

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS: PROPOSAL FOR REGRADING OF REHABILITATION OFFICER.
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 19 DECEMBER 2002	Ref: SKMCD/ST	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

To request that Committee approve the proposal to regrade and redesignate the three Rehabilitation Officer posts within the Sensory Impairment Service from AP2/3 to Mobility and Rehabilitation Officer at AP4/5.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Social work services for visually impaired people were reviewed by the former Strathclyde Regional Council. This led to the creation of specialist visual impairment teams in each of the 12 former districts. Rehabilitation Officers were integral to these teams and were required to carry out mobility and daily living programmes with visually impaired people.
- 2.2. The posts were graded AP2/3, on the understanding that someone without qualification could start in the post at AP2 and be moved to AP3 once they had obtained the required qualification which is a Diploma in Rehabilitation Studies (previously a Certificate in Rehabilitation.). Certain elements of the rehabilitation and mobility work cannot be carried out without this qualification.
- 2.3. Since re-organisation in 1996, the Social Work Department further reviewed the sensory impairment services and amalgamated the four existing Sensory Impairment Teams: (two for Visual Impairment and two for Hearing Impairment) into two teams (one for Visual Impairment and one for Hearing Impairment).
- 2.4. The Report "Sensing Progress: Social Work Services for People with a Sensory Impairment" produced by the Scottish Office in 1998, criticised local authorities for the lack of appropriately qualified personnel to carry out mobility and rehabilitation work, and recommended that they provide a qualified Rehabilitation and Mobility service.

3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. There are three Rehabilitation Officer posts which are managed by the Community Care Adults Section. They provide an authority wide service to people with sensory impairment.
- 3.2. In May 2001, North Lanarkshire Council Education Department created a Mobility Officer post at AP3/4 to provide a service to primary school children within North Lanarkshire Council schools. A Diploma (or Certificate) in Rehabilitation Studies is essential for this post.

- 3.3. The range and remit of this post is significantly less than that of the Rehabilitation Officers based within Social Work. The post within the Education Department only provides a service to primary school children who attend North Lanarkshire Council Schools.
- 3.4. In comparison, social work staff work with all age groups from babies and young children to older people. Their work includes:-
- Primary school children placed in schools outwith North Lanarkshire
 - All secondary school children within and placed outwith North Lanarkshire
 - Transitional Planning for 14/15 year olds with complex needs leaving secondary school
 - Full assessment and care management with children, adults, older people and their families
 - Provision of Sensory Awareness training to other social work staff, and the independent sector.
- 3.5. The assessment and care management element of the posts is not currently part of their existing job description, but is consistent with recommendation 5 in the Sensing Progress Report which requires local authorities to ensure that a visually impaired persons' wider needs are assessed as well as those relating to their visual loss.
- 3.6. The regrading proposal is therefore based on the requirement for a recognised qualification to undertake certain elements of their job description as well as changes in their job which are not detailed in their existing job description. (See Appendix 1).

4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The current annual cost for these posts (including 16% oncosts) is £58,022. The proposed regrading to AP4/5 would require a total annual cost of £74,945 (including oncosts) which represents an additional annual cost of £16,923 (salaries have been taken at the midpoint).
- 4.2. A revised job description has been prepared which more accurately reflects the wider remit that staff now exercise in the tasks they carry out, the greater responsibility now held for assessment and care management and the future development of the service.(see Appendix 2).
- 4.3. The Head of Personnel Services has been fully consulted regarding these proposals.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1. Committee is asked to:
- i) note the reasons for the proposed changes
 - ii) approve the redesignation of the post from "Rehabilitation Officer" to "Mobility and Rehabilitation Officer".
 - iii) Approve the regrading of this post from AP2/3 to AP 4/5.
 - iv) Remit to Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub – Committee for consideration.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
5th December 2002

APPENDIX 1

EXISTING JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: REHABILITATION OFFICER WITH BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE

DEPARTMENT: SOCIAL WORK

RESPONSIBLE TO: SENIOR SOCIAL WORKER WITH BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE

SECTION: COMMUNITY CARE (ADULTS)

GRADE: AP 2/3

MAIN DUTIES

1. Assist with the assessment of the needs of people with visual impairment.
2. Assist in the design of appropriate instruction programmes.
3. Teach daily living skills.
4. Fostering community awareness and self help groups.
5. To liaise in the planning of rehabilitation programmes for individual clients with appropriate workers.
6. Assist with the certification and rehabilitation process.
7. Advise clients on vocational and leisure activities.
8. Undertake any other duties as may be prescribed by the Director of Social Work.

APPENDIX 2

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Department: Social Work

Job Title: Mobility and Rehabilitation Officer

Responsible to: Senior Social Worker (Sensory Impairment)

Grade: AP4/5

Job Purpose

To work as part of the Sensory Impairment Team in providing services to people of all ages who have a sensory impairment. To make effective links with other sections and departments of the Council as well as working in partnership with health colleagues and voluntary organisations. To provide specialist rehabilitation services to this care group, which includes assessment and care management, and provision of appropriate rehabilitation packages.

Job Description: Key tasks required of the Mobility and Rehabilitation Officer include:

1. To undertake and/or to contribute to the assessment and care management services offered to people with a sensory impairment.
2. To design and implement specific rehabilitation packages including independent living skills, developing community awareness and safety within the home.
3. To produce reports, assessments, care plans and interventions in line with demand and departmental priorities and record all work undertaken in accordance with departmental needs and procedures.
4. To participate in formal consultation and supervision with respect to professional practice and development.
5. To provide advice, support and information to individuals, their carers and families on a range of issues relating to sensory loss.
6. To liaise and make effective links with appropriate staff within social work and other departments, health and voluntary organisations. To provide advice and support in a consultative role on issues relating to people with a sensory impairment.
7. To provide equipment designed to maintain independence, and to contribute to informing the future development of equipment services to people with sensory impairment.
8. To carry out mobility and access audits in a range of settings and to contribute to the development of a person's mobility.

9. To undertake and/or contribute to the Future Needs Assessments and Transitional Planning processes for young people leaving school.
10. To provide sensory awareness training to staff within the Council and others where appropriate.
11. To contribute to the training development of Mobility and Rehabilitation Officers, including offering student placements.
12. To carry out other tasks as designated by the Senior Social Worker (Sensory Impairment).