

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Health For All - Motherwell Community Health Project - Continuation of Funding
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 19th August 1997	
REPORT AUTHOR: K Somers	
REF: KS/CM/LMcC	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make recommendations on the future funding for the Motherwell Community Health Project - Health for All former Urban Programme project.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Motherwell Health For All was originally a Social Work Departmental Urban Programme project. Urban Programme funding terminated at the end of June 1996. Social Work Committee considered the future funding of the project in April 1996 and again in May 1996. At that time the Committee heard that the outcome of negotiations between the Social Work Department, Lanarkshire Health Board and Motherwell College was that the Health Board had agreed to contribute £30,000 to the project for one year, subject to North Lanarkshire Council making a similar contribution. Motherwell College were understood to be willing to contribute £20,000 to the project in addition to their contribution of premises and college resources including staff. The College at that time estimated that its in kind contribution amounted to £10,000 support per annum.
- 2.2 No provision was made for mainlining funding for the project within the 1996/97 budget. Social Work Funding for the one year period was approved from DSS transfer monies within the Social Work budget.
- 2.3 The project had been established in 1992 under the Urban Programme in recognition of the relationship between poor health and poverty, with the objective of bringing about improvements in the health of people living in the Motherwell APT area. In agreeing the additional year's funding, Social Work Committee approved altered priorities for the project which were:
- working with young people with learning disabilities
 - promotion of mental health initiatives
 - initiatives for carers.

- 2.4 The Committee recognised that the Health Board and Motherwell College as co-funders would also wish to set priorities, possibly in addition to those listed above.

3. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 After negotiation, the management group for the project agreed that the project should concentrate on two goals during the year, namely work with carers and a community focus on preventative social and health care.
- 3.2 In line with these new priorities the project has directed work towards preventative social and health care activities with carers, young people with learning disabilities and people with mental health problems. The type of work involved is primarily around training people to cope with stress management, being a carer, development of relaxation skills and physical well being. The project works closely with other carers and service users but provides a distinctive training service around health related issues.
- 3.3 The project was carrying a significant number of vacancies when agreement was reached to continue funding for a one year period. In 1996, there was an unanticipated break in the timescales projected for the project with new staff appointed between the months of October and December 1996. This resulted in the project only having 4 - 5 months activities which could be evaluated towards the end of its year's extended funding.
- 3.4 Recording of referrals to the project commenced only in February 1997. From the information available, it would appear that the project is well used both by carers groups and individual carers who are referred by voluntary organisations and staff of the Social Work Department.
- 3.5 It is considered that the project has managed to carry out a substantial programme of work for carers in the time available.
- 3.6 Preventative social and health care activities was a priority area identified by the other funding partners. Within the limited time available, activities of the project include Health Fairs, providing free food at the college to promote healthy eating, and involvement in Drug and Alcohol Education policy at Motherwell College. Whilst such activity is broadly supported by the Social Work Department, it would not be given high priority over other direct community care support services.

4. PROPOSED FUTURE FUNDING

- 4.1 The project is considered by the management group, which includes local staff from the Motherwell Social Work area team and health promotion staff, to have made good progress in meeting the objectives set for it, given the relatively short time available to it since new appointments were made towards the end of 1996.
- 4.2 Motherwell College is keen for the project to be continued. However, as Committee will see in the financial section of this report, its contribution is more limited than the Health Board or the Council.
- 4.3 Officers of the Social Work Department are unable to recommend longer term continuation of the funding for this project at this stage. Committee will be aware that a number of similar departmental community health projects had to close in March 1998, as part of savings required for the 1997/8 budget.

- 4.4 Senior officers of the Health Board have intimated that the Health Board would also wish to examine its position closely in relation to longer term funding.
- 4.5 After discussions with the Health Board, it is proposed that funding up to the existing level should be continued until December 1997, with a further report to Committee at that time. The Health Board would agree to continue its funding for the same period.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Staff in the project are employed by the Social Work Department on temporary contracts. Current staffing is as follows:
- 1 Project Leader (PO2)
 - 1 Outreach Worker Post (APIII)
- 5.2 If a further extension of funding is approved, temporary contracts would be renewed.
- 5.3 In addition there are two vacancies (one Outreach Worker and one Clerical Assistant) which the Department would not intend to fill pending further consideration of the Project by Social Work Committee.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The contribution made by Motherwell College was less than anticipated, in that its contribution was limited to an in kind contribution of office premises and equipment to an estimated value of £10,000. The College has indicated that it was not in fact able to make the anticipated cash contribution of £20,000 over the past year, and that its position had been misunderstood by officers of the other funding agencies. Its proposed contribution for the current financial year would again be in kind, with a value it estimates to be £18,000. This position has been confirmed in writing.
- 6.2 The funding required from the Social Work Department and Health Board to keep the project running to December 1997 would be a maximum of £31,817, with some savings expected because of staff vacancies. The costs would be again be met from DSS transfer monies. The financial implications for North Lanarkshire Council will be £15,908.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The project provides a locally valued service which has in recent months successfully met its defined objective of support for carers. Its other activities are broadly supported by the Department but would not necessarily be attached high priority in circumstances where the Council is having to face financial constraints.
- 7.2 The Project has provided a particularly distinct and innovative service to priority groups within community care i.e. carers and young people with learning disabilities and in the light of previous committee decisions the project has prioritised work in line with departmental policy.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee is asked to:

- (i) approve continued funding of the project to December 1997 from the Social Work budget, at a cost of no more than £15,908;
- (ii) note the contributions to be made by Lanarkshire Health Board and Motherwell College;
- (iii) note that a further report will be brought back for consideration following joint consideration of the future of the project by officers of the Social Work Department and Lanarkshire Health Board



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
6 August 1997

For further information on this report please contact . Duncan Mackay, Principal Officer (Planning and Development) (TEL: 01698 332068)