

## NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

## REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE HOUSING & TECHNICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE		Subject: IMPLEMENTATION OF JOINT EQUIPMENT & ADAPTATIONS WORKING GROUP - PROGRESS REPORT
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK DIRECTOR OF HOUSING & PROPERTY SERVICES		
Date: 23 August 2001 31 <sup>st</sup> August, 2001	Ref:DM/HH	

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report provides Committee with a progress report on implementation of the decisions of the Joint Equipment and Adaptations Working Group.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A report to the Social Work & Housing Committees in October, 1999 identified a number of issues relating to the assessment and provision of community equipment and adaptations. Committee approved a recommendation to establish a joint member/officer working group. The decisions of the group were agreed by Committee in November, 2000; this is the third progress report on implementation.
- 2.2 A report by the Joint Future Group, the community care policy making wing of the Scottish Executive requires agencies to jointly resource and manage equipment and adaptation services, including a combined store, by April, 2002.
- 2.3 This area of activity is subject, nationally and locally, to 15-20% annual increases in demand for service. In 2000/2001 the Social Work Department spent more than double the base budget for equipment, a total of over £1.6m.

**3. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS**

- 3.1 The table set out in Appendix 1 summarises the decisions of the working group and progress achieved to date. Whilst the scale of the task is daunting, significant progress has been achieved to date including:
- 3.2 The joint store has been specified following consultation with service users and carers and renovation work commissioned from Design Services. The site is located at Fern Street, Motherwell. It is Council owned but in poor repair and requires substantial work.
- 3.3 The information and assessment unit, located adjacent to the joint store, has been specified with users and carers and passed to Design Services for renovation costs which are being negotiated with health.

- 3.4 Early recruitment of Occupational Therapists prior to their graduation has resulted in the appointment of five newly qualified staff.
- 3.5 Waiting lists for assessment by occupational therapy staff have reduced by 50% since the end of 2000. No one in the highest priority category is waiting for assessment.
- 3.6 Staffing has been identified to run the new service and store and Committee approval secured for this purpose. The post of manager of the joint equipment service will be proceeding to advert shortly.
- 3.7 Interim arrangements for the unification of contracts for temporary installations have been put in place pending a measured term contract being prepared by Housing Contracts Division, Social Work and Design Services. Approval has been secured to transfer £130,000 on a recurring basis from Social Work to the Housing non-HRA revenue budget for this purpose.
- 3.8 A standard prioritisation system for both adaptations and equipment is in place across the authority.
- 3.9 Administration of equipment has been centralised from Social Work area teams to the Disability Resource Centre, improving service efficiency.
- 3.10 Electronic requisition systems and referrals for all equipment are in operation.
- 3.11 Funding has been obtained to purchase a suitable mobile unit which will provide information and small items of equipment in localities, the specification for which is being concluded with service users and carers.
- 3.12 Agreement has been reached between Social Work and Housing on the administration of "top-ups" to improvement grants. Committee approval has been secured to transfer £50,000 in a recurring basis from Social Work to Housing non-HRA revenue budget for this purpose. The new arrangements have been implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2001, though Social Work will continue to deal with applications in train prior to that date.
- 3.13 Occupational therapists are no longer required to support applicants through the grant application process – this is being carried out by the grants section in conjunction with Care and Repair, so freeing up professional time.

#### **4. FINANCIAL/PERSONNEL/LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Approval is sought to purchase a sophisticated stock control system (known as MESaLS 2000) designed specifically for equipment stores and loan systems, at a total non-recurring cost of £30,550. This will ensure efficient monitoring of the delivery, fitting, repair, return and recycling of equipment. It is web enabled which will allow local staff to access stock levels and availability, and the public to view items of equipment through an on-line catalogue. It is the only system available which meets the requirements of the new joint service; a version of the package is already operated under licence by Lanarkshire Primary Care NHS Trust, which assists the task of merging the two services. The system has been viewed and endorsed by the Council's Information Technology services.
- 4.2 This will be funded from additional monies of £300,000 included in the Social Work budget for 2001/2 as a Council service enhancement. These have been allocated by the Scottish Executive to assist Councils to meet the requirements of the Joint Future Group report.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Committee is asked to:

- (i) note progress made to date in implementing the decision of the Council on equipment and adaptations; and
- (ii) approve purchase of a stock control system as stated at para 4.1; and
- (ii) note that a further progress report will be brought forward to the next Social Work and Housing & Technical Services Committee.



