

AGENDA ITEM NO. 14 (i)

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS:- RECONFIGURATION AND RESTRUCTURE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGH-CARE SERVICES
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 22 AUGUST 2002	Ref: SD/JM	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 To advise of the new duties for the Council arising from the Regulation of Care Act 2001 and to seek approval for the subsequent reconfiguration and restructure of the Social Work Children and Families Throughcare Service.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Throughcare and Aftercare Services are provided by the Council in line with its statutory duties and powers as defined in the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995.
- 2.2 These duties relate to young people previously looked after by the Local Authority who have not attained the age of nineteen and the powers relate to those up to twenty one years.
- 2.3 The Throughcare Service in North Lanarkshire is currently provided by two teams based in Motherwell and Airdrie and managed by the respective Area Service Managers.
- 2.4 The Regulation of Care Act 2001 places new responsibilities on Authorities which include minimum standards for Throughcare and Aftercare.
- 2.5 Throughcare and Aftercare will be subject to a statutory performance indicator, which requires Local Authorities to have contact with care leavers for a minimum period of twelve months.
- 2.6 In April 2004 responsibility for financial support of 16 and 17 years old care leavers will transfer from the Department of Works and Pensions to the Local Authority (ie. the Social Work Department)
- 2.7 Care leavers must be considered a priority in relation to the "Supporting People" agenda and Transitional Housing Benefit forms have been completed for the current population.
- 2.8 It is known that young people previously looked after and accommodated often do not experience positive outcomes. They are more likely than other young people to have low educational outcomes, be unemployed, become homeless and receive custodial sentences within the criminal justice system.
- 2.9 The Throughcare team must be at the forefront of promoting and progressing positive outcomes for care leavers.

3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. The new responsibilities and requirements have implications for delivery of Throughcare and Aftercare services within North Lanarkshire.

3.2. The present staffing of the two teams is:

- 2 Senior Social Workers, Grade P02/5
- 5 Resource Workers, Grade AP4/5/QSW
- 8 Support Workers, Grade AP1
(All of the above receive 7 ½ % irregular hours allowance)
- 2 Clerical Assistants, Grade GS1/2

The present budget for the two teams is £408 905, which includes running costs including property costs, groupwork and payments to carers.

3.3 Care Management responsibility is currently held by the area team, not the Throughcare Service.

3.4 The Council sets aside monies to assist relevant young people in terms of Section 29 Children (Scotland) Act 1995. This is administered by area teams.

3.5 Consideration has been given to how best the Social Work Department can meet all the new requirements and responsibilities in delivering quality Throughcare and Aftercare Services.

3.6 New requirements -

New responsibilities and requirements include:

- The provision of financial Support to 16/17 years old care leavers
- The establishment of local procedures to deal with appeals and complaint
- Meeting Statutory Performance Indicators
- Meeting the requirement of National Standards
- Local Authorities to have a clear policy statement with written procedures and practice guidance.
- Leaving Care Plans to be put in place at an early stage
- Maintenance of an inter-agency approach to planning and service delivery
- Ensuring that Throughcare and Aftercare have a high profile within Children's Service Planning process
- Adoption of a specialist team model within Authorities

3.7. The responsibilities detailed in 3.6 mean that a revised Throughcare Team will now have as its primary functions:

- Assessment
- Care Management
- Programme Delivery
- Links to other agencies
- Support for employment
- Links with Further Education
- Provision of financial support to young people in line with DSS transfer of monies

3.8. The functions are enhanced as they will now include assessment and care management functions as stated in 3.3. It is proposed that, as a result, a number of posts are aligned with posts with similar responsibilities within the Authority.

- 3.9. A post of Co-ordinator Throughcare, Grade P05 needs to be created to have operational responsibility for the service planning, delivery and budget management. The Grade reflects changes to the balance of developmental and line Management responsibilities.

The Co-ordinator, Throughcare will be responsible for progressing the Strategic Development of the Service within the Children's Service Planning Structure.

The Co-ordinator, Throughcare will be responsible for planning, implementing and reviewing new budgetary, administration, assessment, review and management systems.

- 3.10. The new team will require additional posts for the increased administration and financial duties including systems for payments and an appeals and complaints procedure.
- 3.11. The grade of Care Managers, AP4/5/QSW, proposed for this service, reflects the new responsibilities of the service and is similar to the roles, tasks and responsibilities of Care Managers within the Learning Disability framework, recently approved by Committee.
- 3.12. The new post of Health Liaison Officer reflects the executive's commitment to support the health and well being of vulnerable young people who have previously been Looked After and Accommodated. The remit will focus on establishing and maintaining a close working relationships with Health professionals in order to impact positively on young people who have health related difficulties.
- 3.13. The proposed change of grade and role from Support Workers, Grade AP1 to Social Work Assistant, Grade AP2/3, reflects a requirement to undertake tasks similar to those of a Social Work Assistant within an Area Team.
- 3.14. Additional administrative support is required to support the new arrangements and additional responsibilities. It is proposed that posts of Administrative Assistant, Grade AP1, and Senior Clerical Assistant, Grade GS3 are created to manage these responsibilities.

