

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		DEVELOPMENT OF LANARKSHIRE ECARE INFORMATION SHARING PROJECT IN CHILD PROTECTION
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 26 AUGUST 2004	Ref: JD/RM	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report advises on progress, and seeks Committee approval to commit additional Scottish Executive resources, to the work relating to sharing information electronically among appropriate partner agencies in Lanarkshire, with regard to child protection.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Members will recall previous reports to Committee on proposals to progress the means of establishing systems and processes for safe and secure electronic information sharing among partner agencies about children who are subject to or, at risk of, child protection activity.
- 2.2. In November 2003 the Scottish Executive Modernising Government Fund (MGF 2) eCare Programme offered funding to develop work in Lanarkshire on child protection. The Lanarkshire Children's eCare Project was formed of representatives from North and South Lanarkshire Social Work and Education Departments, Strathclyde Police, NHS Lanarkshire and the Scottish Reporter's Administration. The project was given £115k for 2004/5 to progress joint electronic links from the systems used by the partner agencies and the "Shared Data Store" already created in Lanarkshire for use by Social Work and Health in community care work.
- 2.3. In North Lanarkshire a further £150k was secured from the Scottish Executive's Changing Children's Service Fund (CCSF), to support the organisational development work – protocol and procedural development, consultation, training and work on Social Work's Information System (SWIS), the source of all initial information to be shared with other partner agencies.
- 2.4. Following Committee approval, a temporary post of Project Manager was created, from MGF 2 funding and filled in April 2004. In addition development work, including the cost of three posts of temporary IT support workers, Grade AP3, has been funded for specific work in North Lanarkshire from CCSF monies.

3. PROGRESS TO DATE AND FURTHER PROPOSALS

- 3.1 Progress has been made on a number of areas since the last report, including:

- Agreement on two main phases on what should be shared among relevant agencies
- Agreement to create specific messages which highlight concerns among partner agencies
- Agreement and work to deploy part of SWIS for use in Police's Family Protection Unit
- Work on linking Education and Acute Health sectors with the "Shared Data Store"
- Development of training, procedures and protocols on accessing shared information.

3.2 Despite the progress made in a fairly short time by the eCare Project, the scale of the work is very considerable and it will prove difficult to meet the aspirations in Lanarkshire. The Scottish Executive's eCare Programme also has high hopes of work in Lanarkshire assisting in the production of national solutions. As a result discussions are taking place at present between the Lanarkshire eCare Project and the Scottish Executive to determine if additional funding could become available in the current financial year to hasten progress.

3.3 Advancing the pace of development is dependent on agreements regarding SEEMIS, (Education's IT system provider) and with the NHS Lanarkshire's Acute Hospitals system. Discussions regarding the necessary agreements are underway at present.

3.5 Linked to the work on joining SEEMIS and the Acute Hospital system into the work program, is more dedicated work on establishing the integrity and accuracy of data held on existing IT systems and ensuring that it is updated where necessary. It is estimated that three additional, temporary IT Support Worker posts would be required to work on this task in Social Work and Education. One of these posts requires to be located in the Education Department.

3.6 The Scottish Executive have offered £195k to partners, provided it can be spent this financial year. The proposed use of these monies is:

	£
• Data cleaning exercise – 3 staff for 6 months	33,194
• Connect A & E system to store – accident and emergency	50,000
• Connect SEEMIS to store	70,000
• Deploy SWIS to reporters	10,000
• Embed eCart information systems in NLC SWIS	20,000
Total	193,194

3.7 It is anticipated that the Scottish Executive will fund additional work by the Lanarkshire Children's eCare Project. Committee agreeing permission in advance to confirmation of funding being made available would allow the creation three additional temporary IT Support Worker Posts, in order to make maximum use of the short time left in this financial year.

4. FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The cost of three IT Support Workers at AP3 grade, to be employed on a temporary basis until the end of the current financial year, is estimated at £33,194.

4.2 Employment of these posts would be subject to agreement on the award of additional funding from the Scottish Executive as part of a financial increase given to the Project.

4.3 Approval of the proposal to deploy one of the posts in the Education Department requires to be sought from the Education Committee.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Committee is asked to

- (i) Agree the appointment of 3 temporary IT Support Worker posts, Grade AP3, subject to confirmation of additional funding from the Executive; and
- (ii) Remit this report to Education and Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub Committees for consideration; and
- (iii) Otherwise, note the contents of this report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
12 August 2004

For further information on this report please contacts Bobby Miller, Development Manager TEL: (01698 332069)