

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: CONTRACT WITH S.L.A.M CENTRE: REVIEW OF ABSENCE LEVELS IN SOCIAL WORK
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK	
Date: 23 August 2001      Ref: RP/MY	

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. To obtain Committee approval for the commissioning of a review of absence levels in Social Work by the Scottish Local Authority Management Centre (SLAM).


## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The circumstances surrounding the Department seeking approval for the contract with the SLAM Centre are as follows:

- The Social Work Department routinely reports to the Social Work (Planning and Administration) Sub Committee on absence levels within the Department.
- Absence levels in certain sections have remained high despite the best efforts of management to impact on the figures.
- Committee requested that the Department commission an independent review / study of absence to ascertain what were the underlying causes.
- The Department has for many months sought to identify suitable organisations to undertake such a study. Contact was made with the Institute of Personnel Development who were unable to identify a suitable organisation. Similar enquiries with Lanarkshire Health Board resulted in a suggestion that we should use SALUS our current medical advisers. This was not considered appropriate since the present work carried out by them will be covered by the review.
- The Department finally consulted with the Scottish Local Authority Management Centre to ascertain whether they could undertake such a review and they have produced outline specifications for a review which meets the needs of the Department with an indicative cost of £35,000.
- The Head of Personnel has been provided with a copy of the proposed specifications for the review and is satisfied with the proposals.
- The Social Work (Planning and Administration) Sub Committee of 7 August 2001 considered the appointment of the SLAM Centre but on the advice of the Department of Administration has remitted the report to the full Social Work Committee for a decision to allow consideration by Internal Audit whether under the existing Contract Standing Orders we can commission the study from the SLAM Centre.
- Confirmation has been received from Internal Audit that the proposed appointment of the SLAM Centre complies with Contract Standing Orders.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. Committee approves the commissioning of the review of absence levels by the SLAM Centre and authorises the Director of Social Work to conclude the specification for the review.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
16<sup>th</sup> August 2001

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