

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	SUBJECT: ADDICTION SERVICES - STRATEGIC REVIEW OF SOCIAL WORK PROVISION
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 10 June 1997	
REF: R-ADDICT/REM	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report advises members of a proposed strategic review within North Lanarkshire of services provided and funded by the Social Work Department, to be carried out jointly with Turning Point, a specialist voluntary organisation in the addiction field.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members of the Committee will know that problems relating to addiction, particularly alcohol and drugs, are a growing concern to a number of local communities across North Lanarkshire, and have been highlighted by some elected members as a particular concern in their area.
- 2.2 The Health Board, the Education Department and the Social Work Department share responsibility for preventing and responding to the problems associated with addiction. The Social Work Department's responsibilities stem from the duty placed on the local authority by the 1968 Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 to promote social welfare and to provide advice and assistance; and from community care legislation and related Scottish Office guidance, in which people with addiction problems are identified as one of the care groups for which the Social Work Department has a duty to plan, assess and co-ordinate the provision of community care.
- 2.3 The range of direct social work responsibilities of the Department include:
- To provide information, advice and counselling which are appropriate to the needs of the individual and his/her family
 - To provide practical support where this is required
 - To arrange the provision of residential or nursing care where this need has been assessed
 - To ensure that appropriate provision is made for people returning from residential or hospital care
 - To recognise and meet the needs of drug misusers for whom the Social Work Department has responsibility under the Criminal Justice system
 - To offer services to relatives and dependants, including protecting and supporting children whose parents have addiction problems.

- 2.4 Members of the Committee may also be aware that Health Boards are required by the Scottish Office to establish an interagency Drug Action Team in their area. The Directors of Education and Social Work represent North Lanarkshire on the Lanarkshire Drug Action team. The Lanarkshire Drug Action Team provides a useful forum for the exchange of views between the different agencies, and is currently undertaking a review of services across Lanarkshire.
- 2.5 Outwith the activity of the Drug Action Team, Lanarkshire Health Board has separately commissioned Turning Point to carry out a detailed needs analysis of addiction problems in the Coatbridge (Sykeside) and Hamilton (Fairhill) areas. Turning Point has intimated that it is keen to carry out this work in close co-operation with the Social Work Department.

3. PROPOSED STRATEGIC REVIEW

- 3.1 The Social Work Department has inherited a mixture of services in different parts of North Lanarkshire. Historically, services have developed on an ad hoc basis in the absence of a clear policy framework within Social Work for local addiction services.
- 3.2 The Department considers that it can improve the effectiveness of the social work provision, and its contribution to interagency work by establishing for the Department a coherent policy framework for addiction. This would seek to clarify the Department's strategies for social care, review existing services, assess the needs of different areas, and propose an action plan for future social work activity.
- 3.3 The aim of the Social Work Department will be to work closely with the Education Department, and with Lanarkshire Health Board and other health professionals to ensure that there is an appropriate range of well co-ordinated services provided within local communities, with a heavy emphasis on prevention and harm reduction. The proposed strategic review would be carried out within this context.
- 3.4 The review would have the specific objectives of:
- assessing the needs of different communities;
 - reviewing the services currently provided or funded by the Social Work Department;
 - identifying major gaps.
- 3.5 Having completed this initial review of its own services and funding, the Department would seek to agree a joint strategy with representatives of Lanarkshire Health Board, including the development of joint initiatives where this had been identified as a priority.

4. METHODS

- 4.1 The proposed review would involve Turning Point carrying out survey work with Social Work Department staff and health professionals to establish an up to date profile of needs within each area team. Where necessary, the organisation would also carry out field work amongst people with addictions. In Coatbridge, this would be linked to the field work Turning Point is already contracted by Lanarkshire Health Board to carry out.
- 4.2 In relation to existing services, it is proposed that Turning Point should be asked to assist the Social Work Department in reviewing all of its own provision; whilst in the case of voluntary organisations funded by the Department, the review would be led by the Department's officers, using a similar format to that agreed with Turning Point.

5. **TIMESCALE**

- 5.1 The timescale for the review would be carried out over a 6 month period, from August 1997. Turning Point has agreed to give the work priority with an earlier start and completion date if this is possible. Turning Point would produce a full report which will in due course be presented to the Committee for its consideration, along with the Department's recommendations.

6. **COSTS**

- 6.1 Turning Point has agreed to carry out the work on the basis of the costs incurred in making available specialist staff to carry out the survey work, supervise the project and write the final report. It is estimated that 40 days work would be required, costing up to a maximum of £12,000. Provision for these costs is included within the social work community care budget.

7. **RECOMMENDATION**

Committee is asked to approve the proposed review of addiction services at a cost of £12,000 to be met from within the social work community care budget.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
May 1997

For further information on this report please contact K Somers, Head of Social Work Development (TEL: 01698 332024)