

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER – MONITORING REPORT 2000-2001
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 23 August 2001	Ref: JD/SM/DH	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report informs Committee of the performance of the Social Work Department during the final quarter of 2000/2001 and also of the proposals for monitoring performance in 2001/2002.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The establishment of Service Standards is a key action of North Lanarkshire Council's Best Value Implementation Plan. The Corporate Plan also identifies, as one of the Council's priorities, the achievement of "new standards of quality in the delivery of Council services by publishing clear and challenging standards and monitoring performance against these".
- 2.2. A draft Service Charter was published in North Lanarkshire News in Spring 1999. This was intended as a consultation exercise and readers were invited to comment on the standards proposed, namely eleven core standards applied across all Councils activities with a small number of key standards for each of the specific services provided by the Council.
- 2.3. Work was undertaken within the Social Work Department in 1999/2000 to develop these key standards and a number of additional standards were identified for inclusion in the Social Work Customer Service Charter.
- 2.4. In June 2000 Social Work Committee agreed the content of the Customer Service Charter for Social Work which included both the corporate core standards as well as the newly developed key standards for Child Care, Community Care and Criminal Justice Services.
- 2.5. Assessment of performance in 2000/2001 has in the main been undertaken on the basis of sampling. In each instance the means of assessment reported to Committee has been outlined in the quarterly monitoring reports.
- 2.6. Section 3 below provides information on the performance of the Department for the final quarter of 2000 - 2001 in relation to the standards set in the Customer Service Charter.
- 2.7. Section 4 provides information in respect of how the department intends to develop its monitoring of service standards in 2001 - 2002.

3. PERFORMANCE: JANUARY – MARCH 2001

3.1. Making a Complaint or Comment

Due to the nature of collecting this information, this report provides information for the full financial year 2000/2001. Response timescales for the twelve months from 1 April 2000 to 31 March 2001 were as follows:-

From April to March a total of 85 formal complaints were received.

Acknowledgements

Within 5 days	75
Outwith 5 days	7

This means that 92% were acknowledged within time scale (where time is known)

Final or Interim Response

Within 28 days	44
Outwith 28 days	26

This means that 63% were responded to within time scales (where time is known)

3.2. Delivering Service

The standards set out in this section consider customer satisfaction / perception of the service provided. This could not be measured in this quarter, but will be assessed through introduction and implementation of the Social Work Customer Comments Form, previously approved at Committee, and through the related Customer Service Charter and annual survey.

3.3. Writing to the Council

The Department is currently examining systems for routine monitoring of this indicator and will include information in due course when appropriate systems are developed.

3.4. Calling the Council

A sample was undertaken (150 calls across a range of settings, comprising area teams, units and Headquarters). Of this sample 84% of calls were answered within 8 rings, an improvement of 3% from the third quarter (and 10% from the first quarter). The name of the person dealing with the call was given in 62% of all calls denoting a considerable improvement from the previous quarters in that the name has been given in almost double the number of all calls.

3.5. Visiting the Council

Opening times are now displayed in the reception areas and/or exterior of all six main Area Offices, and in a number of other operational units.

3.6. Waiting Times

A sample was undertaken over a two week period by two Area Teams comprising 128 callers to the office. All service users were seen promptly by Reception Staff, and 126 (98%) were seen within 10 minutes by the person dealing with their enquiry. This has improved over the course of the year, and in particular over the last quarter reported (86%).

3.7. Visits

The standards set out in this section consider the presentation of identification when staff visit service users at home. This standard will be monitored through an annual survey of service users.

3.8. Safe Driving

The Social Work Department has not received information for this quarter with regard to the outcome of accidents or insurance claims.

3.9. Equal Opportunities

The measures contained in this section are aspirational, concerning the attitudes of staff to the promotion of quality services and stakeholder participation. These aspects are being promoted and developed through the Department's commitment to Equal Opportunities Policies, Best Value, development of a Performance Reporting Framework and development of a Stakeholder Consultation Strategy.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1. Both the Customer Service Charter and Customer Comments Forms have been received in a final proof form from the printers and it is envisaged that they will be available for full distribution within all units in Social Work in September / October 2001. Customers of the Department will be actively encouraged to take a copy of the Charter and to complete the comments form on their visits to the office.
- 4.2. The comments forms are to be returned to a single point at Social Work Headquarters in Scott House where there is a system for logging and monitoring all comments made. This information will be reported quarterly to Committee.
- 4.3. At the same time systems are being developed within the Department to ensure a more rigorous monitoring of the corporate standards and key service standards. This information will also be reported on a quarterly basis to Committee in the format that has been attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.4. As reported to Social Work Committee in May 2001, a survey of service users and carers will be undertaken by an independent agency during the current year.

