

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH LANARKSHIRE RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE SERVICES.
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 22 AUGUST 2002	Ref: JB	

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. To advise the committee of the ongoing activity being undertaken to improve the quality of the Council’s Residential Child Care Sector.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. This report provides further information on action being taken to continue to improve the quality of service provided as well as action being undertaken to robustly progress a number of recommendations contained within the Scottish Institute Residential Child Care (SIRCC) Report.

**3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS**

3.1. Partnerships with health.

- 3.1.1 Officers from North and South Lanarkshire Council continue to be involved in Lanarkshire Health Board’s strategic Review of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services across Lanarkshire.
- 3.1.2 The review, in line with nationally identified priorities, is robustly considering services provided for young people who are Looked After and Accommodated. Issues such as diet, smoking, self harm, mental health, sexual health as well as drug and alcohol misuse remain at the forefront of this review process and may be the focus of Service development.
- 3.1.3 The Community Adolescent Mental Health Teams (CAMS) have been given additional monies by the Health Board to appoint 8 additional Case Managers. These posts will help reduce the services long waiting list and consequently offer an improved service to young people who are Looked After and Accommodated.

3.2. Education of young people who are Looked After and Accommodated

- 3.2.1 The E.L.A.C Project (Education of Looked After Children Project), has been expanded. The provision of 2 extra teaching posts will offer a range of appropriate support to Looked After

and Accommodated young people in line with the executive's targets for the educational achievement. The additional full time teaching posts will operational from August 2002 providing direct support to young people in Residential and Foster care as well as advice and guidance to staff and carers.

The former Pentland School building in Chryston, as previously reported, has been developed into a resource base. The base now offers a range of educational support materials and equipment, which can be accessed on a loan basis, by residential staff, foster parents or other appropriate local authority staff.

- 3.2.2 The integration of the SEEMIS (Education Department IT System) and the SWIS (Social Work Information System) allowing officers from both Departments to track the attendance of Looked After and Accommodated Young People will be operational for the start of the new school term in August 2002. A staff-training programme for Social work Department Officers will take place during July 2002.
- 3.2.3 The Social Work Department and Education Department organised a conference/training event on 28/29 May 2002. The training was also made available to officers and Foster Parents from South Lanarkshire and Glasgow Council. The training event focused on the support and literacy needs of Looked After and Accommodated Young People and was delivered by the National Literacy Association in conjunction with Who Cares?. The event was considered to be huge success and provided an opportunity to discuss and review best practice.
- 3.3 A Programme of Summer activities is in operation for each Residential Child Care Unit in order to ensure that young people's school holiday period is constructively utilised. This programme, supported by the Authority's commitment to provide free access to leisure facilities, recognises the value of leisure time for young people in relation to stimulating life long interests, reducing unfocused free time along with the related health benefits. The Authority has provided leisure passes to all young people who are Looked After and Accommodated in order that they can access the authority's range of leisure facilities free of charge. One children's home will be taking a small number of young people on holiday to Spain. This follows on from two previous successive trips.
- 3.4 Partnerships with Strathclyde Police
- Positive relationships with the community Safety Branch of Strathclyde Police continue to develop following the joint training day reported to Committee May 2002. Each Residential Child Care Unit has an identified link officer. Police Officers visit regularly to informally engage staff and young people on a number of common issues in line with effective Community Policing Models.
- 3.5 Neighbourhood Meetings
- 3.5.1 Neighbourhood Meetings continue, as previously discussed, offering a forum for constructive criticism as well as Service Review. It is reported by officers, neighbours and elected members that the meetings are viewed as productive allowing consultation to take place as well as developing a common understanding of the role, task and challenges of working with young people who are looked after and accommodated in Children's Units.
- 3.5.2 Building Maintenance
- The issue of building maintenance remains ongoing in line with the Council's responsibility to provide care for young people with regard to National Standards. Improved relationships between Departments is contributing to an enhanced environment for young people within our Children's Units.

3.5.3 The Department has advertised the vacant posts of Unit Manager (Cecil Street) and Depute (Mitchell Street and Pine Court). The response to the adverts has been positive.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 As committee to note contents of this report and ask the Director of Social Work to provide update as appropriate.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**3 July 2002**

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