

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: 25 th OCT. 2001	Ref: DM/DM	

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 fourth 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. The Mobile Unit has been specified and the Transport section of the Council have prepared a tender for this work.
- 3.5. Early recruitment of Occupational Therapists prior to their graduation has resulted in the appointment of five newly qualified staff.
- 3.6. Waiting lists for assessment by occupational therapy staff have reduced by over 50% since the end of 2000 and are now at their lowest levels since the inception of North Lanarkshire Council. No one in the highest category is waiting for assessment.
- 3.7. 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 has been jointly specified and is awaiting approval from Lanarkshire Primary Care NHS Trust to proceed to advert.
- 3.8. 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.
- 3.9. A standard prioritisation system for both adaptations and equipment is in place across the authority.
- 3.10. Administration of equipment has been centralised from Social Work area teams to the Disability Resource Centre, improving service efficiency. Electronic requisition systems and referrals for all equipment are in operation.
- 3.11. 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 on a recurring basis from Social Work to Housing non-HRA revenue budget for this purpose. The new arrangements were implemented from 1st June, 2001, though Social Work will continue to deal with applications in train prior to that date.
- 3.12. 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.
- 3.13. Committee approval has been secured to purchase a sophisticated stock control system (known as MESaLS 2000) designed specifically for equipment stores and loan systems. 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.

4. FINANCIAL/PERSONNEL/LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. Service developments described have been 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:

- (a) note progress made to date in implementing the decision of the Council on equipment and adaptations; and
- (b) note that a further progress report will be brought forward to future Social Work and Housing & Technical Services Committee.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
12 September 2001



Thomas McKenzie
Director of Housing & Property Services
12 September 2001

For further information on this report please contact Duncan Mackay, Manager, Community Care (Adult Services) (TEL: 01698 332065) or John Gormley (Service Development Manager) (Telephone 01236 812630).

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 awaiting approval from Lanarkshire Primary Care NHS Trust.	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, but equipment, and provide the relevant information to inform such choices. This is to be developed with complementary mobile provision and could be part of the joint store.	Suitable resource identified adjacent to proposed store. Specification agreed with service users and carers – renovation costings awaited from Design Services. Staffing as above. Funds to purchase suitable mobile provision approved by Council. Specification completed - Transport have prepared tender.	Manager, Community Care Services for Adults (Social Work)	As Above April 2002
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.

Decision	Progress	Lead Department/Officer	Timescale
Extend opportunities for self-assessment.	Further consultation is planned with service users and carers.	Manager, Community Care Services for Adults (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.	Implemented – October 2001. Agreement reached through floor lifts, steplifts, showerloos and automatic toilets as adaptations. Consideration on further changes deferred until impact of other service developments can be reviewed.		
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 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 Housing Development Grants	Implemented – 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 – 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	Implemented- June 2001, following Social Work Department restructuring. Role of OTs will be periodically reviewed.		