

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: PROPOSED FUNDING LANARKSHIRE LINKS
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 24 OCTOBER 2002	Ref: JD/RM/NMcD	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Committee's approval to contribute to corporate funding of a newly constituted voluntary organisation, Lanarkshire Links, an organisation to promote the views and aspirations of service users who have mental health difficulties and their carers.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Currently in Scotland, there is a strong commitment to the notion of meaningful participation by service users and carers, in the planning and development of services in the public sector, through a range of different approaches.
- 2.2. With regard to mental health services, there has been official support for involving service users and carers to be more actively involved in planning, since the publication, in 1997 by the Scottish Office, of guidelines entitled "A Framework for Mental Health Services in Scotland." This document highlighted the need to change the way in which health services were delivered and indicated the importance of service users and carers having an integral part to play in the planning, development, evaluation and review of mental health services.
- 2.3. This approach has been confirmed in various other directives from the Scottish Executive, including direction around patient involvement and more recently, in the new Mental Health Bill which is intended to modernise mental health provision in Scotland
- 2.4. In Lanarkshire, the Joint Mental Health Steering Group, (a strategic planning pan Lanarkshire group comprising of health, social work and other partner representatives), and it agreed to establish a Service User and Carer Involvement Team which would facilitate users and carers becoming more involved in the various strategic processes around services.
- 2.5. In line with an application to the Scottish Executive, this body received funding from the Scottish Executive's Health Development Fund, to promote the establishment of an independent body representing users and carers of mental health services in Lanarkshire.
- 2.6. In August 2001, after a pan Lanarkshire meeting for agencies and individuals interested in developing community care services, the "New Lanark Group" was formed. This group was comprised of individuals with mental health difficulties and carers supporting people with mental health problems (including dementia). Some members of the New Lanark Group had been involved previously, in working with the Service User Involvement Team and the group, readily developed enough confidence, to ensure that it became independent from statutory agencies in the pursuit of promoting service users and carers interests.

- 2.7. In order for this group to take on the role of a fully independent management group, representing users and carers, the Consultation and Involvement Trust Scotland (CITS) was commissioned by Lanarkshire Health Board to provide support to the group to complete this process.
- 2.8. From April 2002, funding (now from NHS Lanarkshire), was administered by CITS on behalf of the New Lanark Group. The work undertaken by CITS and the New Lanark Group resulted in the development and agreement of a constitution and the organisation was launched under its new name of Lanarkshire Links at a public event on 12 June 2002.
- 2.9. Lanarkshire Links Constitution states that its purpose is to – “to relieve poverty, sickness and distress and to advance education in Lanarkshire, through:-
- Improving services for people who use mental health services and their carers and relatives.
 - Eradicating discrimination and promoting equality for mental health service users and their carers and relatives.
- 2.10 The organisation seeks to achieve the above mentioned goals through:- increasing the involvement and influence of service users and carers in the development of services; developing a Lanarkshire wide network of local groups which share its aims and objectives tackling public and professional discrimination; and; publication and distribution of “Mental Health Matters” a quarterly news letter which provides information for people who have mental health difficulties, their carers and agencies engaged in planning or providing services.
- 2.11 Lanarkshire Links seeks to carry out the broad range of tasks and goals noted above through a variety of means:- establishing and supporting local groups; contributing to the work of Design Teams (local groups which try to shape services in line with local circumstances, in each of the eight Resource Networks in Lanarkshire); publicising mental health issues; and; supporting service users and carers to participate in the planning, development and review, of statutory and voluntary sector providers of services. In addition Links’ a role for encouraging participation of all relevant parties and training events, with a view to integrating genuine partnership working.

3. CURRENT FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1. As noted above, from 1 April 2002, funding from the NHS Lanarkshire Board has been administered by CITS and agreement has been reached with the NHS Lanarkshire Board, for it to continue the current rate of funding in this financial year. The Board has also agreed financial support for 2003/04 and 2004/05, at an annual rate of £75,000.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1. As noted at 3.1 above, NHS Lanarkshire has agreed to commit £75,000 per annum for this and the 2 subsequent financial years. CITS, up until now, and Lanarkshire Links since the election of office bearers in September 2002, are seeking funding from North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council to augment that already committed by NHS Lanarkshire.
- 4.2. The estimated funding of Lanarkshire Links is assessed as requiring £120,000 per annum. NHS Lanarkshire have already committed full year costs for financial year 2002/03 but Lanarkshire Links are requesting half year costs for the balance of the annual budget for the current financial year and thereafter full year support for years 2 and 3. The table below sets out the currently agreed funding and proposed arrangements for Links.
- 4.3. It is anticipated that the organisation will seek independent financial funding during the period up until April 2005 and that it will be independent of statutory agencies by that time. Any funding beyond April 2005 would require a reassessment of the organisations main objectives and performance. In the meantime, the organisation would require to submit regular reports to a group of officers from Social Work and Health, acting as a monitoring group for the organisations activities.

Current Agreed and Proposed Funding Arrangements

	April 2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	Total Costs April 2002/March 2005
NHS Lanarkshire Board	Agreed £75,000	Agreed £75,000	Agreed £75,000	Agreed £225,000
North Lanarkshire Council Social Work Department	Proposed £11,250	Proposed £22,500	Proposed £22,500	Proposed £56,250
South Lanarkshire Council Social Work Department	Agreed £11,250	Agreed £22,500	Agreed £22,500	Agreed £56,250

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. As noted above, agreement to support the application for funding would result in a financial commitment of £22,500 per annum (half year costs for the current financial year and £22,500 for years 2 and 3). The total commitment to the Council would therefore be £56,250 over the 3 year period, which would be met from existing resources for community care.
- 5.2. It is anticipated that Lanarkshire Links should be able to develop alternative funding sources to meet further commitments beyond April 2005 and part of their management task will be to secure such funding arrangements.
- 5.3. Any proposed changes to the financial support for the organisation or requests for additional funding beyond that approved above, would be reported to a future committee for consideration.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Committee is asked to approve the proposed funding of Lanarkshire Links, as noted above, until April 2005, in line with NHS Lanarkshire Board and South Lanarkshire Council's commitment to their share of the funding.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
3 October 2002

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