

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT & MINOR ADAPTATIONS : PROGRESS REPORT	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 26 AUGUST 2004	Ref: SKMCD/ST	

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. To advise Committee of the resource implications associated with the provision of equipment and minor adaptations via the Joint Equipment Store, and to seek approval for the creation of temporary posts.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Joint Equipment Service opened in May 2002, as a result of recommendations made by the joint Member/Officer working group, which reported to Social Work and Housing Committees in November 2000.
- 2.2. The need to jointly resource and manage equipment and adaptation services is a requirement set out by the Scottish Executive in the context of a Joint Future.

## 3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

### 3.1 Service Developments

- 3.1.1. The Joint Equipment Service (JES) has now been operational for approximately 2 years and the volume of work has significantly increased in that time. In 2003/04, the service was required to respond to a significant increase in referrals. The budget in 2003/04 represented an increase (non-recurring) of approximately 300% since the original service design, which has significant implications for the capacity of the service to respond timeously to requests. This continues to be an issue for 2004/5 as the volume of work processed by the JES equals that of the preceding year.
- 3.1.2. The JES has been providing the range of Assisted Living Technology, which has been funded on a trial basis. Future provision will be funded via Supporting People Pipeline Project monies. Discussions are currently taking place to ensure that management arrangements are in place, which will allow for monitoring of the service. It is anticipated that as there is more take-up of this service, this will impact on the current capacity of Technicians within the JES due to the increased amount of time needed for fitting this particular type of equipment.

3.1.3. The Joint Partnership Board held a development day on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2004, which was attended by key NHS and Social Work partners. A wide range of issues were discussed including communication issues (eg. management reporting, administration etc), service standards, policies, procedures, assessment and care management, use of the S.A.I.L Service and service user and carer involvement. The following areas were prioritised for immediate action:

- Training Requirements
- Scoping/Costing existing business
- Administration processes
- Assessment and Care Management (items provided that are returned by service users at point of delivery).

This work will be progressed via the Joint Board and will be the subject of a future Committee report.

3.1.4. The Best Value Review of Independent Living Services has provided an opportunity to review service provision and identify areas which are working well, and those which require to be revised. One of the most significant issues arising from the review in respect of equipment and adaptations relates to the need for additional resources, both in respect of budgets and staffing.

3.1.5. Provision of equipment and adaptations continue to be key in supporting people at home. The increasing demand for this service together with the increasing numbers of staff accessing the service via assessment and care management presents a challenge to the Council in continuing to meet the rising levels of assessed need. It is also essential to demonstrate value for money and best use of existing resources. Consequently consideration has been given to the future provision of equipment and adaptations, and a further report will be tabled at Committee exploring the feasibility of a unified service.

3.1.6. The measured term contract for major items of equipment has been in place since August 2002. A series of process mapping exercises have been underway to identify the steps in the process of commissioning major equipment and identify ways of simplifying and streamlining the process. This work links to the performance indicators which are due to be agreed shortly with Minivator.

3.1.7. Following a joint bid recently tabled to the Changing Childrens' Services Fund (CCSF) by the Social Work and Education Departments, consideration is being given to centralising equipment provided by the Education Department within the JES.

3.1.8. Funding of £190,000 has been awarded via the CCSF across 2003/4 and 2004/5. The lead is with the Education Department, and they are currently conducting an audit of existing equipment both in use in schools, and in storage. The audit will inform the Joint Partnership Board on the estimated amount of work involved.

3.1.9. It is proposed that the JES would offer a similar service to that provided to Health in that it would purchase, store, deliver, recycle, service and maintain all equipment provided via Education. There would be an aligned budget and representation would be required on the Joint Partnership Board. It is anticipated that the funding for the first year of operation would come from monies secured via the Changing Children's Services Fund, but thereafter a transfer of resources would be required.

3.1.10. The S.A.I.L (Support and Advice for Independent Living) Service, established in March 2003, continues to be utilised by a range of people including disability groups and staff from both social work and health.

