

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: LANARKSHIRE COMMUNITY CARE FORUM - CONTINUATION OF FUNDING
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 19 August 1997	
REPORT AUTHOR: Brian McGuire	
REF: BMLCCF/REM	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the evaluation of the Lanarkshire Community care Forum and to recommend future funding arrangements.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Lanarkshire Community Care Forum was established in 1992 and was jointly funded, on a year to year basis, by Strathclyde Regional Council Social Work Department and Lanarkshire Health Board. The former Regional Council contribution is now shared between North and South Lanarkshire councils.
- 2.2 Membership of the Forum is open to non-profit making organisations and individuals with an interest in community care. There are 198 affiliated organisations and 52 individual members. Of these, 90 organisations and 29 individuals are from North Lanarkshire.
- 2.3 The Forum aims to:
- ◆ act as a focal point for consultation and action on issues of common concern
 - ◆ develop a community care information network
 - ◆ represent the voluntary sector on community care issues
 - ◆ develop support mechanisms
 - ◆ promote training within the voluntary sector.
- 2.4 The Forum employs two full time staff who are responsible to a management committee of fifteen people. It manages a Mental Health Advocacy Project and the Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre and runs a number of issue groups.

2.5 In May 1996 the Social Work (Planning and Administration) Sub Committee of North Lanarkshire Council agreed to continue funding Lanarkshire Community Care Forum for a further year, with subsequent funding subject to a satisfactory resolution of two particular issues:

- a) The need to make a clear distinction between the Forum's role in representing the views of service users and carers, and its role as a provider forum. This is necessary to ensure that user/carer views are more clearly identified separately from those of provider organisations, so that Council funding is targeted to the support of user/carer representative organisations.
- b) The need to re-focus some of its efforts at more local level in line with local government re-organisation, thereby ensuring an agreed level of input to each of the two Councils' areas.

2.6 The funding for 1996/97 was £42,500. The agreed cost sharing arrangement with South Lanarkshire Council and Lanarkshire Health Board resulted in a contribution of £14,167 from each agency.

3. EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF LANARKSHIRE COMMUNITY CARE FORUM

3.1 The two issues outlined above were communicated to the Forum Management Committee and were subsequently discussed at a meeting on 10 December 1996 with representatives of the Health Board, North and South Lanarkshire Councils and Lanarkshire Community Care Forum. The Forum highlighted a number of different options for its future structure and function.

3.2 It is the view of officers of North Lanarkshire Council that the options presented did not adequately address the issue of separating user and provider representation and membership.

3.3 The Forum's preferred option to address the changes brought about by local government re-organisation is to retain its Lanarkshire wide remit, albeit with enhanced staffing and an office in both North and South Lanarkshire.

3.4 At a meeting of the Lanarkshire Joint Planning Group on 25 March 1997 it was agreed that the funding partners should carry out a detailed review of the Forum's functions and structure. This review has yet to be concluded.

3.5 The department remains concerned that unless there is early agreement with the Forum about its structure it will be less effective as an organisation for users and carers and there will be a lack of clear focus on work within North Lanarkshire.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The department wishes to:

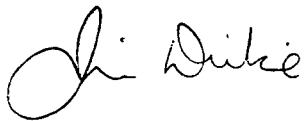
- Extend the review of the Forum to include a canvass of existing user/carer groups in North Lanarkshire on how they would wish their views to be represented.

- ◆ In light of this, explore the best options for user/carer representation and the contribution that the Lanarkshire Community Care Forum could most appropriately make to this.
- ◆ Extend funding of the Forum until 31 March 1998.
- ◆ Decisions about future funding of support for users and carers beyond this date will depend on the outcome of the review.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Committee is therefore asked to:

- a) approve the above course of action;
- b) agree funding of £14,167 until 31 March 1998 and the Director of Social Work to bring forward a report recommending how the Council should thereafter support users and carer representation in North Lanarkshire area.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
August 1997

For further information on this report please contact Brian McGuire, Principal Officer (Community Care) (TEL: 01698 332031)