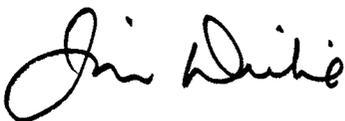
5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. The Social Work Department has committed itself to the provision of quality services which are informed by consultation with stakeholders. The different methodologies outlined in the proposals above will help to inform this process and to identify areas in which the Department is performing well and also areas in which improvement may be required.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Committee is asked:-

- i) to note the performance of the Social Work Department in the final quarter of 2001.
- ii) approve the proposals for future monitoring of performance in 2001 /2002.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
26 June 2001

For further information on this report please contact Ronnie Paul, Head of Social Work Resources TEL: (01698 332023)

North Lanarkshire Council:- Social Work Department Quarterly Performance Monitoring: Service Standards

STANDARD	MONITORING/ REPORTING METHOD	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	PERFORMANCE
Delivering Services				
We will set high standards for all services	Mission Statement: Strategic Plan.		Full compliance	
We will let you know what these standards are and how we are doing at meeting them.	Publish Services Charter and Information Leaflets on all services Publish results from Comments Form, Complaints monitoring and feedback on leaflets or information documents	Response from service users, their families, carers, stakeholders and staff	Positive responses	
We will let you know how well you think we are performing	Publish results of service user surveys (see above)	Response from the surveys and comment forms, from action plans	Continuous improvement in returns	
When you are in contact with us: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff are attentive and helpful • staff are punctual, reliable, and polite • you are treated fairly and sensitively • plain language is used which avoids technical terms • we will give you an appointment within 3 days 	Information from the Comments Form. Train front line staff in Customer Care Self monitoring of each teams performance	Feedback from Comments, Complaints and Service Users/Stakeholder Reviews Completion of staff training in customer care skills Results of self-monitoring	Positive response on comments, complaints and self monitoring returns	
In our Buildings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff will wear name badges and you will be given the name of the person dealing with your enquiry • you will be able to discuss your enquiry in private • Office opening times are clearly displayed 	Self monitoring by teams, training of front office staff	Results from monitoring sheets Feedback from service users, carers, and stakeholders.	Continuous improvement in service users' and stakeholders' Comments on service provided	

North Lanarkshire Council:- Social Work Department Quarterly Performance Monitoring: Service Standards

STANDARD	MONITORING/ REPORTING METHOD	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	PERFORMANCE
When you call the council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • telephone calls are dealt with promptly, politely and normally within 8 rings • you are give the name of the person taking your call. 	Tiger telephone system Comments form results Self monitoring of teams	Comments form: All staff trained to same standard	Positive response from service users	
When you visit our premises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offices are open at advertised times. • our offices are accessible to everyone • the entrances and reception areas are: clearly marked clean, tidy and welcoming offering privacy at the reception desk • you will be seen promptly • information is displayed and accessible • waiting areas are comfortable. • your appointment will begin on time 	Customer comment forms Cold calling Physical check of offices and self-monitoring return by teams.	Service standards compliance confirmed by, comments and complaints forms	Positive response on the survey sheets and comments form.	
When visiting your home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff will show their North Lanarkshire Council Identification Cards 	Customer Comments forms	Compliance with service standard	Positive response on the survey sheets and comments forms.	

North Lanarkshire Council:- Social Work Department Quarterly Performance Monitoring: Service Standards

STANDARD	MONITORING/ REPORTING METHOD	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	PERFORMANCE
<p>Service Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requests for assessment will be acknowledged within 7 days • assessments will be completed within 28 days or • in complex cases any delay will be explained <p>Services for Children, Young People and Families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application to adopt or foster will be responded to in 2 working days <p>Community Care Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where needs have been identified. Community Care services will commence within 7 days of the assessment being completed <p>Criminal Justice Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • detailed information on the services provided for you will be given to you at the start of our contact with you • we will contact you to begin preparation of a Social Enquiry Report within 7 days of the initial court appearance • when we recommend to court, in a Social Enquiry Report, that Social Work remains involved we will discuss the Action Plan with you in advance of the court appearance. • we will see each person placed on a statutory order by the courts within 7 days of the court date when the order was made • we will review at regular intervals all work undertaken with those who use our services. 	<p>Comments and Complaints form responses</p> <p>Ensure system in place for all services</p> <p>Self-monitoring results for all teams.</p> <p>Section to self-monitor and report results</p> <p>SWIS*</p> <p>SWIS</p> <p>SWIS</p> <p>SWIS</p> <p>SWIS</p> <p>SWIS</p>	<p>Compliance with Service Standards</p>		

North Lanarkshire Council:- Social Work Department Quarterly Performance Monitoring: Service Standards

STANDARD	MONITORING/ REPORTING METHOD	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	PERFORMANCE
<p>Equal opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we will provide services of a high quality which meet the needs of the local community; we will consult regularly with different groups and communities to find out if services provided are appropriate and accessible we will treat all members of the public fairly, without discrimination we will treat all complaints seriously and reply within 5 days we will regularly review and improve services to ensure that they meet equality standards 	<p>Customer Comments form Service User Surveys Re-survey service users after changes and assessments are completed. Monitor complaints and comments about the service provided. Results of “stakeholder or carers focus groups”</p> <p>Best Value continuous improvement Action Plan</p>	<p>Constructive feedback from service users</p> <p>Continuously improved performance</p>	<p>Increase positive comments</p> <p>100% completion of action plan</p>	
<p>You will be given a clear explanation of decisions that affect you.</p>	<p>Customer comments form and Service users surveys</p>	<p>Confirmed compliance with standard.</p>	<p>100% compliance.</p>	

*Key SWIS Social Work Information System.