to remove obstacles in society that exclude people?
- Are there any areas which require urgent attention and improvement

4.2.3 On the basis of the available evidence SCISWIS considered five of our nine risk assessment areas presented no significant concerns. A summary of these five areas are detailed below.

- Leadership of social work services and financial governance was good.
- There was effective management and support of staff. Succession planning was being undertaken with good development opportunities for staff.
- The service had a very good level of self awareness and a well developed and embedded programme of self-evaluation and a rigorous approach to performance management and quality assurance.
- The service had good equality policies in place and provided a range of services to meet the needs of marginalised groups with monitoring data in place to support continuous improvement.
- There were no areas requiring urgent attention.

4.2.4 In the remaining four of our nine assessment areas, the level of risk was uncertain. Further scrutiny was required because SCISWIS had insufficient evidence or information to draw conclusions and some developments were at too early a stage to make an evaluative judgement. The initial findings were that:

- Although many indicators were at or above the Scottish average a few exceptions were in relation to the number of children looked after at home being excluded from school and the number of people in receipt of direct payments which was amongst the lowest in Scotland. It was also felt to be unclear about what the department's strategic approach to personalisation was.
- The department was taking a positive and systematic approach to audit and analyse of the quality of practice. However results from the file reading suggested that the Department needed to improve the quality of assessments and in the delivery of services to some adult groups.
- File reading also highlighted that risk assessment and risk management planning were inconsistent with the need to improve the quality of care management. The council had its own secure and close support units and had the second highest rate in Scotland of young people being admitted to these units. Their use and purpose of these specialised resources and related risk assessments was unclear.
- Strategic partnerships were improving as was partnership working with providers of service but the social work department had yet to finalise a comprehensive

commissioning strategy and strategic commissioning was limited to purchased services, focusing largely on community care.

4.2.5 The areas of uncertainty outlined above, formed the focus for targeted scrutiny activity by SCISWIS, which was carried out during April 2011. This included meetings with people who used services, young carers, staff and managers. Following this targeted scrutiny SCISWIS have made three recommendations for improvement. Following further inquiries the inspectors were satisfied with the departments progress on Bullet Point 1. There were 12 recommendations identified in the 2007 SWIA report compared to 3 recommendations from 2011 Scrutiny Report.

4.2.6 **Recommendation 1**

The social work department needs to develop and implement frameworks for assessment and care planning which identify personalised outcomes.

4.2.7 **Recommendation 2**

The social work department needs to fully implement formats for risk assessment and risk management plans and make sure that staff are trained and competent in producing these to a good standard.

4.2.8 **Recommendation 3**

The social work department should work with its partners to agree strategic commissioning strategies that reflect longer-term priorities across all care groups. These should incorporate directly provided services and purchased services for all care groups and contain clear financial information.

4.3 **The Next Steps**

The Department will be required to draw up an action plan, based on these recommendations.

Continued involvement of the SCISWIS link inspector with the council will provide direct support and assistance.

4.3.1 The link inspector will;

- maintain regular contact with the social work department which will include 5 days direct consultation and involvement with staff;
- monitor the performance of the service, including progress made with recommendations for improvement identified above;
- continue to offer support for self-evaluation and improvement activity; and monitor the social work department's action plan.

4.3.2 As part of the departmental self evaluation the following activity is under consideration for involvement of the link inspector:

- supported file audits to review assessment, care management, risk assessment and risk management planning; and
- development of the commissioning strategy.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There were no major issues.

5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and will be made available on the Council website <http://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv/equimpact/>.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Director of Finance have been consulted in preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Equality Impact Assessment.

7.2 Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland Scrutiny Report 2011. A copy of this report has been send to the Lord Provost, Depute Lord Provost and Group Leaders.

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work

DATE: 2nd September 2011