

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS 2003/04	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 28 AUGUST 2003	Ref: DM	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report advises Committee of the use of additional resources in 2003/04 and seeks approval for specific service developments.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. New resources were made available within the 2003/04 local government settlement in order that the Social Work Department is able to meet a range of specified new responsibilities. The majority of new monies relate to community care. Resources relating to services for children and families are allocated and agreed through the Children's Services Strategy group and have been the subject of recent reports to Committee. Services for people delivered through the justice section are allocated and agreed through the partnership grouping and have also been the subject of recent reports to Committee.

3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. Services for Older People

Over the last three years the Scottish Executive have provided additional resources arising from the findings of the Royal Commission on long term care. The total amount allocated to North Lanarkshire was £2.8m. The final tranche of these monies entered budgets this year. The money was for clearly designated purposes designed to further shift the balance of care away from institutional settings towards care at home, which had to be agreed with joint planning partners and submitted in the form of a Local Outcome Agreement to the Scottish Executive. The use to which these monies is put is as follows, in keeping with the requirements of the Executive:

- Intensive home care packages, including services for people to be discharged from hospital or at risk of entering hospital for reasons which could be avoided if appropriate services were provided
- Shopping and household maintenance services
- Funding of four weeks free home care post hospital discharge
- Short breaks including respite care and extended day centre opening hours.

- 3.2. This has contributed to substantial growth in the home care budget to support people more intensively at home. The proportion of people now receiving ten or more hours care a week is almost one third of all service users, allowing many people to remain in their own home instead of entering institutional care, or be discharged timeously from hospital.

3.3. The scale of increase in the home care service has been dramatic and presented major issues of capacity for the Department to manage. In order to achieve this Committee approved the creation of a trip mechanism for Home Support Managers and clerical support posts. Since August 2002 application of the mechanism has led to the creation of 10 (APIV) posts of Home Support Manager and 10 (GS1/2) Clerical Assistant/Typists, one each within Airdrie, Coatbridge and Motherwell Area Teams, two each within Bellshill and Wishaw Area Teams and three within Cumbernauld Area Team. This has enabled the service to implement the following improvements in the last twelve months:

- Hours of support provided have increased from 2.32m to 2.93m (26%)
- Numbers of home support workers have increased from 1,226 to 1,812 (48%)
- Numbers of service users have increased from 4,582 to 5,275 (15%)
- Average level of provision per week per service user has increased from 8.9 hours to 9.4 hours, against a Scottish average of 6.8 hours.

3.4. As well as meeting care needs, assistance with meal preparation and other core tasks, the functions of the home care service include shopping. This is organised differently in different locations. It is considered that this could be managed more efficiently by some home care staff operating in shopping teams. This would entail the leasing of suitable vehicles to enable a large volume of shopping to be undertaken at one time. This is consistent with Executive policy and has already been introduced successfully elsewhere in Scotland. It is proposed to pilot this in one or two areas to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the scheme. The outcome of this, together with proposals to commission a household maintenance service (tasks which are not undertaken by Social Work), will be the subject of a future report to Committee.

3.5. There has also been significant growth in the purchase of home care services provided by independent sector organisations. Work is ongoing to establish the required scale and cost of these services.

3.6. Additionally budget growth allows the purchase of more community alarms. There are now over 8,000 people in North Lanarkshire with a community alarm. They provide a quick and cost effective way of summoning and receiving assistance. It is proposed to purchase a further 1,000 at an approximate cost of £100,000. Approval is sought to enter into a tendering process, the outcome of which will be reported to a future Committee.

3.7. Unlike the other monies allocated through this source, funds for short breaks were not confined solely to older people. The money contributed to funding the increased capacity of the new PHEW development; purchasing dedicated respite care beds for older people and extended day centre hours for older people, as reported to Committee in May 2003. The option of extending the number of dedicated beds in nursing homes is being further pursued.

3.8. Services for People with Learning Disabilities

Following production of the national strategy "The Same As You?" the Scottish Executive made additional resources available to local authorities over a three year period. The total amount allocated to North Lanarkshire was £998k. The use of these monies is agreed with partners and submitted to the Scottish Executive in the form of a Partnership in Practice Agreement. The final tranche of this money entered budgets this year and will be used to support implementation of the day opportunities review. This is the subject of a separate report to Committee. The funding has contributed to the development of a wide range of new services such as supported living and supported employment, which have been the subject of previous reports to Committee, and widely commended as examples of national best practice.

3.9. Services for People with Mental Health Problems

Whilst the Scottish Executive identified mental health as a national priority in 1997, almost all funding allocations are channelled through the NHS, who are considered to be lead partners in this area of activity. Consequently it has been difficult for the Social Work Department to achieve the desired scale of service improvements for this care group, though there has been additional staffing in all localities working as part of joint teams for people with severe and enduring mental illness.

