

To: POLICY & RESOURCES (ESTABLISHMENT MONITORING COMMITTEE)	Subject: PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT & ADAPTATIONS : PROGRESS REPORT	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 11 JANUARY 2007	Ref: BM/JMcD	

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of current service provision, performance and budgetary information relating to equipment and adaptations, including the Joint Equipment Service. Approval is sought for the creation of two additional Technician posts (grade NLC5) and two additional Store Operative/Driver posts (grade NLC4).

2 Background

- 2.1 The responsibility for the provision of equipment and adaptations rests with Social Work, Housing and Health.
- 2.2 The Joint Equipment Service opened in May 2002, as a result of recommendations made by a Member/Officer Working Group, which reported to Social Work and Housing Committees in November 2000.

3 Proposals/Considerations

3.1 Service Developments

- 3.1.1 Work has been undertaken to identify the resources required to ensure compliance in relation to Portable Appliance Testing (PAT), and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER). This is consistent with the recommendations of the Audit Scotland Report, Adapting to the Future (August 2004).
- 3.1.2 The Institute of Electrical Engineers recommends that all electrical appliances used by the public should be tested once per year. This would result in a significant increase in workload for the Joint Equipment Service, as all electrical equipment on loan would require to be tested.
- 3.1.3 The relevant contractor currently tests equipment provided under the Major Equipment Contract, however equipment issued directly from the Joint Equipment Service is not, e.g. bathlifts, hospital beds, mattress elevators and riser-recliner chairs.
- 3.1.4 It is estimated that there are at least 7000 items which would require an annual inspection in order to comply with above regulations and guidance. In order to process this extra workload and any repair work identified via the PAT testing, two additional Technicians are required.

3.1.5 There are currently 7 established Store Operative/Driver posts within the JES who deliver approximately 590 items and uplift approximately 200 items per week. The majority of items are processed within 7 working days (85%). In order to maintain this level of service two members of staff have been employed on a temporary basis within the recycling area since December 2003 and November 2004 respectively. This was agreed by the Joint Partnership Board and funded from existing budgets, however this can no longer be sustained. It is now proposed to create two additional Store Operative/Driver posts in order to maintain and improve upon this level of service.

3.1.6 The resource requirements for the four additional posts are:

Technician (Grade NLC5) x 2	£ 37,893
Van and Fuel x 2	£ 7,044
One- off PAT training and testing kit x 2	£ 4,000
Sub-total	£ 48,937
 Store Operative/Driver (Grade NLC4) x 2	 £ 36,237
Total Costs	£85,175

3.1.7 Costs are mid-point and include 20% on-costs. There are no existing transport requirements for the additional Store Operative/Driver posts. A proportionate contribution has been sought from NHS Lanarkshire, who have indicated a commitment to fund £24,287 per year on a recurring basis.

3.2. Joint Equipment Service

3.2.1 Performance information highlights that there is high level of demand placed upon the existing service in ordering, storing, delivering, up-lifting and recycling equipment as follows:

PERIOD	REFERRALS	DELIVERIES	UPLIFTS
23 June 06	2530	2781	333
21 July 06	2538	2460	356
18 Aug 06	2455	2379	330
15 Sept 06	2402	2213	312

3.2.2 Performance information highlights significant service improvements at the Joint Equipment Service including:

- Over 85% of standard stock is now delivered within 7 days compared with only 50% at January 2005
- An increase in the number of pieces of equipment which are being cleaned and reissued

3.3. Equipment and Minor Adaptations Provision (Social Work Provision)

- 3.3.1. The 2006/2007 budget for Equipment and Minor Adaptations is £1,815,060 (this includes £300,000 for Service and Maintenance via the Major Equipment Contract and £22,300 for Hearing Impairment Equipment). This was uplifted by a non-recurring amount of £750,000 (approved by Council on 9 February 2006). This takes the total budget for 2006/2007 to £2,565,060.
- 3.3.2. The Council's Insurance Section has until now been responsible for arranging annual inspections of a range of lifting equipment. This responsibility has now transferred to the Joint Equipment Service and £100,000 has been transferred to the Service and Maintenance budget from the Insurance Section to cover this work.
- 3.3.3. At 13 October 2006, spend on equipment and minor adaptations for 2006/7 was £1,649,676. There was an additional committed spend of £504,164 (total spend £2,153,840).
- 3.3.4. The Joint Equipment Service continues to process equipment provided to children with additional support needs at school on behalf of the Education Department. This is currently being funded by the successful joint bid to the Changing Children's Services Fund (CSSF) with a budget of £100,000 for 2006/2007. At 13 October 2006, spend from this budget was £30,205. There was an additional committed spend of £23,339 (total spend £53,544).

3.4 Major Adaptations (Housing Provision)

- 3.4.1 The budget provision for local authority properties for 2006/2007 is £2,858,000. At 31 October 2006, the committed spend was £1,996,355. This does not include service-users who are awaiting an adaptation.
- 3.4.1 At 31 October 2006, local authority tenants who had scored 18 points or above on the priority scoring system were able to have their adaptation progressed.
- 3.4.2 The number of people waiting for an adaptation at 31 October 2006 was:

Number of People	Points Range	Value £
9	25 - 30	£28,000
32	20 - 24	£101,433
114	18 - 19	£372,860
114	15 - 17	£383,500
94	10 - 14	£306,500
363	10 - 30	£1,192,293

- 3.4.3 The budget provision for private sector adaptations via Private Sector Housing Grants for 2006/7 is £850,000 (which includes £50,000 top-up funding)
- 3.4.4 At 31 October 2006, the total committed spend for private sector adaptations was £1,048,000 and a further £276,000 grants have been offered but not yet accepted. It should be noted that although funding has been committed or offered, not all works will be undertaken or completed in the current year and some of the above will carry forward into next year.

3.4.5 The total potential spend (not including future applications) is £1,324,000. As a result, only service users who have scored 18 points or above on the priority scoring system are having their Home Improvement Grant application processed. This will ensure that resources are targets at individuals with greatest need.

3.4.6 It should be noted that the difficulties in meeting assessed needs for private adaptations was the subject of a separate report to the Housing and Technical Services Committee on 9th August 2004 which was also remitted to Social Work Committee on 28th October 2004.

4. Financial/Personnel/Legal/Policy Implications

4.1 The approach to the provision of equipment and adaptations in North Lanarkshire is consistent with legislation and national policy.

4.2 The creation of the four additional posts is required in order to maintain current service levels and to comply with Health and Safety regulations and guidance. Additional resources of £85,175 are required to create the four additional posts and these have been identified from within existing Community Care budgets and NHS contribution.

4.3 There continues to be an increasing demand and need for equipment and adaptations with significant implications for the resources of the Council.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Committee is asked to:

- (i) note the level of demand for equipment and adaptations;
- (ii) note that the equipment and minor adaptations budget has been uplifted for 2005/6 on a non recurring basis;
- (iii) approve the creation of two additional Technician posts (NLC5) in order to comply with Health and Safety regulations and guidance for PAT testing, and approve the creation of two additional Store Operative/Driver posts (NLC4) in order to maintain current service levels;
- (iv) remit this report to the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee for consideration;
- (v) other-wise note the content of this report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
7 November 2006

For further information on this report please contact Bobby Miller, Development Manager on telephone 01698 332286 or Jamie McDermott, Senior Officer – Independent Living Services on telephone 01698 332055.