

THE EXECUTIVE

8 FEBRUARY 2005

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

FEEDBACK ON ANNUAL SOCIAL SERVICES CONFERENCE 2004 AND ATTENDANCE AT 2005 EVENT	FOR DECISION	
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>The Annual Social Services Conference 'Communities that Care, Services that Deliver' took place in Newcastle on October 20-22nd 2004. This conference is a joint event run by the Association of Directors of Social Services.</p> <p>The Conference was attended by Councillor Bramley as Children's Champion and Councillor Rush as support Member for disability, mental health, drug and alcohol services and accompanied by the Director of Social Services. This report summarises the main messages from the conference and implications for policy development in Barking & Dagenham.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>That Executive is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the main messages from this conference and agree the benefits of attendance.2. Agree representation by one officer and two elected Members at this year's conference, to take place on 19-21st October 2005 in Birmingham at a cost of £1600, which will be met from the Social Services training budget.		
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1. **Benefits of Attendance**

- 1.1 The Conference was three full days packed with plenary, policy sessions and fringe events attended by circa.1,000 elected Members and senior offices nationally. These were some of the main messages arising from the plenary speakers;
- 1.2 The Rt. Hon Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Education announced a greater separation of commissioning and providing services and more emphasis on commissioning for local authorities and a greater clarity in the relationship between central and local Government.
- 1.3 **Joined up Inspection**

From next year all inspections of social care services will be undertaken jointly. In Children's Services, Ofsted will be the lead inspection agency. The focus will be more on improvement than monitoring and a greater focus on people who use

services. It is planned that the Star Ratings will be undertaken separately for Children's and Adult Services.

1.4 Social Work Registration

The new General Council for Social Care was established this year. The Council was actively promoting the need for all social workers to register with the Council by 1st December. It will be illegal for anyone to call themselves a social worker after 1st April 2005. This is a fundamental shift in the 'professionalising' of social work and in the protection of vulnerable people who use social work services.

1.5 Bichard Inquiry

Sir Michael Bichard, Chair of the Bichard Inquiry reiterated the messages for safer services following the Soham Inquiry. He announced that he will be conducting a national review on his recommended actions with all authorities. In this plenary, Councillor Rush raised an interesting question on the issue of NHS and CRB checks and scrutiny which he said he would look into.

1.6 ALG Health and Social Care Committee

This Committee was attended by Councillors Bramley and Rush. A number of significant matters for London and Barking & Dagenham were discussed including Gershon Review and Children's Trusts.

1.7 Health & Social Care Agenda

The Secretary of State for Health, the Rt. Hon John Reid stressed the importance of service delivery at the front line and promoting choice and independence for all older people and adults using social services.

2. Financial Consideration

2.1 The financial costs for the 2004 conference in total amounted to approximately £1,800 and were funded via the Social Services training budget.

2.2 Costings for 2005 – 19-21st October Conference

The total costs for the October conference will be in the region of £1,185 + VAT for 3 people attending and £405 + VAT for 3 people's accommodation + travel expenses.

Background Papers

Executive Committee Report dated 16 December 2003