

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Social Work Committee - 19 September 2005

REPORT ON: Closure of Linlathen Family Support Centre and Reinvestment at Whitfield, Douglas and Bruce Street Family Support Centres

REPORT BY: Director of Social Work

REPORT NO: 567 - 2005

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the closure of Linlathen Family Support Centre and the re-investment of a proportion of these resources to increase the service capacity at Whitfield, Douglas and Bruce Street Family Support Centres.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:-

2.1 approves the contents of this report and the closure of Linlathen Family Support Centre by 31 March 2006 with subsequent re-investment in new outreach services and staffing resources in Douglas, Whitfield and Bruce Street Family Support Centres.

2.2 instructs the Director of Social Work and Assistant Chief Executive (Management) to bring a report to a future Personnel Committee regarding all the staffing implications including redeployment.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 It is anticipated that the closure of Linlathen Support Centre will release resources of £259,750 of which £72,340 will be re-invested in outreach services and an increase in capacity at Whitfield, Douglas and Bruce Street Family Support Centres. The balance of resources totalling £187,410 will be used to offset budgetary pressures within the Social Work Department's Revenue Budget.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Dundee's Family Support Service is committed to delivering services to children in need and their families, wherever they live in the city, by providing services on an outreach basis in their own homes and in other community settings, as appropriate. The reinvestment of staffing resources to Douglas, Whitfield and Bruce Street Family Support Centres will allow these larger teams to develop new outreach services. This will ensure that they are equipped to respond to need, both in the areas currently served by the Linlathen Family Support Team, and wherever else it arises in the north east and central areas of the city.

7.0 BACKGROUND

- 7.1 In order to make most efficient use of resources, a review has been undertaken of the spread and targeting of provision across the city. As part of this exercise, account has been taken of the location of the city's 8 Family Support Teams and the level of demand for services made on each. This review has led to a focus on the north east of the city, as it is here that there is the highest concentration of family support resources. This concentration has arisen because of the levels of deprivation and need which presented in the past in the local neighbourhoods that make up this part of Dundee.
- 7.2 Unlike elsewhere in the city, there are at present 3 Family Support Centres located in relatively close proximity in the Whitfield, Linlathen and Douglas areas. Whitfield Family Support Centre is attached to the local Social Work office base in Whitfield, whilst the Centre at Douglas is located at the office site at Balmerino Road currently occupied by a number of different social work services. Linlathen Family Support Centre is a stand-alone building located in its own grounds.
- 7.3 During the past ten years there have been significant demographic changes in the north east of Dundee, as key local areas like Whitfield, Mid Craigie and more recently Douglas have been the subject of substantial regeneration work. This has involved sizeable numbers of families moving from the east to central and west Dundee, resulting in increased levels of need in areas such as the Hilltown, St Mary's and Charleston, and a relative decrease in the level of need for family support services in the north east as a whole. Recent referral patterns and caseload profiles in the field Social Work teams reflect this general shift in need from east to central and west, as well as north to south of the city. It is therefore proposed, in terms of efficiency, that a family centre in the North East of the city should close and that there will be a shift in services from being centre-based to being delivered on an outreach basis.
- 7.4 The decision to select Linlathen Family Support Centre as the centre for closure in the north east has taken into account the need to preserve the close working arrangements between the Social Work and Family Support Teams based in the Whitfield Office and Family Support Centre. The commitment given to co-locate the Douglas Family Support Team in the new PPP school build at Powrie when completed as part of the plan to improve integrated services in the city, has also been a major factor in the decision making process.
- 7.5 It is proposed to increase the level of the staffing resources in the Whitfield, Douglas and Bruce Street Family Support Teams to equip them to provide services to the families involved. The additional staffing resources will also allow these Family Support Teams to develop and deliver new family support services on an outreach basis to families living in the areas currently directly served by the Linlathen Team. Where necessary, transport will be provided to ensure families receive any centred-based services they require.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILIES RECEIVING A SERVICE AT LINLATHEN FAMILY SUPPORT CENTRE

- 8.1 At present there are 40 families receiving a service from the Linlathen Family Support Team and it is not anticipated that the level of need for family support services from the local areas currently served by the Team will change during the remainder of this year.
- 8.2 It is proposed that the effects of this change be minimised by ensuring that on a phased basis over the next six months the Whitfield, Douglas and Bruce Street Family Support Teams take on the responsibility for providing alternative supports and services to these families, and to any new families referred for a service during this transitional period.
- 8.3 As part of this transfer process careful consideration will be given to the needs of all the children and families currently receiving a service from the Linlathen Family Support Team to

ensure that the proposed changes do not affect the continuity, level, quality or range of services being delivered to them.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR STAFF EMPLOYED AT LINLATHEN FAMILY SUPPORT CENTRE

9.1 The plan to reinvest staffing resources in the Douglas and Whitfield Family Support Teams will create an additional two Family Support Worker posts across the two Teams involved. These posts present redeployment opportunities for the Family Support Workers from the Linlathen Family Support Team. There are also vacant Family Support Worker posts elsewhere in the Family Support Service and this will ensure that all members of the Linlathen Team can be redeployed to a suitable alternative post within the structure.

9.2 It is also proposed to establish a new post at Douglas Family Support Centre with responsibility for developing new community based individual and group based services on an outreach basis in the Mid Craigie and Linlathen areas. The current Senior Family Support Worker at Linlathen Family Support Centre will be redeployed to this new post.

9.3 The Family Support Team Manager at Linlathen Family Support Centre will be redeployed to a post at the same level currently vacant at Lochee Family Support Centre.

9.4 The Domestic Assistant staff at Linlathen Family Support Centre will be consulted regarding relocation and redeployment opportunities elsewhere in the Social Work Department.

10.0 CONSULTATION

10.1 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 group at Linlathen Family Support Centre and other relevant staff within Dundee's Family Support Service. The families currently receiving services from the Linlathen Family Support Team have also been consulted regarding this report.

11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work

Date: 9 September 2005

FINANCIAL APPENDIX

Linlathen Family Support Centre

Current budget

2005/06

£

Staff costs

232,030

Property costs

19,810

Other non staff costs

7,910

259,750

Proposed reinvestment

Full financial year

£

Staff costs

2 x Family Support Workers

42,940

Senior Family Support Worker

29,400

72,340

Balance Available to Fund Budget Pressures

187,410