

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE - 18 DECEMBER 2006

REPORT ON: PASSIVE SMOKING - HOME VISITING POLICY: ANNUAL REVIEW

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 680 - 2006

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report is provided at the request of the Social Work Committee who wished to be updated on progress by December 2006. The report informs members of the outcome of a recent review of the Passive Smoking: Home Visiting Policy which was approved by Committee in December 2005 and implemented from 1st April 2006.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:-

2.1 Note and approve the contents of this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Financial implications will be absorbed within existing budgets.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Anti-poverty: Social Work Services are provided for people in need, who are some of the most vulnerable people in the city in terms of poor health.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Passive smoking - breathing other people's tobacco smoke - has been accepted by scientific bodies worldwide as a cause of lung cancer in non-smokers, as well as aggravating many other illnesses such as asthma. Some research also suggests a possible connection to heart disease.

6.2 As part of the Social Work Department's commitment to ensure the health and safety of its employees and service users, and to protect them where possible from exposure to tobacco smoke, the Passive Smoking: Home Visiting Policy was developed after consultation with both service users (Home Care) and staff members.

- 6.3 The Passive Smoking: Home Visiting Policy was implemented on 1st April 2006. It stipulates that service users who smoke, or their family members/carers, be asked to refrain from smoking during the period of any visit and also to ventilate the room/house if possible. This information is contained within the letter which is sent to arrange a home visit and there is a supporting leaflet for service users if more information is required.
- 6.4 A procedure was drawn up and implemented to cover situations where there is absolute refusal by the service user, or a member of their household, to stop smoking during a home visit. This includes a Welfare Assessment.
- 6.5 Staff members continue to be flexible in situations where the service user is unable, rather than unwilling, to comply with the no smoking request but a risk assessment will still be undertaken in these circumstances focused on minimising the risk to staff members.
- 6.6 Using the Strategy and Performance Bulletin and an 'all staff' email, staff members were asked to give their feedback on the policy and their experience of asking service users not to smoke while the staff member was visiting. Staff members who responded to the policy review reported that the majority of service users are happy to comply with the policy. The Health and Safety Officer reported that he has been involved in only one Welfare Assessment in the eight months since the policy was implemented. It is clear from this feedback that the majority of social work service users are willing to help protect our staff from the effects of passive smoking.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) were consulted in the preparation of this report. Staff members were also consulted on the progress of the procedure implementation over September/October 2006.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work

Date: 7 December 2006