

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
REPORT**

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject:  <b>PROPOSED REMIT FOR MEMBER/OFFICER WORKING GROUP ON REVIEWING DAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES</b>
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 24 May 2001	
REPORT AUTHOR: Duncan Mackay	
REF: CM/DM	

**1 CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to establish a member/officer working group to review day opportunities for people with learning disabilities and for agreement to adopt a proposed remit for the group.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Over 500 people with learning disabilities in North Lanarkshire attend day centres, most of which is provided by the Social Work Department, at a cost to the Council of over £5.5m per year.
- 2.2 Most day centres are registered to accommodate large numbers of people with learning disabilities in ways that challenge the aims of social inclusion, though actual levels of daily attendance are significantly lower than capacity. Staffing ratios and service designs are such that it is difficult to meet a wide range of individually assessed needs. This is particularly the case for people with higher levels of need, including those at times of transition in their lives such as young people leaving school and older people with increasing frailty and health problems.
- 2.3 The restricted range of day opportunities available to people with learning disabilities is no longer considered appropriate, particularly at a time when growing numbers are moving into supported living arrangements and employment. The Scottish Executive strategy "The Same As You" reflects this concern as does the views of service users contained within the local Lanarkshire strategy "We Want A Life."
- 2.4 Where evaluations of services have taken place service users have been critical of the ways some existing services are delivered. Many aspire to more individualised outcomes and the sorts of life choices that the rest of population can access, with appropriate levels of support. At the same time it is important to acknowledge that carers often view day services that are provided more positively and have real anxieties about some of the alternatives, or lack of them, that may be proposed. Indeed many of the current day centres owe to their origins to the substantial efforts of carers in establishing services for their family members.

2.5 There have been recent local service developments which have demonstrated that it is possible for young people with highly complex needs to access community facilities and enjoy more fulfilling and inclusive lives. The reality however, for most people with learning disabilities and their families, is very different and attendance at a day centre remains the norm for the vast majority.

2.6 It is an appropriate time to conduct a review of day opportunities that looks at how services are delivered, how well equipped they are to meet individual need, what the experiences and aspirations of service users and their families are, and what can be learned from best practice.

### 3 REMIT

3.1 The proposed remit of the group is set out in Appendix 1.

### 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Committee is asked to:

- (i) establish a member/officer working group to review day opportunities for people with learning disabilities; and
- (ii) agree the proposed remit for the group set out in Appendix 1; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

  
**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**8 May 2001**

For further information on this report please contact .Principal Officer (Planning & Development)  
(TEL: 01698 3320721)

## **Appendix 1 - Proposed Remit for Member/Officer Group**

- ◆ To examine and make recommendations on the range of day opportunities available for people with learning disabilities in North Lanarkshire.
- ◆ To be informed by best practice and make recommendations to ensure services are designed to meet individual need.
- ◆ To be informed by the views, experiences and aspirations of service users and carers in determining future approaches to service delivery.
- ◆ To make recommendations for improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of day services provided or funded by North Lanarkshire Council, taking account of the needs of people with learning disabilities, the resources available to the Council and other relevant agencies.
- ◆ To pay specific attention to the needs of people at times of major life transition, such as young people leaving school and older people with increasing frailty and health problems, and make recommendations on service planning and delivery.