

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: NORTH LANARKSHIRE RESIDENTS' SURVEY: VIEWS ON SOCIAL WORK SERVICES
FROM: Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 18 April 2000	
REPORT AUTHOR: K Somers	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To draw the Committee's attention to the views of the residents of North Lanarkshire on Social Work services, as reported in the initial results of a recent survey of the views of North Lanarkshire residents.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members of the Social Work Committee will be aware that a Residents Survey was recently conducted to ascertain the views of North Lanarkshire residents on the importance, use and quality of Council services, priorities for improvements to services and issues which residents considered the Council should be tackling. The initial findings were reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in March 2000.
- 2.2 The initial results of the survey include a number of findings relevant to the provision of social work services in North Lanarkshire. This report draws the attention of the Social Work Committee to those aspects of the survey.

3 AWARENESS OF COUNCIL SERVICES

- 3.1 A significant proportion of North Lanarkshire residents were confused about which services the Council is responsible for providing. This included services relevant to the provision of social work, which involve partnership with other agencies. In particular, 62% of residents thought the Council provided health services and 61% crime and policing. 70% of residents were aware that the Council provided residential care for older people.

4 USE OF SERVICES

- 4.1 Social Work did not rank within the six most used Council services, as would be expected given that social work of its nature is targeted to the more vulnerable individuals and groups in the community.

- 4.2 The most commonly used services in the last year were public transport (72%); public parks and open spaces (70%) followed by libraries and sport and leisure facilities (50%)

5 IMPORTANCE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

- 5.1 In contrast to the low numbers reporting usage of social work services, the survey shows that the residents of North Lanarkshire attach very high importance to care services.
- 5.2 Care services for people with disabilities and care services for older people were ranked very important by the greatest number of residents (82% and 80%). 100% of those responding considered these services to be very or quite important.
- 5.3 Care services for children and families were also ranked highly by all residents surveyed - 77% considered them very important and 23% quite important.
- 5.4 Other services which residents rated highly in terms of importance were roads and footpath maintenance, education services and refuse collection, council house repairs, street cleaning, council housing and public transport.

6 QUALITY OF SERVICES AND PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 6.1 Care services for older people and for children and families were within the ten best quality services the Council provides (considered by residents to be good/very good).
- 6.2 Three services for which the Social Work Department is responsible were within the top five services which local residents consider the Council should give the highest priority for improvement - namely, care services for people with disabilities, for older people and for children and families.

7 COMMUNITY ISSUES

- 7.1 Care services for people with disabilities and older people were also rated highly in terms of issues the Council was tackling well as was promoting the welfare and development of children and young people.
- 7.2 There was much less consensus that the Council is doing well in tackling poverty, deprivation and ill-health or improving safety at home, in neighbourhoods or on the roads.

- 7.1 The five highest priorities given by residents for community issues the Council and other public agencies should tackle:
- [a] Assisting unemployed people into work
 - [b] Meeting the needs of people with disabilities
 - [c] Creating jobs through development of the local economy
 - [d] Improving safety at home, in neighbourhoods and on roads
 - [e] Tackling poverty, deprivation and ill health.
- 7.2 Meeting the needs of older people and promoting the welfare of development of children and young people also received high ratings as issues which the Council and other public agencies should tackle.

8 IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

- 8.1 The residents survey confirms the high importance and priority attached to services for the very vulnerable groups who are a priority for the Social Work Department and other community care partner agencies, namely people with disabilities, older people and children. Issues affecting these groups have already been identified as a priority in the Community Plan under the theme of Health, Well-being and Care and are prominent in the Department's Service Plan.
- 8.2 The survey also confirms the importance of social inclusion issues where the Council's social work service has a significant contribution, in particular safety issues and issues relating to poverty, deprivation and ill health. The Department will continue to give these issues priority through the Service Plan and through its contribution to corporate initiatives.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to note the high importance attached by residents of North Lanarkshire to the social work services the Council provides.



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5 April 2000

For further information on this report please contact K Somers, Head of Social Work Development (TEL: 01698 332010)