

EXCERPT OF MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE HELD ON
10 MARCH 1999

MODERNISING COMMUNITY CARE - GUIDANCE ON THE HOUSING CONTRIBUTION

10. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 10 February 1999 by the Director of Housing regarding the contents of a consultation document received from the Scottish Office entitled "Modernising Community Care - Guidance on the Housing Contribution" (1) outlining the background to, and the current and future issues of, the draft document; (2) advising that the guidance set out general principles of good practice and ways in which they may be implemented; (3) detailing the implications for North Lanarkshire; (4) intimating that the Joint Planning Steering Group had agreed to set up a inter-agency Working Group, and (5) informing that the group consisted of officers from the Housing and Social Work Departments, Scottish Homes and Lanarkshire Health Board with a remit to prepare a joint report on the implementation of the housing guidance within North Lanarkshire.

Decided:

- (1) that the terms of the report be noted;
- (2) that an inter-agency Housing Group be established to evaluate the impact of the proposals and submit a report to future meetings of the Housing and Social Work Committees;
- (3) that the proposed response to the Scottish Office as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report be approved, and
- (4) that the report be remitted to the Social Work Committee for information.

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: HOUSING COMMITTEE		Subject: MODERNISING COMMUNITY CARE - GUIDANCE ON THE HOUSING CONTRIBUTION
From: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING		
Date: 10 February 1999	Ref: GSW/AP/JM/2	

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Committee of the contents of a consultation document received from the Scottish Office entitled "*Modernising Community Care - Guidance on the Housing Contribution*", and seek approval for the proposed response to the draft guidance.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared in conjunction with the Director of Social Work and will also be reported to the Social Work Committee.

2 Background

- 2.1 The draft document Modernising Community Care - Guidance on the Housing Contribution was produced by the Scottish Office Development Department in December 1998. The purpose of the draft guidance is:

"...to help housing, social work, health and other agencies to overcome administrative obstacles to co-operation on housing and community care in order to achieve the fundamental aim of enabling people with community care needs to live at home wherever practicable and it is their choice."

Co-operation should include:

"...the statutory, voluntary and private sector, and take account of the views of users and their carers."

- 2.2 It is also stated in paragraph 1.2 of the Introduction to the Guidance that it:

"...supplements and compliments existing guidance, notably the guidance in Community Care - The Housing Dimension (The Scottish Office, August 1994)."

- 2.3 The document outlines current and future issues that will impact on housing providers ability to respond to those with community care needs. These are identified as:
- The increase in the number of older people, particularly those over 85 years of age, and the number of people with physical impairments or other problems such as dementia.
 - The need to take account of current government policies for the creation of a more inclusive society.

- Ensuring that Best Value principles are adopted in the planning and delivery of community care.
- Securing better results for users and their carers through the person-centred approach and joint agency working as promoted in Modernising Community Care - An Action Plan.

2.4 The guidance is primarily aimed at the housing sector although it is recognised that it is also relevant to health and social work agencies and others who co-operate with housing agencies to provide care, particularly at home. It is considered that the document should also be of interest to policy, planning and senior operational staff in statutory, voluntary and private agencies.

3 Content

3.1 The guidance sets out general principles of good practice together with some pointers as to how these might be implemented. It also contains illustrative examples of practice from a variety of agencies throughout Scotland, but recognises that implementation in specific areas should take account of local needs and circumstances.

3.2 In summary, the guidance covers the following issues:

- Section 2 - Strategic planning issues, including how the housing dimension can be included in community care strategies, and how housing providers and users and carers can be involved in the planning process.
- Section 3 - The need to develop joint planning and joint working at a local, as well as authority-wide, level, to take account of distinctive local characteristics.
- Section 4 - General issues about implementation and the translation of strategic objectives into the desired outcomes on the ground, including the funding and co-operation of individual projects.
- Section 5 - Individual assessments and reassessments and the importance of integrated approaches, including the role of joint and shared assessments.
- Section 6 - Hospital discharges both from long stay and acute sectors.
- Section 7 - Options for home-based approach, including re-housing and staying put.
- Section 8 - Housing management arrangements in housing with support, including tenancy rights and floating support.
- Section 9 - Monitoring and evaluation, particularly in the context of achieving Best Value.

