

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

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| TO: Social Work Committee Housing Committee | Subject: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTATIONS |
| FROM: Director of Social Work Director of Housing & Property Services | |
| DATE OF COMMITTEES: Social Work: 25 January 2001 Housing & Property Services: 1 February 2001 | |
| REPORT AUTHOR: Duncan Mackay | |
| REF: JD/TMcK/DM/JMcF | |

1 CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report advises Committee of additional non-recurring monies allocated by the Scottish Executive and of their agreed use by joint planning partners.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The report of the joint member/officer working group on equipment and adaptations was adopted by Social Work and Housing Committees in November 2000. The report proposed a series of recommended options to secure service improvements. Officers from Health, Housing and Social Work are currently devising implementation plans.

2.2 One of the central findings of the working group was that, in keeping with national trends, assessed need for equipment and adaptation services was rising at an estimated 15-20% per year. It is anticipated that this trend will continue because:

- ◆ Improved health care has meant people survive longer with greater degrees of disability and higher care needs
- ◆ Changes in society have meant that it is largely no longer acceptable for people with severe disabilities to live in institutions such as hospitals
- ◆ Changes in acute hospital care have meant that people are discharged from day or in-patient care at earlier stages than was once the case (or treated entirely at home) and need more support at home
- ◆ Government policy is to support increased numbers of people at home instead of in institutional care settings
- ◆ North Lanarkshire has the highest rate of reported long-term limiting illness in the UK
- ◆ Expectations from service users and carers continues to rise.

3 RESOURCES

3.1 The report of the working group indicated that, in 1999/2000:

- ◆ Social Work spent £967,000 on equipment (more than double the base budget)
- ◆ Health spent £250,000 on equipment across Lanarkshire
- ◆ Housing spent £1.74m on adaptations to Council housing stock and allocated a further £200,000 on Housing Grants for private sector property
- ◆ Scottish Homes spent £400,000 on adaptations to housing association stock across Lanarkshire.

3.2 Demand continues to far outstrip resources. Each year over 7,500 referrals are received by Social Work for assessments of this nature. Assessed unmet need stands at over £500,000. A further 2,000 referrals await allocation. There are similar difficulties in the funding of adaptations. Implementing the member/officer report will inevitably take some time to deal with these problems, given their historical scale and the difficulties associated with staff recruitment and retention.

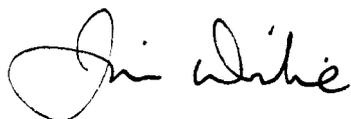
3.3 In these circumstances indication from the Scottish Executive in a letter dated 24 November 2000 that £5m was to be allocated nationally for equipment and adaptations is to be welcomed. The share for North Lanarkshire is £303,082. These monies will be included in the March 2001 payment as a redetermination of the Revenue Support Grant conditional upon receipt, by mid-January, of a statement of how these resources will be used and "names and positions of senior health staff with whom the use of resources have been discussed."

3.4 The monies are non-recurring for this purpose, though the correspondence did make reference to "considerable additional resources being made available for community care in future years."

3.5 The allocation of funds was required to be agreed and reported between Committee cycles. They were considered at the Community Care Joint Planning Group and it was agreed that two-thirds would go to Social Work to fund additional equipment; the remainder to Housing for adaptations. The Social Work element includes a minimum of 10% for the "top-up" elements to Housing Grants.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
19 December 2000



Thomas McKenzie
Director of Housing and Property Services
19 December 2000

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