

**SOCIAL SERVICES SUB COMMITTEE
9 MARCH 1999**

Present: Councillors Barnard (Chairman), Bayle, Mrs Clifford,
Miss Haydon, Jones, McCormack, Mrs Pile and Worrall

Apologies for absence were received from:
Councillors Mrs Shillcock and Mrs Sutcliffe

27. Substitute Members

The Committee noted the attendance of the following substitute Members under Standing Order 38:

Councillor Jones for Councillor Mrs Shillcock
Councillor Mrs Pile for Councillor Mrs Sutcliffe

28. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 15 December 1998 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. Supporting People (Item 1)

The Director of Social Services and Housing introduced a report giving details of the Government's proposals to create a new coherent policy and funding framework for delivering support to vulnerable people in different types of accommodation and tenure. A consultation paper on the proposals had been published in December requiring responses by 5 February 1999. The response annexed to the report had been forwarded to the Department of Social Security and an additional letter had been drafted regarding further points of concern including the possible effects on the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account. The new proposals for delivering support to vulnerable people would operate in combination with community care, housing and other existing policies to support vulnerable people in the community. A single unified budget would be created by merging the existing housing benefit expenditure, the Special Housing Managing Grant paid to the Housing Associations through the Housing Corporation, Probation Accommodation Grant and the relevant elements in the Department of Social Security Resettlement Programme and the DETR's Improvement Agency Programme.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Committee notes the implications of the report; and
- (ii) the Committee endorses the response of the Director of Social Services and Housing as detailed in Annex A of the report, and that further comments be forwarded to the Department of Social Security as appropriate.

30. **The Quality Protects Initiative (Item 2)**

The Director of Social Services and Housing introduced a report seeking the Committee's endorsement for the Quality Protects Action Plan which had been submitted to the Department of Health by the Borough Council in response to the requirements of the Quality Protects Initiative launched in September 1998. The timescale for submission had been extremely tight and had involved a considerable amount of work undertaken within a very short space of time. It was noted that positive feedback had been received on the report by the Social Services Inspectorate. The Director gave details of the framework of the Quality Protects Initiative and the five areas within which Local Authorities had been set key objectives. Funding would be provided for the Initiative over a three-year period and work would be phased in during that time frame. The Committee commended the Department on their report.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Committee endorses the Quality Protects Initiative Management Action Plan and the approach adopted; and
- (ii) the Committee endorses the proposed allocation of the first tranche of £118,000 funding to support the objectives and targets set out in the Management Action Plan.

31. **Home Care (Item 3)**

The Committee considered a report giving details of the proposal to tender, on a block contract basis, that part of the domiciliary care service currently purchased on an individual 'spot-purchase' basis within the independent sector. It was anticipated that savings could be made by block contracting through a limited number of suppliers. The Committee considered the tendering process to be followed and it was anticipated that this would give a more structured approach to provide individuals with the services they required, working towards the aims of best value. It was considered that block contracting would give greater consistency to the pattern of care provided by agreeing with agencies a specification level to deliver the service to. Contracts would be agreed on a two-year basis, giving the ability to provide greater continuity of care.

RESOLVED that the proposed process for tendering for block contracts for home care be agreed.

32. **Items Submitted for Information**

The following item was submitted for information only;

- (i) Social Service Management Information 1998/99 (Item 4)

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm
and concluded at 9.05pm.

CHAIRMAN