

PROGRESS BEING MADE IN IMPROVEMENT OF RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

Renfrewshire Council is providing good social work services overall, according to a report published today by the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA).

Although service improvement is moving in the right direction, the report highlights the need to focus on improving outcomes in certain areas, particularly for those people with learning disabilities, and in home care services. The council's approach to partnership and multi-agency working was acknowledged as being a key strength.

The report, which covers all aspects of Renfrewshire Council's social work services, evaluated seven areas as good, two areas as adequate and one area – relating to the service's impact on the community – as very good.

The findings of the inspection, which was carried out between October 2008 and February 2009, were:

- People who use services were broadly positive about social work in Renfrewshire
- Multi-agency working was a key strength with good initiatives in place
- Some improvement was necessary in important areas such as reviewing of care plans and permanency planning for children and young people
- Support for volunteering and community organisations were strong aspects of service delivery
- Further work was needed to develop and inform the approach to commissioning of services
- Good partnership working arrangements were in place at an operational and strategic level
- Good progress was being made on performance management, with a good range and quality of services in place
- Staff morale varied across the services, however staff were committed and well motivated and were supported by good quality training

- A clear vision for social work had been established which staff across the council had all contributed to

Alexis Jay, Chief Inspector, Social Work Inspection Agency said:

“Today’s report gives a positive account of the social work services being provided by Renfrewshire Council, with good performance being delivered across a number of areas.

“Inspectors have outlined a series of recommendations for further improvement, particularly in relation to the quality of outcomes for people who use services and some aspects of how services are delivered.

“The council’s capacity for improvement has been rated as good, and this coupled with its effective leadership and committed workforce, will help deliver these improvements. We will now work closely with the council to agree an action plan in response to this report.”

- ends -

For further information, please contact Linda McIntyre at Consolidated PR on 0131 240 6420 or email swia@consolidatedpr.com

Notes to editors:

- **Embargoed copies of the report are available – please contact Linda McIntyre on 0131 240 6420**
- SWIA uses a six point scale in its inspection of local authority social work services. The gradings given to Renfrewshire Council in the ten areas of evaluation were:
 - Outcomes for people who use services – adequate
 - Impact on people who use services - good
 - Impact on staff – good
 - Impact on the community – very good
 - Delivery of key processes – adequate
 - Policy and services development, planning and performance management – good
 - Management and support of staff – good
 - Resources and capacity building – good
 - Leadership and direction – good
 - Capacity for improvement – good

- SWIA is carrying out performance inspections of all local authority social work services in Scotland
- SWIA, which operates independently and impartially, reports publicly to the Parliament on the quality of these services, locally and nationally
- SWIA gathers and analyses a wide selection of information about a local authority and the social work services it provides or is responsible for. These findings are published in a report that identifies strengths as well as areas for improvement
- For further information on inspections and the timetable of inspections for 2009, log on to www.swia.gov.uk