

AGENDA ITEM No. 16

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: DEVELOPMENTS	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 20 MAY 2004	Ref: ST	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval for the deletion of a post of Social Worker (Mental Health), Grade QSW and the creation of a post of Senior Officer (Mental Health), Grade PO2/5.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. At Social Work Committee in February 2002, a qualified Social Worker post was created to specifically support the implementation of the Adults with Incapacity Act 2000.
- 2.2. This post has made an extremely positive contribution to this area of work, by supporting and training staff across agencies, developing systems / procedures / protocols and developing joint working arrangements. In addition, the post has developed to take on responsibility for the support, development and co-ordination of Mental Health Officer services, and has a key role to play in the implementation of new developments eg the co-ordination of the discharge planning process at Hartwoodhill.
- 2.3. This reflects the commitment made by the Department to maximise the use of existing resources and to ensure continuous service review when faced with new legislative and policy requirements.

3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. Since the establishment of this post, there has been significant change in the field of mental health and more change is imminent. In respect of legislation, the impact of the implementation of the Adults with Incapacity Act 2000 is growing for staff, and in particular for Mental Health Officers and their managers. This is due to an increasing understanding and use of the Act by Courts and legal representatives. In addition, the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 received royal assent on 25 April 2003 and will be implemented in 2005. The Act will create new duties for local authorities, which will require to be implemented by making additional resources available. This will include a need for additional Mental Health Officers and consequently additional support, training and staff development opportunities will be required. Work is currently taking place to assess the requirements and this will be the subject of a separate report to Committee at a future date.
- 3.2 In respect of policy developments in the field of mental health, a range of new initiatives/developments require to be progressed. This includes the implementation of the Choose Life Suicide Prevention Action Plan and the implementation of specific initiatives within the Scottish Executive Mental Health and well being Programme of change, for example, anti-stigma developments.

3.3 Given these demands, the Department has reviewed the capacity and deployment of the Social Worker (Mental Health) post, and has identified the need to establish an additional Senior Officer (Mental Health) post (grade PO2/5) which would take lead responsibility in the development of quality mental health services in North Lanarkshire.

3.4 The post will be located within the Social Work Headquarters Community Care Adults Section.

3.5 This post can be funded through the deletion of the vacant Social Worker (Mental Health) post (QSW grade).

4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The additional costs of this post can be met from within existing Social Work budgets.

4.2 As outlined, in creating this change, the Department is making a commitment to maximising the use of existing resources, and will be better placed to respond to the new legislative and policy challenges in the field of mental health.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Committee is asked to :

- i. approve the deletion of the post of Social Worker (Mental Health) (Grade QSW)
- ii. approve the creation of the post of Senior Officer (Mental Health) (Grade PO2/5)
- iii. remit the report to the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub Committee for consideration
- iv. note the contents of this report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
27th April 2004

For further information on this report please contact Susan Taylor, Manager, Community Care (Adults) Tel : 01698-332177