

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Provision of Redundancy Support
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 24 August 1999	
REPORT AUTHOR: Calum MacKinnon	
REF: JD/GMCI/CMACK/JMCF	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the work undertaken by Council Departments in the provision of redundancy support to affected workforces in North Lanarkshire.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will recall that on 2 March 1999 the Council adopted a protocol which informs the Council's approach to work in this area and that this guides the officer liaison group.

3 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 During the last year, April to March, the following work was undertaken:

- 12 company redundancies were notified;
- 6 of these were complete company closures;
- 1 of these 6 was the result of company liquidation;
- The remaining 6 were classified as large scale or partial closures;
- A total of 1421 jobs were lost in these redundancies;
- Input varied according to notice period and involvement of the company.

- 3.2 The following industrial sectors were affected as follows:

• Textiles & Clothing	-	230 jobs lost
• Plastics	-	90 jobs lost
• Electronics/Manufacturing	-	582 jobs lost
• Distribution & Transport	-	65 jobs lost
• Steel Production/Products	-	247 jobs lost
• Heavy Engineering/Manufacturing	-	119 jobs lost
• Print & Packaging	-	<u>88 jobs lost</u>
Total	-	1421 jobs lost

The approximate gender breakdown equates to: Male: 794 Female:627

- 3.3 A wide range of support was delivered by North Lanarkshire Council and its external partners over the year in these redundancies. Other partners in the voluntary sector also played a part in the service delivery.
- 3.4 The support delivered varied depending upon the timescale allowed and the co-operation of the companies involved, but covered:
- Welfare Rights Advice/Representation & Advocacy Support
 - Money Advice and Debt Counselling
 - Employment and Training advice and provision
 - Provision of practical vocational training, e.g. Training Assistance Grant
 - Utilisation of Employment incentive schemes e.g. Employment Grants Scheme
 - C.V. Construction & Job Motivation Workshops
 - Job Shops and Vacancy Display Boards
- 3.5 In all but three of the 12 notified redundancies the Council was able to provide a support service which offered the workforce the range of support services described above. In those 3 we were unable to offer a complete, or any service, due to late notification or no notification from the company.
- 3.6 In the vast majority of the redundancy situations the organisation of support was drawn together through the implementation of the North Lanarkshire Council Redundancy Support Protocol, with the Council Departments of Social Work and Economic Development sharing the lead role.

4 ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.1 As a result of the early work it was realised that there was a need to update and improve the existing Redundancy Support Packs which were originally developed by the former Strathclyde Regional Council.
- 4.2 The range of information which was in the original pack was added to, improved and updated, then printed in a user friendly A5 booklet.
- 4.3 The new pack was launched in January 1999 with the support of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (S.T.U.C.). This organisation was particularly enthusiastic about the pack and other Local Authorities and Scottish Enterprise have welcomed the initiative and shown interest in the approach of North Lanarkshire Council to this area of work. Internal discussion has taken place about how this could be marketed commercially to these types of organisation.
- 4.4 Council officers have also played an advisory role in discussions with other local authorities experiencing large scale redundancies, or company closures, Falkirk Council and South Lanarkshire in particular.

5 FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

- 5.1 Of all the redundancies covered, the Assi Doman Ltd. redundancy most closely approached the best model for the provision of services as indicated in the North Lanarkshire Redundancy Protocol. This was because the company gave early notification and provided time and facilities for a concerted and concentrated input from the partners, especially Social Work, Economic Development and the Employment Service. An evaluation of the "ideal" position based upon the Assi Doman Ltd Cumbernauld redundancy was carried out.
- 5.2 The evaluation consisted of the partners, including representatives from the company and the Union, assessing the impact and outcome of the services offered.
- 5.3 The evaluation found that whilst there were some excellent strengths there were areas which could be improved upon. The result of the evaluation exercise was a recommendation that a working group be set up to examine how the partnership can be strengthened.
- 5.4 It is proposed that the group would consist of representatives from Social Work, Economic Development, Lanarkshire Development Agency, Benefits Agency and Employment Services. This group has yet to meet due to internal debate within Lanarkshire Development Agency which has been prompted by a Scottish Enterprise inspired review regarding a similar type of support being provided by the LEC system.

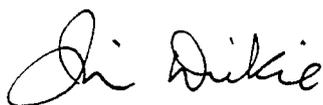
6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 On the whole the work has been highly satisfactory, but some instances of a lower than ideal service provision have occurred. Once again this is due to late or no notification by the companies involved, or a lack of interest by same.
- 6.2 It is expected that the Working Group when it meets, should be able to provide a solution to some or all of these problems, notwithstanding the major difficulties of commercially sensitive information being placed in the public domain, and production requirements in the run-up to the redundancies or closure.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:

- i) Note the contents of this report;
- ii) Requests a further report from the Director of Social Work on the findings and outcomes of the proposed working group.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
17 August 1999

For further information on this report please contact . Principal Officer (Strategy) (TEL: 01698 332063)