

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: FRAMEWORK FOR PURCHASING RESPITE PLACEMENTS FOR FRAIL OLDER PEOPLE AND OLDER PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 9 May 2002	Ref: JD/RM/NMcD	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee on attempts to secure contracts with Independent Care Homes, for the provision of respite placements for frail older people and older people with dementia. The report also seeks permission to enter into a contract with one independent care home and seeks permission for further negotiations around securing additional respite placements.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Members will recall that the Social Work Committee of 25 October 2001 approved a Local Outcome Agreement prepared by the Council and its Health partners, in respect of the allocation of additional recurring funding to the Council, by the Scottish Executive, in line with recommendations of the Royal Commission which reported on the long term care of older people.
- 2.2. Among the areas which the Scottish Executive wished Councils to improve their services, was their ability to provide "more short breaks for those providing the most care." Money was specifically targeted within the Executive's allocation to North Lanarkshire to develop short breaks for older people and their carers.
- 2.3. In the joint agreement which was submitted to the Scottish Executive by the Council and NHS Lanarkshire, it was reported that additional money invested into the Departments own home support services would increase the opportunities for carers to have respite from caring for a dependent older person, living in their own home. It was also indicated however that the Council intended to purchase places in the independent care home sector, to supplement the places available within the Council's own older people's residential accommodation.
- 2.4. Consultation carried out among carers and through the Joint Community Care Consultation process, supported the intention to secure care home placements within the independent sector for those service users and carers who wish to take the opportunity to secure "breaks" and required this facility.
- 2.5. Within this context, it was proposed that places be purchased across North Lanarkshire so that each of the 6 social work area teams would have the facility to use 2 beds in suitable care home settings and that this be done by purchasing 12 placements across North Lanarkshire for use all year round. The reason for this proposal related to the lack of capacity within the independent sector to provide regular and guaranteed places for those requiring this form of short term care.

- 2.6. Unfortunately, the dispute which had developed nationally at that time between independent nursing home owners and Councils, meant that any attempt to tender for places, would be met with little or no response, due to the sensitivity of the ongoing negotiations around charging levels at that time.
- 2.7. Currently, independent care homes fall into different categories of registration (previously a function of NHS Lanarkshire but as of 1 April 2002, the Care Commission), in situations where nursing care is required as part of the registration. Homes are registered as suitable for frail older people but those which are suitable for people with mental health or dementia problems are registered, indicating this. The majority of independent care homes are not currently registered to provide care for people with a medical diagnosis of dementia or serious mental health difficulty and therefore the choice available within North Lanarkshire is somewhat restricted for people who have these difficulties.

3. THE TENDER PROCESS

- 3.1. In line with discussions with users, carers and social work staff, it was agreed that a range of geographic location as well as capacity for caring with both frail older people and people with dementia, needed to be available. To this end, initial invitations were sent to all independent nursing homes currently on the Council's List of Approved Services, inviting them to express an interest in providing 2 places for respite accommodation within their unit.
- 3.2. Along with the letter was a proforma which asked units to provide brief details around the type of accommodation being offered, staffing levels, level of training within the Unit and registered status.
- 3.3. The response from this initial letter was quite poor and information which emerged, revealed that there was some confusion about the status of notional cost which care homes were being asked to express in the note of interest, some concerns about affecting the level of negotiations still to be concluded around the standard nursing home rate and misunderstandings around the payment arrangements proposed by the Council.
- 3.4. Due to this a further letter was sent to the providers clarifying the position above and again asking them to indicate whether they wished to be considered for submitting a full tender.
- 3.5. As a result of interest sought from 21 care homes, only 6 indicated an interest in pursuing the tendering process and one of these homes, advised that the new accommodation which they proposed to offer for respite places, would not be completed until August 2002 at the earliest.
- 3.6. A draft proposed contract for securing places in nursing homes was prepared by social work staff and staff from the Legal Services Section of the Council. This along with a tender application document (agreed by Legal Services), covering the care standards outlined for use by the new Care Commission, was sent to the 6 establishments who had indicated an interest on 21 March and a closing date for the submission was set for noon on 15 April 2002.
- 3.7. In line with Council standing orders, the tenders were submitted to the Department of Administration and opened by an Officer of the Council and the Convenor of Social Work. Although 6 tender applications had been expected, only 3 were submitted by noon on the 15 April.
- 3.8. The 3 tender applications were considered by officers of the social work department and the written material submitted was evaluated against the Care Standards. Interviews were also arranged for representatives from the 3 organisations to be seen by 3 officers of the council so that further information about their applications could be shared and the evaluation process further informed.
- 3.9. Two representatives from each of the 3 organisations which submitted tender were interviewed and the information which they provided, further clarified the information at hand. This information consisted of visits by officers of the council to the units tendering for the contracts, evaluation of the written information provided by the tendering organisations and information from the interviews which were conducted by officers of the council and the units representatives.

