

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT**

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject Social Work Recruitment
FROM: Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 25 January 2001	
REPORT AUTHOR: I M Crawford	
REF: ic/rp/rect1/2001	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current situation in Social Work Department with regard to vacancies and the steps taken to fill those vacancies.
- 1.2 To advise the Committee on the factors affecting recruitment.
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of recruitment needs which will be generated by the Future Service Agenda

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 North Lanarkshire Position

- 2.1.1 The current level of vacancies in North Lanarkshire Social Work Department is set out in the appendix to this report and has been referred to in November Committee Report.

It can be seen from these figures that vacancy levels are high across all sections of the department although there are particular areas of concern.

The most serious problem lies in shortage of Social Workers where current vacancies are now reaching 25% across the department with turnover running above 30% in the last 18 months.

- 2.1.2 This level of vacancies is not the result of one single factor although it has not been helped by the delays inherent in the Vacancy Control Procedures previously adopted by the Council.
- 2.1.3 The shortage of Social Workers also has an adverse effect on recruitment of Senior Social Workers.
- 2.1.4 To compensate for the shortfall in Social Workers the Department has increased the number of Social Work Assistants as a temporary measure to minimise the operational shortfalls. However Social Work Assistants are not able to undertake all the duties of a Social Worker.
- 2.1.5 There is an ongoing need for recruitment in the residential and day care sectors with particular concerns in Child Care where high attrition rates and high absence levels are making recruitment difficult. This is not shown on appendix, as this is part of the ongoing recruitment process which is recorded elsewhere.
- 2.1.6 In Home Support there is pressure for more staff due to the developing agenda and the changes within the service. These changes are most evident in Intensive Home Support and the Hospital discharge programme where the intensity of support required is much greater than that provided in the past.
- 2.1.7 The introduction of two new grades has improved career prospects for Home Support staff and thus made the posts more appealing to a wider group of staff although this has also resulted in a considerable increase in recruitment activity. The sheer volume of recruitment required to meet demand and utilise budgets has meant that senior Home Support staff are spending an increasing amount of their time in the recruitment process.
- 2.1.8 Although Clerical vacancies are also high there has been a healthy response to our adverts as detailed in the appendix to this report and there should be no problem in filling outstanding vacancies within the current round of interviews taking place across the department.

2.2 National Position

- 2.2.1 The situation in North Lanarkshire must be set in the National Context where there is a growing shortage of Social Workers across the country with all authorities struggling to fill vacancies.
- 2.2.2 The change in Dip SW courses from two to three years allied to a general shortfall in output from West of Scotland Colleges has led to a considerable shortfall in new Social Workers being available for recruitment.

- 2.2.3 In addition to these factors the proposed changes in qualification levels across all aspects of Social Care is causing concern as it will reduce potential recruitment market and increase competition for qualified staff.

3. Current Recruitment Campaign

- 3.1 As reported to Committee in November 2000 adverts were run in National and Local Press and the response to these adverts is shown on the appendix to this report.

The appendix shows a mixed response to this campaign with considerable interest in vacancies such as Clerical Support, Home Care and Social Work Assistant but very little interest in Social Work vacancies.

A number of our vacancies for promoted posts have been filled internally and this has resulted in vacancies in other parts of our organisation however, with the exception of Social Workers, we do not foresee major problems in filling these resultant vacancies.

Appendix to report also shows the current progress in filling vacancies and the stage of the process in those which are not yet complete.

As shown on the appendix response to Social Work vacancies has been poor thus further adverts will be required although problems noted elsewhere in this report do indicate difficulty for all authorities in this area.

Recruitment for Senior Social Workers has been satisfactory however due to the fact that most appointments have been made internally this has resulted in a worsening of the vacancy position for basic grade Social Workers. Senior positions in Child Care and Community Care have not attracted satisfactory response therefore they will require to be re-advertised. Recruitment in Residential and Day Care services is part of an ongoing process which is not included in appendix however it should be noted that this is a continual process with a constant demand across the department for staff.

- 3.2 The report clearly shows the volume of activity which has taken place and demonstrates the requirement for a planned recruitment process to avoid a repetition of current volume of vacancies.

4. Future Service Development

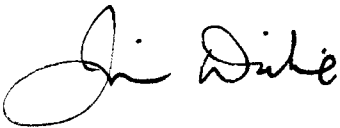
- 4.1 There is a major change agenda in Social Work which over coming years will require the workforce to be increased and the skills mix to be radically altered.
- 4.2 There are clear indications both locally and nationally that the demand for experienced and well trained Social Care Staff will grow over the next five to ten years with particular concentration on Home Support where the hospital discharge programme and the Care in the Community Initiative are generating large scale increases in the need for Home Support staff. It is currently estimated that the need for Home Care Services will double in the next three years.
- 4.3 The new Social Care Commission which commences work in October 2001 will introduce the concept of registration for all Social Care Workers and at the same time introduce minimum qualification levels for all persons employed in Social Care. This will have the effect of making recruitment more difficult as demand increases for those workers who possess the necessary qualifications.
- 4.4 In Child Care the increasing demand for qualifications and the high attrition rate are making recruitment increasingly difficult.
- 4.5 The growth in elderly population will result in a considerable increase in the requirement for Residential and Day Care Services and support at home.
- 4.6 The development of the National Agenda for Supported Employment will result in increased demand for Employment Support and Job Coaching.

5. Human Resource Strategy

- 5.1 In all operational areas of Social Work there are development plans in place, which express the aims and objectives of the Department in service delivery terms and financial terms.
- 5.2 It is essential that we should have a strategy in place to show how we intend to recruit, retain and develop our staff in order to fulfil these plans.
- 5.3 It would therefore be our intention to review the future personnel needs of the Department and produce a plan which lays out the strategy for recruiting, retaining and developing a workforce which will deliver the quality of services to which the department aspires.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is requested that Committee note the content of this report.
- 6.2 It is requested that Committee approve the development of a Human Resource Strategy



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
15th January 2001

COUNCIL
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	VACANCIES		RECRUITMENT PROGRESS								
	Advert reference Number	Total No of vacancies as at Nov 2000	Total No of Applications Requested	Total No of Applications Received	No of Applications Not Shortleeted	Total shortleeted for interview	How many unsuccessful	Number Successful External	Number Successful Internal	Number Refused Offer	Total No of vacancies filled
	242a	5.5	32	12	5	7	4	0	3	0	3
ncies)	244a	44.5	15	5	0	5	4	1	0	0	1
	247a	34	185	101	36	65	44	8	13	0	21
ficer	243a	3	38	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
	245a	4	15	6	0	6	2	4	0	1	3
(Temp)	246a	2	13	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
	248a	7	56	29	15	14	7	4	3	0	7
	Int81	5	50	39	28	11	6	0	5	0	5
	various	63.5	1056	567	296	190	36	17	4	0	23
	Int79	2	9	5	0	5	3	0	2	0	2
	Int82	2	43	24	14	10	8	0	2	0	2
	Int107	2	7	3	0	3	1	0	2	0	2
	234a	270	1289	628	301	327	87	140	4	18	119
	252a	2	11	6	2	4	2	2	0	0	2
		446.5	2819	1435	707	647	204	176	38	19	190

s still ongoing and shortleeting still to be done (figures given will not balance)

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