### 3.2 Assessment

- 3.2.1 Training for single shared assessment will be extended to more people during 2004, and will focus on assessing the needs of adults with a learning disability, mental health difficulty and/or a physical disability. This expands the range of care groups health colleagues will be allowed to access equipment for non-complex need and will continue to avoid delays and duplication of effort.
- 3.2.2 Further work is taking place on the IT systems in use at the JES , and it is anticipated that the outcome of this work will improve monitoring and reporting arrangements.

### 3.3 Equipment and Minor Adaptations Provision (Social Work)

3.3.1 Detailed work has taken place investigating the areas of work where a significant shortfall exists. The results of this indicate a staffing resource shortfall across all staff categories, in particular Technicians and Store Operative/Drivers. The main reason for this is the increased workload as a result of uplifting the base budget (on a non-recurring basis) for equipment and minor adaptations.

3.3.2 The current demands on the service are as follows:

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| • Average number requisitions received at JES per day  | 140 |
| • (54 for Technicians, 69 for Store Operative/Drivers) |     |
| • Number requisitions still to be progressed           | 955 |
| • Average number achieved/day                          | 97  |

These figures are based on estimated staffing levels over the next 5 months. This, in effect places 43 people on the waiting list every day (215 per week), in addition to the existing waiting list of 955.

3.3.3 The Joint Partnership Board has put arrangements in place to employ cleaning staff on a temporary basis to deal with the current backlog on recycling items. This has been funded within the existing budget. However, in order to both clear the waiting list and to maintain throughput of current and new work it is estimated the following additional temporary staff are required for a 12 month period :

3 x Store Operative/Driver (GS1/2)	£46,038
2 x Technician (AP1)	£34,884
Additional vehicle hire	£15,550
<b>Total costs (includes 20% oncosts)</b>	<b>£98,472</b>

These posts are additional to the existing posts within the JES and therefore have the same grade and job description.

3.3.4 The current budget for Equipment and Minor Adaptations in just over £1.7M (this includes £200,000 for Service and Maintenance via the Minnivator Contract and £22,300 for Hearing Impairment Equipment). This is being uplifted by additional non-recurring monies via the Corporate Management Team of £161,000 (2003/4 balance approved growth brought forward), and £850,000 (approved by Personnel and Resource (Finance) subgroup on 1.6.04.). This takes the total budget for 2004/5 to £2,711,000.

3.3.5 At 13th July 2004, the spend on Equipment and Minor Adaptations for 2004/5 was £411,832 and there is a committed spend of £608,433 (total spend of £1,020,265).

### **3.4 Major Adaptations (Housing)**

- 3.4.1 The budget provision for Local Authority properties for 2004/5 is £2,758,000. The waiting list value is £2,007,115. There are 38 people waiting with a points value of 20 and above, and 1,318 people waiting with a points value of 19 and below.
- 3.4.2 The budget provision for private sector adaptations via the Grants Section is £866,000. At the end of June 2004, the spend was £209,000 and the committed spend was £321,000 (total £530,000). These figures do not include the value of grants which have been offered but not yet accepted (£181,000) or the value of estimated grants in the pipeline (£938,000).
- 3.4.3 The budget provision for top-up facilities is £50,000. At the end of June 2004, the spend was £72,000 and the committed spend was £62,000. This does not include offers of grants not yet accepted where a top up will be required (£3,000) or offers of estimated grants where a top up is likely to be required (£18,000).
- 3.4.4 These figures continue to highlight the increasing level of demand for adaptations with the corresponding shortfall in resources to meet this demand.

## **4. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The approach to the provision of equipment and adaptations in North Lanarkshire is consistent with legislation and national policy.
- 4.2 There continues to be an increasing demand and need for this service, which has significant implications for the resources of the Council. This has been reported to Committee on a regular basis.
- 4.3 The proposal to create temporary staff is necessary to ensure that equipment and minor adaptations can be provided timeously.
- 4.4 The creation of these posts is necessary on a temporary basis. While the need for the posts can be clearly evidenced, the current budget for equipment and adaptations is £1.7m, while the actual expenditure is £2.7m. This has been made available on a non-recurring basis.
- 4.5 The temporary posts are additional to the existing establishment, and are consistent with the existing designations / grades / job descriptions of Technician and Store Operative/Driver.