

REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: INLUDEM HOME PROJECT
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 19 DECEMBER 2002	Ref: JD/SD/LG	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

1.1 To seek committee approval to renew and expand the contract with Includem Home project. The present contract is due to expire on 31 march 2003.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The intensive service provided by Includem Home team was commissioned in April 2001 by North Lanarkshire Council Social Work Department.

2.2 The service was considered necessary to intervene with some of the most troubled and troublesome young people who were living in Departmental children's units.

2.3 There was a recognition that these young people needed an intensive service to stabilise a range of behaviours, challenge their behaviour and move on to alternative stable placements.

2.4 The service was to work with 16 of the most vulnerable young people known to the Social Work Department.

2.5 The service consists of 2 project workers and a pool of mentors. Management cover is provided by the manager of the Includem Offenders Project who receives a small responsibility payment to carry out the task. The original contract was for £133,981 for 2 years with start up costs of £11,602.

2.6 In addition an external evaluation by The Centre for The Child, Glasgow University was commissioned at a cost of £2500. This evaluation reflects that Includem have made a positive contribution.

2.7 The work of Includem Home is reviewed on a three monthly basis by senior Children and Families managers and monthly returns are submitted to the Monitoring and Standards section. In addition operational reviews are carried out by the co-ordinator Children and Families (the identified link officer) on a monthly basis.

3. PROPOSALS/CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The service has been reviewed in light of the forthcoming expiry of contract in March 2003.

- 3.2 The review concludes that Includem has been successful in stabilising the situation of some of the young people and assisting them to move on from their placements in children's units.
- 3.3 It is clear that Includem have been able to offer a service to the identified target group and have for most of the service duration worked with numbers significantly above the 16 places commissioned. This increase in the agreed numbers reflects that not all the young people receive a high level of service at all times.
- 3.4 It is recognised that the management arrangements require to be enhanced. A service working with young people who experience frequent crises and offers responsive, flexible arrangements need a dedicated management structure.
- 3.5 Includem is considered to be a valuable service, which is one of burgeoning range, aimed at working with the most troubled and troublesome of young people known to the Social Work Department.
- 3.6 The Department continues to view the aforementioned young people as a priority for intervention in line with National Policy and legal imperatives such as Regulation of Care Act, The Review of Youth Crime, The Changing Children's Services Fund, "Getting Our Priorities Right" and the recently published "It's Everyone's Job To Make Sure I'm Alright".
- 3.7 With this in mind there have been recent service developments agreed by Committee for example the establishment of Youth Justice Teams, the expansion of Rushes, the reconfiguration of Kirknowe to provide a community based direct alternative to residential care. Targeted at some of the same kind of young people Includem work with, these services are at an early stage and will need time to become established and to deliver positive outcomes.
- 3.8 The review concludes that Includem is a valuable service where demand has regularly exceeded capacity. This has meant service has been offered outwith the terms of the original specification, that is, increased use of mentor hours, increased demand of the 24 hour helpline and a knock on effect on practical and administrative costs.
- 3.9 It is recognised that the service should also have dedicated management arrangements in place.
- 3.10 The service remains necessary and some expansion is required to allow appropriate progression of service.

4. FINANCIAL/PERSONNEL/LEGAL/POLICY IMPLIICATIONS

- 4.1 Includem have requested an increase in the annual grant to enable an increase in capacity (50% approximately) and provide robust, dedicated management support. This is considered to be appropriate and necessary. The annual cost to the Council will increase to £215,498. Costs will be met from existing resources and supplemented by specific grant monies for children's services from The Scottish Executive.
- 4.2 In the year 2002/03 there is acknowledgement of increased service beyond capacity as outlined in paragraph 3.8. A further contribution from North Lanarkshire of £12,000 is necessary to fund this increase for the remainder of the year.
- 4.3 North Lanarkshire will draw up a new contract with Includem Home Project which will include a robust monitoring and reporting framework.
- 4.4 It is proposed that North Lanarkshire's payment to Includem Home will be £215,498 per annum (an increase of £79017) for the 2 years 2003/04 and 2004/05. (2004/05 will be subject to inflationary increase only.) This represents an increase to an existing service and is purchased in accordance with negotiated tendering procedures. The service will be reviewed prior to any further recommendation for continuation of contract.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Committee is asked to

- (i) Approve the recommendation to continue to purchase services from Includem Home.
- (ii) Approve payment of additional £12,000 for year 2002/03 for provision of increased capacity and subsequent expenditure.
- (iii) Approve increase in payment to Includem Home of £79,017 to £215,498 to allow expansion of service and to ensure dedicated manager for the service.
- (iv) Otherwise note the content of the report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
9 December 2002

For further information on this report please contact Susan Devlin, Manager Children and Families and Criminal Justice TEL: (01698 332190)