4 Implications for North Lanarkshire

4.1 The document focuses on the need for all agencies to work more effectively together to enable people with community care needs to live at home whenever practicable. The guidance therefore has implications for all agencies involved in the delivery of community care services.

- 4.2 The guidance proposes a fundamental shift in the way that community care services, including accommodation are planned, resourced, delivered and monitored. The clear emphasis is on developing an inter agency approach to planning, commissioning, assessment and service delivery. Not since the launch of Community Care - The Housing Dimension (1994) has such a fundamental review of the role of housing in delivery of community care services been proposed.
- 4.3 The scope of the guidance is extensive. Examples of good practice are given in each of the sections within the document. However, the expectation being placed on housing departments is that they will incorporate, in a way specific to their locality, inter-agency working in all aspects of housing where there is a community care dimension. Despite significant progress in developing joint working arrangements with partnership agencies, the changes to working practice proposed in the guidance will impact upon most policies and procedures currently operated by the Housing Department.
- 4.4 A fully detailed analysis of the guidance is required, whereby an evaluation of the impact of the proposals for North Lanarkshire and the Council's joint planning partners is considered.

5 Consultation

5.1 The draft guidance has been issued for consultation to:

- Directors of Housing and Chief Housing Officers;
- Directors of Social Work and Chief Social Work Officers;
- General Managers, Health Boards;

and copied to:

- Chief Executives, NHS Trusts;
- Chief Executive, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities;
- Chief Executive, Scottish Homes;
- Director, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations;
- interested professional, voluntary and private sector bodies.

6 Consultation with Joint Planning Partners

6.1 The document Modernising Community Care has been the subject of a report to the Joint Planning Steering Group on 26 January 1999, and was agreed to set up an inter-agency working group with the remit to prepare a joint report on the implementation of the housing guidance within North Lanarkshire which would:

- assess current inter-agency working arrangements;
- outline structures that could be adapted to facilitate inter-agency working;
- identify the need for development of structures within agencies;
- quantify the resource commitment required from each of the agencies;
- evaluate the impact of the proposed changes upon relevant agencies;
- evaluate the impact of the proposed model of working for users of services and their carers;
- take account of the Best Value principles in the report's recommendations.

6.2 The inter-agency Housing Group, which is a sub group of the Joint Planning Steering Group, has been re-established to undertake this work. Representation on the group is as follows:

- North Lanarkshire Council Housing Department;
- North Lanarkshire Council Social Work Department;
- Scottish Homes;
- Lanarkshire Health Board;
- Lanarkshire Health Care Trust.

7 Recommendations

7.1 Housing Committee is asked to:

- 7.1.1 note the contents of this report regarding the draft guidance;
- 7.1.2 note that the North Lanarkshire Housing Group will evaluate the impact of the proposals which will be the subject of a future report to Housing and Social Work Committees.
- 7.1.3 approve the proposed response to the Scottish Office as outlined in Appendix 1 to this report
- 7.1.4 refer this report to Social Work Committee for information.

8 Background Papers

8.1 Background information is available from the Housing and Social Work Departments.



Gavin Whitefield
Director of Housing

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EH6 6QQ

Dear Mr Murphy

Modernising Community Care - Draft Guidance on the Housing Contribution

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft guidance on Modernising Community Care - The Housing Contribution. The following comments are made on behalf of North Lanarkshire Council.

General

The delivery of responsive community care services continues to challenge local authorities in terms of enhancing services and adopting best practice within a context of increasing demand and limited resources. The guidance from the Scottish Office is therefore welcomed, and in particular the recognition of the value of housing within the integrated approach to service delivery. However the complexity of the partnership arrangements required to deliver person centred planning cannot be underestimated nor can the resource implications of providing the range of accommodation and support required in each locality.