4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The additional costs associated with this proposed development will be met from "Supporting People" monies and funds available from the Scottish Executive for infrastructure costs for the transfer of benefits.
- 4.2. The overall financial effects of the personnel changes will be an additional cost of £38,783. These costs will be available from "Supporting People" monies.

The revised structure, now proposed to Committee is:

- 1 Co-ordinator (Throughcare), Grade P05
- 1 Senior Social Worker, Grade P02/5 + 7 ½ % irregular hours allowance
- 3 Care Managers, Grade AP4/5/QSW + 7 ½ % irregular hours allowance
- 8 Social Work Assistants, Grade AP2/3 + 7 ½ % irregular hours allowance
- 1 Health Liaison Officer Grade, Grade AP4/5
- 1 Admin Assistant, Grade AP1
- 1 Senior Clerical Assistant, Grade GS3
- 2 Clerical Assistant / Typists Grade GS1/2

- 4.3. The personnel implications are as follows:

Post	Implications
Throughcare Co-ordinator	Create 1 post, Grade PO5
Senior Social Worker	Delete 1 post, Grade PO2/5
Resource Workers	Delete 2 posts, Grade AP4/5/QSW
Care Managers	Re-designate 3 Resource Workers to Care Manager, Grade AP4/5/QSW
Social Work Assistants	Regrade Support Workers to Social

Health Liaison Officer	Work Assistant (AP1 to AP2/3)
Admin Assistant	Create 1 post, Grade AP4/5
Senior Clerical Assistant	Create 1 post, Grade AP1
Clerical Assistants / Typist	Create 1 post, Grade GS3
	Retain current establishment

5. ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

- 5.1 At present most young people leaving care do not have a range of accommodation options. Many of them go into homeless and hostel accommodation some live with supported carers. Supported carers can offer support to young people making the transition to adulthood but who are not ready to live on their own. At present the Department has ten supported carers offering fifteen places and as a result are a greatly oversubscribed resource. It will be a priority for the Throughcare service to recruit, assess and retain more supported carers. In the first year of the restructured service the target is to recruit 5 new carers.
- 5.2 Payments to carers (£93,600) are made via the Section 29 budget and 40% of the total is claimed back from housing benefit. Sixteen and seventeen year old care leavers will no longer be eligible to claim housing benefit after the transfer of benefits from the Department of Works and Pensions in April 2004.
- 5.3 The Section 29 budget (£186,123) will be transferred to the Throughcare team from Area Teams to support the wider responsibilities outlined in the Regulations of Care Act.
- 5.4 Many of the young people who would be placed with supported carers are vulnerable young people experiencing a range of difficulties such as alcohol/drug misuse, offending behaviour, relationship difficulties and poor negotiating skills. It is clear that supported carers are being asked to offer care and support to challenging individuals and should be recompensed appropriately.
- 5.5 Supported carers are paid less than other carers used by the Social Work Department although they now undergo similar assessment (BAAF Form F) and scrutiny and are approved Adoption, Fostering and Family Placement Panel as approved at Operations and Services Sub Committee on 9 May 2002.

It is recommended that supported carers should receive an allowance on a similar scale to foster carers. It is recommended the weekly supported carers allowance should increase to £250. This may also assist with the recruitment and retention of carers. The required increase of £200,000 will be paid from the increase in budget funded by "Supporting People" monies.

- 5.6 The team must be involved in a range of priority developments. These include:
- Early identification and needs assessments of young people looked after and accommodated
 - Recruitment and assessment of carers
 - Developments of protocols and services with Housing Department
 - Development of integrated services to young care leavers
 - Links to Careers, training agencies, Health
 - Links and development of protocols with Housing Associations
- 5.9 The present budget is not sufficient for the service to develop and funds should be made available from supporting people monies to ensure requirements can be met for increased staff and running costs.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Committee is requested to:

- (i) Note the proposed service developments
- (ii) Approve the following staffing changes

Throughcare Co-ordinator	Create 1 post, Grade PO5
Senior Social Worker	Delete 1 post, Grade PO2/5
Resource Workers	Delete 2 posts, Grade AP4/5/QSW
Care Managers	Re-designate 3 Resource Workers to Care Manager, Grade AP4/5/QSW
Social Work Assistants	Regrade Support Workers, Grade AP1 to Social Work Assistant, Grade AP2/3
Health Liaison Officer	Create 1 post, Grade AP4/5
Admin Assistant	Create 1 post, Grade AP1
Senior Clerical Assistant	Create 1 post, Grade GS3

- (iii) Approve the application of 7.5% irregular hours allowance to the staff groups detailed in Section 4.2.
- (iv) Approve the use of Supporting People monies to progress the proposed service developments
- (v) Remit to Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee for consideration.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
August 14th 2002

(For further information on this report please contact Susan Devlin, Manager, Children and Families and Criminal Justice Tel: 01698 332032)