

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

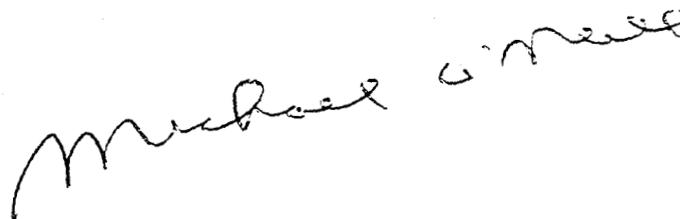
To: Social Work and Education Committees	Subject: JOINT EDUCATION/SOCIAL WORK CONTRACT: NOTRE DAME/FERN TOWER
From: Director of Social Work and Director of Education	
Date: 6th May 1998	
Ref: JMCG/RM/LL	

Purpose of Report:

This report advises committee of the proposed arrangement for North Lanarkshire Council Education and Social Work Departments to contract jointly from the Notre Dame Centre a therapeutic support to vulnerable children and young people in North Lanarkshire.

Recommendation:

Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and to approve the proposals outlined in section 2.

Members wishing further information on this report should contact either:
 Michael O'Neill, Director of Education on 01236 812307,
 Jim McGuinness, Head of Support for Learning on 01236 812280
 Jim Dickie, Director of Social Work on 01698 332000, or
 Alexis Jay, Head of Social Work Services on 01698 332000.

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL : DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION
AND SOCIAL WORK**

**JOINT EDUCATION/SOCIAL WORK CONTRACT : NOTRE
DAME/FERN TOWER**

Joint Report by Directors

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Historically, the Notre Dame Centre (formerly the Notre Dame Child Guidance Clinic and Fern Tower Adolescent Unit) in Glasgow, has provided a range of psychological and therapeutic services to children and young people in the west of Scotland. Given the independent nature of these resources - an organised charity and a company limited by guarantee - a tripartite funding arrangement involving education, health and social work had been contractually agreed. Within this, each agency had access to a fixed number of sessions provided by these centres for negotiated use with identified children and families.
- 1.2 At the point of the reorganisation of local government in April 1996, the education and social work departments in North Lanarkshire each received a proportionate sum of disaggregated monies to allow the existing contract to be honoured until its expiry in March 1998.
- 1.3 Since April 1996, the education and social work departments of the council have been increasingly developing a range of joint activities and operational and strategic linkages in line with the council's social strategy. In addition, both departments have enthusiastically entered into joint arrangements and working practices in keeping with the letter and the spirit of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the related Children's Service Plan.
- 1.4 The demise of the existing contract with the Notre Dame Centre offers an opportunity for the education and social work departments to develop further a corporate approach to the delivery of a quality service and its strategic development - particularly in relation to children with social and emotional difficulties.
- 1.5 Current usage of the centre by the social work department has been small, with an average of 3-4 children per year accessing the service. However, the intensive service provided has been invaluable for those very disturbed young people whose background histories may include sexual or physical abuse, coupled with neglect and general poor parenting. The education department has also made separate use of the services available with, on average, some 5 youngsters and their families accessing this facility in the course of the last year.

1.6 The services offered include:

- assessment
- individual work with play therapists for the child and parent
- group therapy for young people
- intensive child therapy
- counselling
- work with adolescents

2. Proposals

2.1 The existing contract with the Notre Dame Centre is predicated on “sessions” provided to individual children and families within the physical location of the Centre’s premises in the West End of Glasgow. While the service provided has proved valuable, it has proved difficult to maintain close professional liaison between the Centre and the referring agency. In addition, the location of these services in Glasgow has involved children and families from North Lanarkshire in significant time and travel in order to gain access.

2.2 As a result of discussion between senior officers in education and social work and the director of the Notre Dame Centre, a new contract is proposed with the following elements:

- (i) a “service level agreement” delineating a range of professional and staff resources to be made available to the council from the Notre Dame organisation. This would replace the existing “sessional” model.
- (ii) the provision of these services at a **local** level, i.e. within the physical boundaries of North Lanarkshire.
- (iii) funding provided jointly by education and social work
- (iv) joint referral, monitoring, review procedures by both departments.

2.3 The resulting arrangements will allow a more efficient, effective, diverse, and localised service than has been previously available.

2.4 In addition, the ensuing strategic, operational, and financial collaboration between education and social work would progress the intention of these departments to take a corporate approach to children who are a joint responsibility and a shared source of concern to both.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 The costs of the new contract would be met within the funding already disaggregated for the previous contract: £16000 from education and £4000 from social work.

4. **Recommendation**

- 4.1 Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and to approve the proposals outlined in section 2.

Jim Dickie

Michael O'Neill

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