

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Supporting People
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 25 January 2000	
REPORT AUTHOR: George McNally	
REF: JD/GMCI/JMCF	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Social Work Committee of a new scheme of Transitional Housing Benefit which will be introduced from April 2000 to fund support services.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Under the existing Housing Benefit regulations the scope for including other charges related to the accommodation and services is fairly limited and, therefore, there can be problems in financing tenancies for people with special needs.
- 2.2 The Transitional Housing Benefit scheme from April 2000 will become the main source of funding through the benefits system for charges for support services.

3 TRANSITIONAL HOUSING BENEFIT SCHEME

- 3.1 The new scheme will broadly meet the same support services as those covered by current Housing Benefit regulations. It will also meet reasonable charges for general counselling and support for tenants who live in:

- ◆ supported accommodation which has opened since August 1997
- ◆ supported accommodation that opens during the life time of the scheme (April 2000 - March 2003)
- ◆ private sector accommodation where the tenant has a valid community care assessment.

- 3.2 The scheme will meet reasonable charges for support services, for example, which will assist the tenant with:

- ◆ maintaining the security of the dwelling
- ◆ maintaining the safety of the dwelling
- ◆ complying with those terms of the tenancy agreement concerned with -

- nuisance
- rental liability
- maintaining the interior of the dwelling
- the period of the tenancy
- contact with others to ensure the tenants welfare

3.3 As part of the above process the Council requires to identify all the support services which are provided and whether such services will be met through the transitional scheme. To this end officers from the Social Work and Housing and Property Service Departments have begun the corporate task of identifying all of the properties which will ultimately fall within Supporting People, as over time this will replace Housing Benefit as the means for meeting costs for support services.

3.4 In addition there are opportunities to develop new services in the community for tenants with special needs, again officers from Social Work and Housing Departments are looking at how best to take this matter forward.

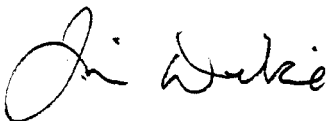
4 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The Supporting People Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme represents an opportunity to secure proper funding arrangements for the accommodation and support services which are required by people with special needs. The Council welcomes this development and will use its best endeavours to maximise the opportunities which it offers.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Committee is required to:

- i) Note the terms of this report



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
December 1999

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