

Motherwell, 11 April 2003 at 9.30 am.

A Special Meeting of the **SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE**

PRESENT

Councillor H. McGuigan, Convener; Councillor Selfridge, Vice-Convener; Councillors Chadha, Coyle, Curley, Gordon, Jones, McCabe, Ross and Saunders.

CHAIR

Councillor H. McGuigan (Convener) presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Committee Services Officer, Director of Social Work, Head of Social Work Resources, Head of Social Work Services and Accounting Manager.

APOLOGIES

Councillors Love, McElroy, J. McGuigan, J. Martin and Sullivan.

RECRUITMENT OF SOCIAL WORKERS, SENIOR SOCIAL WORKERS AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

1. With reference to paragraph 16 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 27 February 2003 when, inter alia, it was agreed that the Council (1) offer a portion of funding at a level to be agreed with the Head of Personnel Services to students starting their final year in autumn 2003, and (2) develop a recruitment package to offer a wide range of benefits for Social Workers to assist with their retention and recruitment, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 2 April 2003 by the Director of Social Work setting out measures to improve the recruitment and retention of Social Workers, Senior Social Workers and Occupational Therapists in North Lanarkshire (a) outlining the background to the problems encountered in recruiting and retaining Social Workers in North Lanarkshire; (b) indicating that despite a number of innovative recruitment measures the Council had 60 vacancies out of an establishment of 200; (c) intimating that the recruitment difficulties had been exacerbated by the increasing demand for Social Workers due to National Social Policy Developments and increased competition in recruitment of Social Workers from other local Authorities, and (d) proposing that in order to improve recruitment and retention of Social Workers, Senior Social Workers and Occupational Therapists in North Lanarkshire (A) existing staff be provided with a lump sum of £5,000 equal to that already provided for newly qualified staff in return for a commitment to remain with the Council for a period of three years with the tax liability of £1,450 being met by the Council; (B) newly recruited Social Workers be placed on a point of the salary scale which is competitive with other Local Authorities; (C) a review of salary placings of current employees be carried out; (D) Senior Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapists be provided with a similar sum to that of Social Workers on the same terms and conditions, and (E) detailing the financial implications of the proposals.

Decided: that the measures outlined in Section 3 of the report to improve the recruitment and retention of Social Workers, Senior Social Workers and Occupational Therapists be approved.