

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT**

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| TO: Social Work Committee | Subject: REPORT OF CARERS CONFERENCE AND CARERS STRATEGY FOR NORTH LANARKSHIRE |
| FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work | |
| DATE OF COMMITTEE: 22 March 2001 | |
| REPORT AUTHOR: Duncan Mackay | |
| REF: CM/DM | |

1 CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report advises Committee of the report of the North Lanarkshire Carers Conference and seeks approval to issue a final version of the North Lanarkshire Strategy for Carers 2001-2004.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Scottish Executive introduced a Strategy for Carers in Scotland on 24 November 1999. This was reported to Social Work Committee on 25 January 2000.
- 2.2 North Lanarkshire received an additional £305,500 in the 2000/2001 local government settlement to support the strategy. Allocation of these monies for the current financial year was approved by Social Work Committee on 6 June 2000.
- 2.3 In March 2000 Committees of the Council approved a draft North Lanarkshire Strategy for Carers for a period of consultation. This is now complete and amendments have been made to the document to allow for final issue.
- 2.4 A key element of the draft Strategy was the establishment of a Carers Network in North Lanarkshire, the development of which the Council has previously set aside funds.

3 THE NORTH LANARKSHIRE STRATEGY

- 3.1 A number of carers groups and organisations including the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Carers Liaison and Support Project, the Young Carers Project and Lanarkshire Community Care Forum have worked with Council Departments and Health to produce the North Lanarkshire Strategy for Carers.

- 3.2 The document cannot in itself address the many issues facing individual carers in their everyday lives. What it can provide is a framework for the development of services to carers in the context of national priorities; give carers a more powerful voice in what happens; and set out an action plan for the future. Amongst the proposals was the development of a Carers Network in North Lanarkshire.
- 3.3 Contents of the draft Strategy have been largely endorsed by comments received during consultation. The final version of the document differs from the draft only in that it sets out a revised implementation plan with timescales and includes a section on feedback, with particular reference to the report of the Carers Conference.

4 REPORT OF NORTH LANARKSHIRE CARERS CONFERENCE

- 4.1 In November 2000 "The Way Forward" - a conference for carers in North Lanarkshire - was organised by carers, for carers. Over 200 people attended, the vast majority of them carers, and all were given the opportunity to discuss the future needs of carers and how these might best be addressed. The format of the event was very imaginative and over 1000 comments were received. These have been summarised in the report.
- 4.2 The focus of the day was to identify "the way forward." There was widespread support for the idea of a Carers Network in North Lanarkshire. Speakers at the event included representatives from South Ayrshire and East Renfrewshire Networks. There was much discussion about different models and approaches. A number of carers expressed an interest in becoming actively involved in the setting up and running of a North Lanarkshire Network. This is presently being progressed by carers, with support from the Community Services Department of the Council, and will be the subject of a future report to Committee.
- 4.3 A copy of the North Lanarkshire Carers Conference Report "The Way Forward" will be placed in the Members Library.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Committee is asked to:
- (i) approve issue of the North Lanarkshire Strategy for Carers 2001-2004; and
 - (ii) note the significant progress made by carers organisations towards the development of a North Lanarkshire Carers Network; and

- (iii) remit to Housing, Education and Community Service Committees for interest and action as appropriate; and
- (iv) otherwise note the contents of this report



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
7 February 2001

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