**Jim Dickie**  
Director of Social Work  
1<sup>st</sup> August, 2001



**Thomas McKenzie.**  
Director of Housing & Property Services  
1<sup>st</sup> August, 2001

For further information on this report please contact Duncan Mackay, Manager, Community Care (Adult Services) (TEL: 01698 332067) or John Gormley (Service Development Manager) (Telephone 01236 812650)

## Appendix 1 - Progress Summary of Working Group Decisions (Update)

Decision	Progress	Lead Department/Officer	Timescale
Establishment of a Joint Service and Store with Health to purchase, stock manage, supply, deliver, fit, demonstrate, recycle, repair and maintain all equipment	Site identified in Fern St, Motherwell; renovation work commissioned from Design Services. Staffing establishment approved by Committee-lead officer post proceeding to advert.	Manager, Community Care Services for Adults (Social Work)	Subject to tendering of renovation work by and Design Services and completion of same.
Establishment of a central resource to enable people to try out and, where appropriate, buy equipment, and provide the relevant information to inform such choices. This to be developed with complementary mobile provision and could be part of the joint store.	<p>Suitable resource identified adjacent to proposed store. Specification agreed with service users and carers - renovation costings awaited from design Services. Staffing as above.</p> <p>Funds to purchase suitable mobile provision approved by Council. Specification close to completion with service users and carers. Transport to carry out tender exercise.</p>	Manager, Community Care Services for Adults (Social Work)	<p>As above</p> <p>April 2002</p>
Adoption of single multi-agency assessment applied according to an agreed set of protocols across agencies using a common form.	A jointly developed community care assessment tool is used universally in Social Work and by Health staff in specific projects. The successful Modernising Government Fund bid is being used to progressively introduce this across Health and Social Work settings in North Lanarkshire.	Head of Social Work Development	December 2001 into one Local Health Care Co-operative area.

<b>Decision</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Lead Department/Officer</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Extend opportunities for self-assessment.	Further consultation is planned with service users and carers.	Principal Officer Planning & Development (Social Work)	Autumn 2001
Adoption of a standard priority system.	Implemented - April 2001		
Review the points scoring system to clarify what level of need can be met.	Housing have created an implementation working group and included this in its remit. The group are currently assessing demand within the context of available resources.	Service Development Manager (Housing)	Autumn 2001
Treat major installations of equipment as adaptations with budget control lying within a single service/Department.	Agreement reached to regard through floor lifts, steplifts, showerloos and automatic toilets as adaptations. Consideration on further changes deferred until impact of other service developments can be reviewed.	Projects and Quality Manager (Housing)	1 October 2001
Establish unified maintenance contracts for large items of equipment.	Interim arrangements put in place pending measured term contract being prepared by Housing Contracts Division, Social Work and Design Services.	Projects and Quality Manager (Housing)	Partially implemented - Measured term contract to be let April 2002

Decision	Progress	Lead Department/Officer	Timescale
Improvement grants, including "top-ups" to be administered solely by the Housing Department Grants Section.	Implemented - 1 June 2001. Social Work retain financial responsibility for any outstanding "top- ups" in train before that date.		
Extend eligibility for improvement grants to include additional items.	Implemented- 1 June 2001. Agreement reached to include specified items (through floor lifts, steplifts, showerloos and automatic toilets initially) for grant eligibility.		
Formalise the Care and Repair Scheme as the service which supports applicants through the grant process.	Implemented - April 2001		
Develop a clear set of eligibility criteria.	Being considered as part of an overall Social Work review of assessment and care management, to be informed by implementation of joint service and store.	Head of Social Work Services	April 2002
Devise and publish service standards.	As above.	Head of Social Work Services	April 2002
Propose a continued policy of no charging, subject to future review.	Implemented - April 2001		
Make immediate improvements for occupational therapy in Social Work	Implemented - April 2001		
Review role and management arrangements of occupational therapy in Social Work	Social Work restructuring resulted in reorganisation of community care services. Functions of OTs will be periodically reassessed.	Head of Social Work Services	No formal timescale