3.10. Over the next three years there are small allocations for mental health contained within the settlement to support implementation of new mental health legislation. The total allocation for North Lanarkshire will be £832,000, though all but £49,000 enters budgets in 2004/05 and 2005/06. The Scottish Executive have specified what the money is for i.e. day and after care; additional Mental Health Officers and their training; and advocacy. Whilst the funding is very limited, it does enable the Department to support a long standing service user-led proposal to develop a Clubhouse. Social Work and Health are in dialogue with a group of service users to specify the design and location of the service, which would seek to provide day opportunities, mutual support and access to employment. An estimate of the full year cost of the service is around £80,000, half of which would fall to the Council. NHS Lanarkshire have indicated their support for the proposal but have not yet been able to identify funding. A detailed report will be presented to a future Committee.

3.11. Services for People with Physical Disabilities, Sensory Impairment or Head Injury

The Department is committed to improving services for people with physical disabilities, sensory impairment or head injury. Much previous effort has been focussed on redesigning services which have provided equipment and support to enable people to remain at home. This resulted in the creation of a Joint Equipment Service between Social Work and Health which has led to large reductions in waiting times for assessment and service. Progress is reported on a routine basis to Committee.

3.12. There are a number of priorities that Social Work would like to advance, including:

- Consolidating the joint equipment service
- Strengthening services for people with sensory impairment
- Introducing a community support model for people with physical disabilities, in keeping with day opportunities agenda being pursued with other care groups
- Enhancing assessment and care management capacity
- Improving access to respite care.

3.13. Available resources to meet these priorities are limited but are presently being quantified in light of the 2003/04 settlement. This will be the subject of a future report to Committee, informed by the recent well-attend "Open Space" consultation event and the ongoing Best Value of independent living services.

3.14. From June 2003 local authorities are required to make Direct Payments to service users who wish to make arrangements for services, provided their needs have been assessed accordingly, instead of the Department arranging services on their behalf. Previous reports to Committee approved the Council's scheme in this regard, including a tariff of funding. Where it is agreed that the assessed need is such that it can best be met by a specialist provider commissioned by the Council to undertake services in North Lanarkshire, the rate paid will be the rate approved for that organisation by Committee. The uptake of Direct Payments is not known at this stage, though it is likely to grow over time and it will be necessary to make some additional budget provision for this purpose. A report on implementation of the scheme will be presented to a future Committee.

3.15. There are regular reports to Committee on the provision of equipment and adaptations and the challenge posed by a year-on-year increase (locally and nationally) in assessed need of 15-20%. The Social Work Department are responsible for the funding and provision of equipment; the Housing Department are responsible for the funding and provision of adaptations. In 2002/03 the Council made additional resources available on a non-recurring basis, facilitating spend of £3.5m over the year, so enabling provision of equipment on the basis of assessed need. The gap between base budget and projected assessed need is estimated at between £1.5m and £2m in 2003/04. This is a situation that cannot simply be resolved in the longer term by the use of one-off budget enhancements. However it is proposed to commit £700,000 of development monies for this purpose on a non-recurring basis to help ease the scale of the problem.

3.16. Services for Carers

Within the Social Work budget there are monies which are ring-fenced for direct services to carers, which have to be agreed with carers' organisations prior to submission to the Executive. These funds total £627,500 and their use is regularly reported to Social Work Committee. The Executive have made no additional funding available since 2001/02. In recognition of the fact that there remains a need to expand services to carers, it is proposed to enhance this budget by £40,000 from community care monies in the 2003/04 budget. The use of these funds would be agreed by carers and reported to Committee in the usual way.

3.17. Supporting People

In 2002/03 considerable effort was expended to secure Transitional Housing Benefit. The claim of £23.6m was the second highest in Scotland. These monies meet the assessed needs of individuals for housing support and make a major contribution to the funding of essential services which are provided in a person's own home. Implementation of what is termed the Supporting People agenda brings significant additional income maximisation, administrative, contractual, review and monitoring responsibilities for Social Work. The total allocation for Supporting People infrastructure to North Lanarkshire was £504k, the final tranche of which entered budgets this year.

3.18. A number of posts were created on a temporary basis to enable the Council to meet responsibilities associated with Supporting People. In November 2000 Committee created temporary posts of Income Maximisers (7 posts at AP2/3), one post per Area Team and one post located at Wishaw General Hospital and Clerical Assistant/Typists (6 posts at GS1/2), one per Area Team. In February 2002 Committee created temporary posts of Supporting People Officers (3 posts at PO2), two posts for Needs Mapping and one post for Purchasing and Commissioning. It is proposed that these three posts be established on a permanent basis as Supporting People Officers grade PO2, one post per Division, to ensure that the Department can deliver its future obligations for Supporting People, funded through allocations from the Executive for this purpose.

4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1. The only proposals contained in this report with personnel implications are those associated with Supporting People monies, set out at Para 3.18. This entails the conversion of the identified posts from temporary to permanent. Resources required to fund the developments described are contained within 2003/04 allocations, as set out in the text of the report.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Committee is asked to:

- (i) agree the proposals for service developments detailed in the report; and
- (ii) remit this report to Policy & Resources (Personnel Sub) Committee; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.



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30 July 2003

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