

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**REPORT**

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject:  Planning for Young School Leavers with Special Needs - Development Partnership Proposal
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE: 25 January 2000	
DATE OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 1st February 2000	
DATE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES: 1st February 2000	
REPORT AUTHOR: Duncan Mackay	
REF: DM/NDT	

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to enter into a partnership with the National Development Team to help improve planning and promote social inclusion for young school leavers with special needs in North Lanarkshire

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The National Development Team are a non profit making organisation formerly funded by the Department of Health in England. They have undertaken significant work in partnership with a number of Scottish Social Work Departments and Health Boards.
- 2.2 In February 1997 Social Work (Planning & Administration) Sub Committee approved the use of the National Development Team to help the Council develop services for people with learning disabilities. Progress made was reported in February 1998, together with plans to continue with their services. This support and advice has now helped the Council to arrange support for more than 30 people in their own supported living tenancies; a further 14 people into open employment; and to develop a service user managed advocacy scheme.
- 2.3 Much more remains to be achieved. Extensive service user and carer participation in the production of the draft Joint Learning Disability Framework highlighted a pressing need for closer inter-departmental and multi-agency involvement in the future needs planning process for children with special needs. Carers groups have also made strong representations to elected members about problems they experience in securing services for school leavers.

- 2.4 The Joint Planning Forum of 11th November 1999 recognised the importance of this issue and asked for a report on progress at the next meeting.

### 3 KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- 3.1 The proposal operates from the following key premises, which reflects feedback from parents during the learning disability framework consultation process.

- ◆ that transition planning which seeks to bridge child and adult services for people with complex health and support needs is not yet functioning at levels that could be considered satisfactory by young people, their families and statutory agencies and departments.
- ◆ that young people and their families are not always as centrally involved in this process as they require to be.
- ◆ that small but significant numbers of young people leave school each year with complex needs that can only be met by individualised planning and creative service design.
- ◆ that most existing day services are not equipped to meet high levels of need

- 3.2 It therefore seems incumbent upon the Council and its joint planning partners to take action which demonstrates sound joint working practice, results in better outcomes for service users and their families, and build confidence amongst carers that there is a genuine commitment to improvement.

### 4 PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The National Development Team has launched a "Development Partnership Initiative" around a series of key themes. Of particular interest to the Council are those relating to community inclusion including day opportunities and family matters, which is concerned with developing services for young people at the point of transition between school and adult services. The themes are not mutually exclusive and it is proposed to negotiate a tailored scheme to suit the requirements of this Council across as outlined above.

- 4.2 The cost of entering into the Development Partnership for a three year period is £8,000 per year. These monies would be found from existing community care budgets. This buys:

- ◆ 7 days 'on site' development work per year
- ◆ 2 staff development days per year to train staff
- ◆ Advice and mentoring as required
- ◆ Access to relevant information and development work going on elsewhere in the UK
- ◆ 2 free places on annual conferences
- ◆ Any additional consultancy require can be purchased at reduced rates

4.3 For the specific proposal the National Development Team would:

- ◆ Put together a project management group with key representation from Social Work, Education, Community Services, Health and other agencies/ departments as require
- ◆ Assist the group to plan a participative process with service users and their families
- ◆ Equip staff with the person-centred planning tools required to plan with young people who have complex health and support needs
- ◆ Advise and support the project management group during the planning and implementation of the work through facilitation and expert input.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Committee is asked to:

- (i) approve the proposal to establish a project management group to improve planning and promote social inclusion for young school leavers with special needs and;
- (ii) approve engagement of the National Development Team to support this process and;
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**December 1999**

*For further information on this report please contact Duncan Mackay, Principal Officer ( Planning & Development) (TEL: 01698 332072)*