

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL**

**SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT**

<b>Social Work Committee :</b> <b>5th October, 1999.</b>	<b>Subject : Homes for the Future Initiative - Improving Choice and Care for Older People in North Lanarkshire</b>
<b>From :</b> <b>Jim Dickie, Director of Social Work</b> <b>Prepared by :</b> <b>Jim Nisbet, Principal Officer, Community Care</b>	

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This report advises Committee of proposals for a major review of the Council's own residential care provision for older people. The report outlines the need for such a review and proposes a range of review actions including options for the significant involvement of members in the review process itself.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 There is not enough choice for older people in North Lanarkshire when they need higher levels of supported care because of increasing frailty or dementia. Too many older people have to go into residential care (most of which is Council provision) or private sector nursing homes.

2.2 The Government has said that new money for modernising community care will only go to Councils which demonstrate they are working closely with health colleagues to provide a much wider range of options to support people in their own homes. The Council has made a good start through its out of hours and intensive home support services, the latter developed jointly with the Health Service. Much more could be done to modernise services where, older people and their relatives need to feel that each person is safe and well cared for, and is receiving a high standard of care.

**3. CURRENT POSITION**

3.1 The Council runs ten residential homes for older people. All of them need modernised to meet standards which future service users will expect. This includes not having to share a bedroom with someone who is not part of your own family and having your own toilet facilities. Many homes in the independent sector already reach these standards. Further, a small number of the Council's homes do not meet appropriate general standards and are in a poor state of repair.

3.2 From 2001, the Council's residential homes will be registered and inspected by an external agency, the new Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care. It is essential that the Council takes action ahead of this date to prepare its homes for the future by developing a strategy which addresses both the longer term future of residential care as well as urgent remedial work required.

- 3.3 The Accounts Commission recently analysed cost and quality in local authority homes and nursing homes. Many Council homes emerged as more expensive than nursing homes.

The Commission has recommended that Councils examine their costs closely and achieve efficiencies without compromising the quality of care. This will be an important consideration if the Council is to achieve best value and ensure a committed workforce.

#### 4. THE PROPOSED REVIEW

- 4.1 The Social Work Capital Programme is insufficient to address the needs identified. In addition to addressing issues of physical standards, the Council will require to review the operation of its in house services to ensure they are competitive in terms of best value. Any action to reduce revenue costs through efficiencies would require a corporate approach and would be subject to Trades Union consultation. The Council needs to demonstrate a long term strategy based on partnerships with Health and Housing in order to secure new Government money for modernising community care.

- 4.2 A strategic approach is needed to -

- consult with older people and their carers about the care they expect and choices they would like
- achieve standards of care which meet the aspirations of older people and the wider community
- ensure a modern approach to community care in partnership with Health and Housing
- decide on the balance of care services, offering people the option of being cared for in their own home for as long as they wish
- ensure a balanced approach to future service provision through a range of housing and care options
- examine all possible sources of funding, emphasise new partnerships and maximise external sources of funding from all sectors
- agree a long term plan (5 - 10 years) which must be ambitious, affordable and achievable.

- 4.3 The Homes for the Future Initiative will be of major significance to some 40,000 older people in North Lanarkshire. It will therefore be important, through public consultation and discussion with smaller groups, to engage with people who will be directly affected by the future strategy. Such citizen consultation would be consistent with Government intentions illustrated in the "Better Government for Older People" report.

- 4.4 It is proposed that the review should be taken forward by a group of 10 elected members chaired by the Convener of Social Work. Membership would be drawn from Housing and Social Work Committee as follows:

- Convener and two Vice Conveners of Social Work
- three Social Work Committee members to be nominated by the majority group
- two Social Work Committee members to be nominated by the minority group

- Convener and one Vice Convener of Housing and Property Services

- 4.5. It is proposed that an initial meeting of the Working Group should be convened as quickly as possible and would consider at its first meeting an action plan setting out detailed proposals for the work to be undertaken at each stage of the review, and timescales for completion.
- 4.6. In view of the significance of the issues under discussion, it is proposed that the Working Group should place a strong emphasis on consultation with a wide range of interests and would have the discretion to invite involvement and participation of external stakeholders in the work of the Group at such stages as may be appropriate.
- 4.6. Officer support to the Group would be led by the Social Work Department and include input from Housing and Property Services and other relevant Departments.
- 4.7. Social Work Committee would receive regular reports from the review.

## 5. RESOURCES

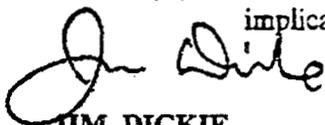
- 5.1. It is proposed that time and resources to complete the review should be met in the main from existing community care resources of the social work department. One exception may be in the area of consultation with carers and partner organisations. It is proposed that once consultation processes have been agreed, the Director of Social Work is asked to provide a further report on the resource requirements of the consultation process.

## 6. TIMESCALE

- 6.1. It is proposed that the review be conducted between October, 1999 and June, 2000, with a view to launching the Initiative in autumn, 2000.

## 7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1. Committee is asked to -
- (i) note the contents of this report
  - (ii) approve the proposal for this review of in-house residential services for older people
  - (iii) consider options for involving members in the process as outlined in section 4.4 of this report
  - (iv) ask the Director of Social Work to report to a future Committee on the resource implications of the consultation document.



**JIM DICKIE**  
**DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK**  
**30 SEPTEMBER, 1999.**

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