The good practice examples are interesting but may be of more practical use if more detail was provided, perhaps in an appendix to the main document. As many of the examples cited have been implemented in several councils what criteria was used to identify individual authorities?

Section 2 - Strategic Planning

The recognition of housing as an equal partner within the planning process is welcomed. In North Lanarkshire a Joint Accommodation Strategy has been produced in conjunction with the Community Care Plan, which sets out the partnership approach to the planning and delivery of accommodation and support services.

The involvement of users and carers is a complex area but care must be taken to ensure that a diverse range of experience is brought into the planning process from a users and carers perspective and this is given credence by the professionals.

Section 3 - Locality Planning

North Lanarkshire Council would endorse the approach outlined in this section. It reflects current developments within North Lanarkshire where work is ongoing to develop models of services which have a locality focus, particularly in relation to mental health and learning disabilities.

Section 4 - Implementation

This section acknowledges the difficulties in translating the agreed priorities and targets set out in community care plans into practice, and once again reiterates the need for joint working and funding.

Given that the proposals contained in this section represent a fundamental change in policy and practice for most agencies it might be worth while expanding on the issues surrounding the different management arrangements.

The objective of integrating housing with other health and social care services is welcomed. However where housing and other facilities are too closely integrated in one location, although more cost effective, this can work against the objective of integration as people become identified by their perceived disability.

The provision of barrier free housing should not be seen as an issue for social housing providers alone. However it is unlikely that private developers will adopt these standards unless the government undertake a review of the current building regulations. The issue of the right to buy for people living in specialist accommodation, but which is not part of a complex covered by a warden, also needs to be reviewed as this can act as a disincentive to local authorities in the development of flexible accommodation options for people with community care needs.

Section 5 - Individual Assessments and Reassessments

This is an area that is being developed within the Council for people with complex care needs. Joint procedures are in place which outline referrals for community care services, screening and assessments, although these will be reviewed as experience develops within the agencies involved. Although all agencies may agree in principle on the need to share information this can often vary in interpretation between individuals and agencies, therefore firmer guidance may be appropriate in this area. It should also be recognised that there can be inherent difficulties in expecting one agency to provide a service on the basis of another agency's assessment and this should not be underestimated given the many demands on the resources of each agency.

Section 6 - Hospital Discharge

The various approaches suggested in relation to providing accommodation and support for people leaving long stay institutions have been used by the Council. All require detailed planning, commitment to the process and adequate resourcing to be successful.

Section 7 - The Home Based Approach - Re-housing and Staying Put

The need to provide services to meet the continuing care and housing needs for community care users, including the increasing number of older people, is an enormous challenge for the Council and its community care partners. There are major policy implications for housing providers as they increasingly accommodate more vulnerable tenants. Therefore, encouragement alone may not be enough to help develop the 'staying put' options when resources are currently tied into residential type services. Some additional resources may be required to allow flexibility in the delivery of community based services while retracting from current models of provision.

The Council has developed joint procedures in relation to the provision of adaptations and has also developed the use of modular extensions, as a more cost effective alternative to traditional house extensions. As mentioned above, further consideration should be given to widening the exclusions under the right to buy to include properties which have been adapted.

Section 8 - Management Arrangements in Housing

The Council fully supports the provision of a secure tenancy to any individual who can achieve a basic understanding of a tenancy agreement. Only in exceptional circumstances will the tenancy be awarded to an appointee. The guidance on this issue is welcomed although firmer direction may be useful. The distinction between supported accommodation and mainstream housing with flexible support packages no longer seems appropriate in terms of the type of tenancy provided.

Section 9 - Performance Review

As the achievement of community care objectives by housing agencies can be dependent on the performance of other agencies it would seem to make more sense to develop joint performance review systems which have the support and commitment of all partners.

I trust these comments will be of assistance to you in developing the final guidance. Should you wish to discuss any of the points raised in more detail please do not hesitate to contact me.

● Yours sincerely

Gavin Whitefield
Director of Housing

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