

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: 1. Social Work Committee 2. Policy and Resources (Performance and Best Value) Sub Committee	Subject: Customer Service :
FROM: J Dickie, Director of Social Work	Social Work Performance for Quarter 1 April to June 2000
DATE OF COMMITTEE: August 22nd 2000	
REPORT AUTHOR: J Scott, Principal Officer, Criminal Justice S Mackay, Performance Review Manager	
REF: Co_0081	

1. CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to :

- inform the Committee of the performance of the Social Work Department.

This report provides information on the way in which the Department manages its services, with particular regard to the performance standards set out in the Corporate Service Charter.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Assessment of performance, in some instances, has been undertaken on the basis of a sample. In each instance, the means of assessment is outlined.

2.2 The means of assessing performance across the whole Social Work Department, on a longer term basis, needs further development and is being refined, to facilitate monitoring and reporting to Committee.

2.3 This report establishes a baseline, against which to measure the future performance of the Social Work Department.

2.4 The Social Work Department has developed a Social Work Customer Service Charter, which sets out detailed performance measures for Social Work services. This has been approved by Committee. Performance in relation to the measures contained in this document will be reported to Committee later in this financial year, as systems are developed to assess performance.

3. PERFORMANCE

3.1 **Making a complaint or comment** - 94% of complaints received were acknowledged within 7 days of receipt and 58% were provided with a detailed reply within 28 days.

3.2 **Delivering Services** - The standards set out in this section consider customer satisfaction / perception of the service provided. This could not be measured in this quarter,

but will be assessed through introduction of the Social Work Customer Comments Form, previously approved at Committee, and through the related Customer Service Charter and annual survey.

The annual survey will assess service users' perception of the service provided by Social Work, and includes contacts when staff visit services users at home and when service users visit offices.

The Customer Comments form will provide returns on service users' satisfaction with Social Work services when they contact our offices. This information will be collected on an ongoing basis from August 1st, and will be available to report to Committee from this date.

3.3 Writing to the Council - A sample of correspondence requiring responses was undertaken. 46% of correspondence received a full reply within 14 days. This requires improvement, and consideration is being given to the introduction of a standard monitoring system for incoming and outgoing mail across the Department, to effect improvement.

3.4 Calling the Council - A sample was undertaken. 74% of calls were answered within 8 rings. The name of the person dealing with the call was given in 48% of calls. It is expected that improvement will be seen in this measure with the introduction of the Social Work Service Charter on August 1st.

3.5 Visiting the Council - Opening times are displayed at two of the six main Area Offices, and in a number of other operational units. Arrangements are in hand to install additional signs which display opening times. In the meantime, offices are displaying temporary signs to provide this information.

3.6 Waiting Times - A sample was undertaken, in one of our Area Offices, of people with an appointment to meet the Duty Worker. This showed a fairly high rate of compliance with the measure, with all service users being promptly by Reception Staff, and 85% seen within 10 minutes by the person dealing with their enquiry. It is expected that this figure will, initially, be lower when arrangements are made to measure performance across all Area Teams.

3.7 Visits - The standards set out in this section consider the presentation of identification when staff visit service users at home. This could not be assessed in this quarter, but will be done through the annual survey previously referred to.

3.8 Safe Driving - In this period, no complaints were received about the standard of driving of the 42 North Lanarkshire vehicles working for Social Work. Two were involved in accidents where the staff member was considered blameworthy.

3.9 Equal Opportunities - The measures contained in this section are aspirational, concerning the attitudes of staff to the promotion of quality services and stakeholder participation. These matters are promoted through the Department's commitment to Equal Opportunities Policies, Best Value, development of a Performance Reporting Framework, and development of a Stakeholder Consultation Strategy.

The outcome of Best Value exercises have been reported to Committee and the detail of the Performance Reporting Framework and Stakeholder Consultation Strategy will be reported to

Committee when complete.

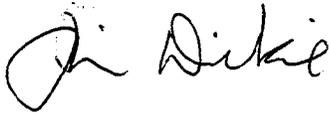
4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The Social Work Department has committed itself to the provision of quality services which are informed by consultation with stakeholders. The performance noted above requires improvement in a number of areas, and the development of information systems which facilitate easy access to relevant information. These systems are being developed and the performance of the Department in relation to customer service has been made a standing item on Management Team agendas

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committees are asked to :

- note the performance of the Social Work Department in relation to the measures contained in the Corporate Service Charter, and the steps taken to effect improvement where required.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work

July 26th 2000

For further information on this report please contact John Scott, Principal Officer, Criminal Justice TEL: 01698 332053) or Sandra Mackay, Performance Review Manager (TEL : 01698 332076)