

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: COMMUNITY CARE: A JOINT FUTURE – PROGRESS IN NORTH LANARKSHIRE
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 24 OCTOBER 2002	Ref: DM/SWC	

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. To advise Committee of progress being made in North Lanarkshire to implement the Scottish Executive's community care policy of A Joint Future.

## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1. "Community Care: A Joint Future" is the title of the report published in December 2000 by the Joint Future Group, the community care policy making wing of the Scottish Executive. It contained various recommendations which were accepted, with minor amendments, by Ministers in January 2001. The Executive subsequently issued 10 circulars on the subject between August 2001- March 2002 in which the expected priority of this policy for the NHS and local authorities was repeatedly reinforced.

2.2. The recommendations were grouped under five main headings:

- **Rebalancing care of older people** – creating more home support and respite services and moving away from the reliance on institutional forms of care.
- **Improving joint working** – developing single shared assessments and information sharing across agencies; integrating equipment and adaptation services and rationalising OT services.
- **Planning, financial and service management frameworks** – agreeing programmes for joint resourcing and management, initially for services for older people.
- **Charging** - COSLA to develop guidance to reduce inconsistencies in charging policies; free home care for first 4 weeks after leaving hospital and free "extended home care" (since covered by free personal care policy).
- **Good practice**- Executive to lead on sharing good practice nationally.

2.3. Joint planning partners were subsequently required to submit Local Partnership Agreements detailing their plans for implementing A Joint Future, paying specific regard to the "building blocks" of joint management arrangements; joint resourcing; human resource arrangements; and action plans for 2002/03.

### **3. PROGRESS TO DATE**

#### 3.1. Prominent achievements to date include:

- Establishing new joint planning and management arrangements, the top tier of which is the Health and Care Partnership, chaired by the Convener of Social Work.
- Submitting a Local Partnership Agreement in April 2002 which set out initial plans to deliver A Joint Future.
- Expanding services to older people, including early supported discharge and rapid response teams; and increased short breaks.
- Creating electronic single shared assessment between the Council and the NHS, governed by information sharing protocols, and currently the subject of a training programme for 350 staff.
- Opening a joint equipment service in May 2002 for people with disabilities.

### **4. SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE FEEDBACK**

- 4.1. Feedback on the content of the Local Partnership Agreement and progress to date in North Lanarkshire was received in a letter from the Scottish Executive dated 19 August 2002. This recognises the context of established joint working in North Lanarkshire and the inclusive approach that has been taken with stakeholders. It goes on to address the 4 priority areas identified in paragraph 2.3, in all cases seeking an update in November 2002.
- 4.2. Joint management arrangements – there is strong support for the tiered approach which has established the Health & Care Partnership at a senior level and Local Care Partnerships within localities. These arrangements are said to “more than fulfil the bottom line requirements and the partners are to be commended on their thinking and progress to date.”
- 4.3. Joint resourcing – it recognises that “the partners’ intentions... are positive and based on considerable experience of the flexible deployment of resources” but that details of the actual budgets to be aligned were still required.
- 4.4. Human resources - it states that the initial Local Partnership Agreement does not cover the 3 human resources “bottom line” requirements in detail but that work is being progressed locally.
- 4.5. Action plan – the Executive state that “the partners are to be commended on this work” to date, acknowledging that it was at an outline stage at the time of the initial submission.
- 4.6. In general it is considered that the Executive feedback is fair and balanced. There is acknowledgement from all the partners that the major outstanding tasks relate to financial frameworks and human resources plans. These are currently the subject of intensive joint working between agencies.
- 4.7. Agreement has been reached with the Scottish Executive to submit the additional information required, together with updates on other areas on activity, after the next meeting of the Health & Care Partnership in December 2002.

## 5. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The partners' approach, in terms of financial arrangements, has been to adopt aligned budgets whereby each agency remains accountable for their own resources.
- 5.2. The partners are required to prepare an initial Statement of Intent in regard to human resources issues, to be followed by an Organisational Development and Training Plan by March 2003. These documents will be developed by a partnership involving Personnel staff from the Council, NHS Lanarkshire and the trade unions.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1. Committee is asked to:
  - (i) note the progress made towards implementation of "A Joint Future" in North Lanarkshire; and
  - (ii) request the Director of Social Work to report further progress to a future Committee; and
  - (iii) remit this report to Policy & Resources Committee for their interest and consideration; and
  - (iv) otherwise note the content of this report.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**16 September 2002**

*For further information on this report please contact Duncan Mackay, Manager, Community Care Partnerships (TEL: 01698 332072)*