

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Looked After & Accommodated Children - Extension to Services for Young People
FROM: Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: March 22nd 2001	
REPORT AUTHOR: M Fegan, Head of Social Work Services	
REF:	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of Committee to extend the current use of specialist services for young people from the voluntary organisation, Includem.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Social Work Department already contracts through a partnership agreement with South Lanarkshire and Includem to provide flexible services for very vulnerable young people in the community who are at high risk of entry to secure accommodation or to the Criminal Justice System. This work is funded by 100% funding for Criminal Justice Services and demands the capacity of agencies to cope with demanding and testing behaviour.
- 2.2 Pressing concerns have arisen in relation to ensuring provision of appropriate specialist services for certain young people who are currently looked after and accommodated by the Social Work Department. This provision relates to work associated with rehabilitation to their own homes or movement on to independent living. These issues have been exacerbated by shortages of qualified Social Workers within the Social Work Department.
- 2.3 Includem is an approved provider for the Social Work Department. Its Lanarkshire Service commenced last year, and the organisation has shown itself to be capable of providing the degree of commitment and flexible support needed by these particularly vulnerable young people.

- 2.4 After consultation with the Convener of Social Work, the Head of Social Work Services has reviewed the needs of the young persons concerned. It is considered that these would be best met by an extension of the service currently provided in North Lanarkshire by Includem, because of:
- the organisation's expertise in delivering service to very challenging young people;
 - its success in providing high quality services to this client group within the criminal justice field;
 - its ability to deliver the service required at short notice with a relatively modest increase in its local infrastructure.
- 2.1 The young people who urgently require special services to be secured will include those who are most vulnerable, most at risk of offending and entry to the Criminal Justice System and who require the highest level of intensive support to successfully deal with the difficulties they face.

3 PROPOSALS

- 3.1 Discussions have taken place with Includem to ascertain how the existing service provided in North Lanarkshire could be extended with a focus on the group of young people referred to at 2.2. above. The following service developments are proposed as immediate measures to address the urgency of the situation:
- [a] Includem should be asked to provide individual services to 16 highly vulnerable young people, with an anticipated commencement date of April 1st 2001; the service Includem will provide to each individual will be identified through individual needs assessments and support plans and will take the form of a tailor made home support service with specialist interventions as required by the individual young person
- [b] as a temporary measure over the next 6 months, Includem would provide 2 additional workers to provide direct intervention and support to the most challenging young accommodated people in the Council's residential units and others accessing education in specialist units.
- 3.2 It is proposed that this extension of the service to looked after and accommodated young people would run for 2 years from April 1st 2001. It will be regularly monitored for activity and performance.
- 3.3 If as anticipated the service delivers successful outcomes for the first 16 people referred, the Department would intend to bring forward proposals for securing similar services for an increased number of very vulnerable young people. This will be the subject of further reports to the Committee in due course.

3.4 The extended service will involve the regrading of the existing Project Manager, the employment of 2 dedicated specialist workers and the use of temporary staff as mentors for the young people.

4 FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 The recurring costs of the service from April 2001 will be as follows:

Project Manager upgrading	£ 4,774
2 project workers to provide specialist supports to looked after and accommodated children	£50,304
Mentors	£14,560
24 Hour Help line/on call service	£10,300
Volunteer costs	£ 4,160
Client expenses	£ 8,320
Travel costs	£ 9,880
Administrative support staff	£13,436
Training	£ 1,620
Administration, Management and office costs	£16,627
TOTAL	£133,981

4.2 Non recurring costs would comprise start up costs of £11,602 and staff costs of £25,152 for 2 temporary workers to work with young people in the Council's residential Units..

4.3 All of the costs detailed can be met through existing Child Care budgets.

4.4 It is proposed that the initiative should be funded through a grant to Includem in line with the detailed budget agreed, with quarterly payments subject to normal monitoring processes.

4.5 The funding mechanism will be reviewed as part of a wider review of the existing contract for that part of Includem's services which is funded in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council. This is scheduled to take place in 2002.

RECOMMENDATIONS /...

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Committee is asked:

[i] to approve grant funding of £133,981 recurring revenue plus start up costs of £36,754 as detailed in Section 4 of the report to enable Includem to develop specialist support services for highly vulnerable looked after and accommodated young people; and

[ii] to note that the matter will be the subject of further reports in due course.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
14 March 2001

For further information on this report please contact Mary Fegan, Head of Social Work Services
TEL: 01698 332004