- 3.10 All of this information was set against the views of carers which had contributed to the contract being pursued and an evaluation score allocated against the proposed offers of places by the care homes. One of the care homes however in interview indicated that they were not prepared to tender for the contract against some of the conditions outlined in the draft contract. The interview with this organisation therefore did not proceed as they indicated they did not wish to be considered unless fundamental changes were made to some of the proposed payment arrangements.
- 3.11 A scoring format to consider the tender applications had been devised prior to the interviews and this covered 12 main areas:-

The physical resource, management arrangements, systems and procedures around admission and discharge of service users, communication links with the social work department and carers, capacity for provision of the service, management experience, respite experience, induction and training of staff, transport provision, information from previous inspection and monitoring reports, cost and best value.

4. RESULTS OF THE TENDERING PROCESS AND EVALUATION

- 4.1. One of the homes, Arran House Airdrie, was evaluated as offering a satisfactory quality service for frail older people. The establishment can offer 2 single rooms with ensuite facilities in a relatively discreet area of the residential unit at a cost of £386 per week for each place (until the new nursing care rate takes effect in April 2003). The other Unit which was evaluated, did not demonstrate the capacity to provide such good facilities and standards nor did it meet best value.
- 4.2. Unfortunately therefore at this stage, it would appear that efforts to secure the resources to improve the quality of life for older people and their carers, would be restricted to 2 placements in Airdrie to serve the whole of North Lanarkshire. In addition, as Arran House is not registered for people with medically diagnosed dementia, it is not possible to provide a guaranteed placement for those requiring this service for the moment.
- 4.3. Officers of the Council have been advised by some establishments which indicated that they would be submitting a tender to the Council, that they still wish to be considered but for a variety of reasons eg. the facility yet not being open, they had not submitted on time for consideration in the current round.
- 4.4. Approval to seek 12 contracted places for older people in the independent sector has already been proposed and endorsed by the Social Work Committee and partners in NHS Lanarkshire through the Local Outcome Agreement submitted to the Scottish Executive in October 2001.

5. CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

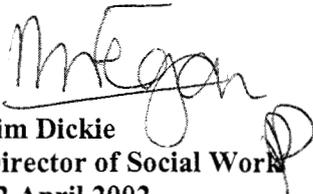
- 5.1 The provision of contracted respite placements has already been secured within the financial resources allocated to the Social Work Department and does not require additional funding to be made available from the Council.
- 5.2 Until further work can be concluded around securing additional places for frail older people and older people with dementia, the Council will not be able to provide a level of service which it wishes to and which is sought by carers and supported by partners in NHS Lanarkshire.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Committee is asked to:-

- a) Approve the award of a contract to Arran House Nursing Home, Airdrie for the provision of 2 places at the rate of £385 per bed until April 2003 and then in line with further reporting to Committee.
- b) Agree that Officers of the Social Work Department can pursue negotiations with local providers to obtain further respite contracts for frail older people and older people with dementia and report further proposals to Committee.
- c) Committee is asked to note that detailed implementation will be progressed jointly by the Director of Social Work and Head of Legal Services.

6.2. A further report outlining progress and further recommendations will be brought to a future meeting of the Social Work Committee.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
22 April 2002

For further information on this report please contact Robert Miller, Development Manager - TEL: (01698 332069)