

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: SOCIAL WORK ENTRY PROGRAMME	
From: J DICKIE, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 24 OCTOBER 2002	Ref: JS/CR/0205PT	

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the current position regarding the training of Student Social Workers and to seek approval for the alteration of arrangements to create posts.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. This report is associated with the reports, presented to Committee in May 2002, which concerned the introduction of the Social Work Entry Programme. The programme brought forward proposals to support the training and development of Social Workers within the Social Work Department. The proposals linked the development of students to ongoing employment with the Council.
- 2.2. Committee gave approval for the recruitment of 15 staff each year, over the next 3 years, to be employed as Peripatetic Care Workers, while being supported to undertake professional training as Social Workers.
- 2.3. It has been known for some time that the qualification to practice as a Social Worker, the Diploma in Social Work, (DipSW), will change to that of an honours degree, which incorporates the professional qualification.
- 2.4. There is concern that, in the period of transition from the Diploma to the degree, that there will be a shortfall in the numbers qualifying in Scotland. This is set against the existing national shortage.
- 2.5. It has now been clarified that the last entry to full time Diplomas will be September 2003 and the Open University Distance Learning Programme supported by this Department, February 2004. This change is being introduced earlier than has been understood to date.
- 2.6. Social Work has implemented the Social Work Entry Programme, approved in May, appointing the first tranche of staff.

### 3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Given the change outlined above, it is proposed that Social Work be allowed to bring forward plans to employ a further 15 staff as Peripatetic Care Workers, Grade RW 12 - 16 in 2003, and 15 in 2004, to allow the Department to support additional staff through the Open University Diploma in Social Work, while this route remains available.
- 3.2 Bringing this plan forward will allow the Department to maximise the opportunity currently available to support the training of Social Workers through the most cost effective route available, to manage the problems which will be associated with the transition to the degree, and to meet its statutory obligations.

- 3.3 During the period of development and secondment to the distance learning programme, the staff will be used flexibly over 7 days, providing necessary cover within residential and day care settings to supplement core staffing. Over a period of 12 - 18 months they will gain experience in the various fields of residential care, day care, and fieldwork.
- 3.4 The costs will be largely offset by savings in current arrangements for providing temporary cover in residential and day care services.
- 3.5 After satisfactory completion of the Diploma in Social Work, the individual would be contracted to work with the Council for a period of 2 years.
- 3.6 This would both serve the needs of the Department in providing service, would meet the needs of graduates in gaining a range of experience before professional training, and would improve the recruitment of qualified social work staff.

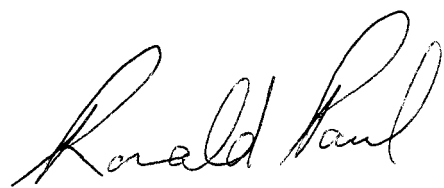
#### **4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. The cost of these proposals would be £5,000 for course fees, over 3 years, for each person seconded. The cost for care workers can be met from within existing care budgets.
- 4.2. It is anticipated that these proposals will, in the medium term, have a significant impact on the recruitment of social workers to the Council, producing social workers with not only the professional qualification, but with a well rounded experience of the range of social work services provided by North Lanarkshire Council.
- 4.3. The proposals will complement efforts being made to recruit social workers in the short term, and the development of Senior Practitioners, approved by Committee, to promote retention.
- 4.4. The proposals will support the Social Work Department in its capacity to meet its statutory responsibilities, and the requirements, which will be imposed through the introduction of Regulation of Care.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1. The Committee is asked to:

- Approve that Social Work brings forward the second and third phases of Social Work Entry Programme.
- Remit this report to the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub Committee for consideration.



PP. **Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**October 4<sup>th</sup> 2002**

For further information on this report please contact J Scott, Manager of Resources and Information TEL: (01698 332037)