

Report

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Report to:	Social Work Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	3 May 2006
Report by:	Executive Director (Social Work Resources)

Subject:	Pilot Inspection of Social Work Resources by the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA)
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Advise Committee of completion of the inspection of South Lanarkshire Social Work Resources by the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA)
- ◆ Inform Committee that the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) will make a formal presentation to Committee on 3 May 2006 to present inspection findings and recommendations.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the recommendations set out by SWIA within the South Lanarkshire report be considered
- (2) that a Resource Action Plan in response to the SWIA's findings be submitted to the Social Work Resources Committee on 28 June 2006

3. Background

- 3.1. The Social Work Inspectorate Agency (SWIA) launched in April 2005 has responsibility for undertaking all formal inspections of social work services with SWIA inspectors exercising statutory powers of inspection under the terms of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 as duly authorised by Scottish Ministers.
- 3.2. SWIA aims to inspect all local authority social work services performance on a three-year-cycle. SWIA will also be involved in new integrated inspection activities working in partnerships with other audit and inspection organisations such as the Care Commission, HM inspectorates of Education, Constabulary and Prisons, Mental Welfare Commission, NHS Quality Improvement Scotland, Communities Scotland and Audit Commission.
- 3.3. SWIA has responsibility to inspect all social work services in Scotland and report both publicly and to Parliament on the quality of these services, locally and nationally. When requested by Scottish Ministers, SWIA will also carry out investigations, provide professional supports to policy development and undertake other tasks that need up-to-date professional knowledge and expertise.

- 3.4. SWIA has also published on 3 April 2006 a Performance Inspection Report on the Lanarkshire Grouping Criminal Justice Social Work Services which will be the subject of a separate report to Social Work Resources Committee.

4. National Pilots

- 4.1. South Lanarkshire Council is one of three local authorities which were selected for pilot inspection in 2005, the others being Fife Council (report publication March 2006) and Angus Council (report publication February 2006). Following the pilot inspections reports are provided and thereafter the local authority produces an action plan setting out how it will make any changes that are needed. This must be agreed with SWIA. There will be a jointly agreed programme for monitoring how the plan is put into effect and a nominated lead officer from SWIA to liaise with the local authority in action plan performance monitoring.
- 4.2. Inspection reports include an examination of all the local authority's social work functions and cover four broad themes:
- Leadership and management of social work services
 - How well services are being delivered
 - Service users and carers experiences
 - Outcomes for service users and carers

5. SWIA Findings & Recommendations

- 5.1. Social Work Resources welcome the findings and recommendations from SWIA and would advise Committee that in terms of recommendations those areas had already been identified by the Resource as requiring further targeted action and work was underway in all aforementioned areas at time of inspection. In presentation of the Resource action plan to Social Work Resources Committee in June, a more detailed progress response will be set out for Committee reference.
- 5.2. SWIA have identified Social Work Resources in South Lanarkshire as achieving good outcomes for most people who use services. Particular areas profiled are:
- evidence of good political, strategic and professional leadership
 - Social Work makes an important contribution to Council services as a whole
 - financial management is very good
 - considerable capital investment in residential homes, day provision and local offices
 - notable positive impact on both the people who use services and staff alike
 - strong emphasis on involving people who use services and other stakeholders in planning and improving services
 - most people consulted felt that social work resources had made them feel safer and more independent
- 5.3. The Social Work Inspection Agency report will identify a range of recommendations. However the Resource would wish to highlight to Committee for reference, those which will be profiled in the Summary of the South Lanarkshire Council Performance Inspection Report.
- evaluating the effectiveness of services
 - timely submission of reports to the Reporter
 - carers assessments
 - services to people with a physical disability
 - protection of vulnerable adults

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. Employees have been directly involved in all stages of the inspection process in a variety of ways including staff briefings, questionnaire participation, individual and group discussions with inspectors and direct observation of worker engagement with users of service
- 6.2. A series of briefing sessions in May and June have been arranged for employees where the Resource Senior Management Team will outline and address the recommendations, set out the Resource response to the above and invite discussion and contribution of views.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. There are no financial implications for the Council arising from this pilot inspection process.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. None

9. Consultation

- 9.1. At commencement of the inspection process a communication and information strategy was established by the Resource for all stakeholders and was commented on favourably by SWIA at that time.

Harry Stevenson
Executive Director (Social Work Resources)

6 April 2006

Link(s) to Council Objectives

- Learning in the community
- Living in the community
- Supporting our communities
- Modernising services
- Resource management

Previous References

- Social Work Resources Committee 24 August 2005

List of Background Papers

- SWIA Partners Launch Bulletin June 2005

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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