

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: BEST VALUE REVIEW OF INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES: UPDATE REPORT	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 28 OCTOBER 2004	Ref: ST/SKMcD	

1. Purpose of Report / Introduction

To advise Committee of progress made to date on the findings and recommendations of the Best Value Review of Independent Living Services which was reported to Committee on 11th March 2004.

2. Background

- 2.1. On 14th May 2002, the Councils' Policy and Resources Committee agreed a report which outlined progress to date in the completion of Best Value Service Reviews. It also approved guidelines for staff undertaking Best Value Reviews and set out priorities for reviews during 2002/03.
- 2.2. Social Work Services to people with physical disabilities were prioritised for review and this was subsequently broadened to include services to people with brain injury and/or sensory impairment.
- 2.3. The review took place within the context of a range of service improvement activities which are already being undertaken within the Social Work Department, eg. the creation of the Joint Equipment Service following the Officer/Member Review of Equipment and Adaptations Services.
- 2.4. In addition, two separate reports were commissioned to assist in reviewing:
 - Brain Injury Services, and
 - Services for people who are Deafblind

This work was undertaken within the broader context of the Best Value Review and has been the subject of separate reports to Committee.

- 2.5. The work on brain injury services was undertaken by the Disability and Rehabilitation Education Foundation (DARE), and consisted of a series of workshops involving a mix of service users, carers and service providers. The findings and recommendations are documented in the Final Report, and include a need for improved information, staff training, increased support options and better partnership working.
- 2.6. The work relating to people who are deafblind was undertaken by Deafblind Scotland. It consisted of an awareness raising campaign, through the use of public information and awareness sessions, and a needs identification project which identified 45 people who are

considered to be deafblind. The development of further services is currently being explored as part of the Best Value Review implementation arrangements.

2.7. The Best Value Review Final Report has now been agreed by the Corporate Management Team, as it involved a range of Council departments. A Strategy Implementation Group has been convened to take the recommendations forward

3. Proposals / Considerations

3.1. Strategy Implementation Group Membership

The implementation steering group will lead, implement, monitor and evaluate the work, and will have participation from the following Key Stakeholders:

- People affected by disability/communication support needs
- Carers
- North Lanarkshire Council
- NHS Lanarkshire
- Further Education Colleges

3.2. Links to Corporate Work across the Council

There has been a range of recent work reported nationally and locally which highlight the corporate role of Councils in progressing opportunities for disabled people. Some examples include:

3.2.1 "Disablism: How to Tackle the Last Prejudice" (Scope 2004) states that the basic aim of social care services should be enabling disabled people to be citizens. This cannot be achieved by maintaining the responsibility for change within traditional departments/ agencies.

3.2.2 The Audit Scotland "Adapting to the Future, Management of Community Equipment and Adaptations" (August 2004) report states that at least one third of Scottish households have one person with a long-term illness, health problem or disability.

3.2.3 North Lanarkshire Council Economic Regeneration Framework (2004-7) supports the local Housing, Social Inclusion and Youth Strategies and the Local Learning Plan, none of which can be taken forward in isolation from an Independent Living Strategy.

3.2.4 "Community Care Services for People with a Sensory Impairment – An Action Plan" (Scottish Executive, August 2003) details seven recommendations to ensure appropriate support is offered to people with sensory impairments. This was the subject of a separate report to committee on 24th February 2004.

3.3. Key Priorities for development

At a prioritisation event in October 2003, which took place within the context of the review process, the following areas were prioritised for development:

- Information
- Continued involvement and participation of stakeholders in planning and service provision
- Assessment and support arrangements
- Specialist services: sensory impairment, Brain Injury
- Training

- Day Services
- Transport
- Services for younger people
- Respite/short breaks
- Equipment

In addition, 13 criteria were agreed as a template in designing and developing new services, opportunities and initiatives that aim to support people with disabilities and communication needs.

3.4. Summary of progress

To date progress has been made in the following areas:

3.4.1 Day Services

It was recognised that despite the positive efforts of staff, day services are limited in the opportunities they can make available to people. One of the existing day services is based at the Alexander Resource Centre in Coatbridge. The lease on this building is about to expire and NHS Lanarkshire, who own the building, will not be offering the option to extend the lease. This has presented a very positive opportunity to investigate alternative models of support. It is planned to include services currently provided at the Five Day Centre in Wishaw in this process.

3.4.2 Brain Injury Services

- A range of discussions have been taking place with independent providers around options for support. Some of this discussion reflects the challenges in meeting the often diverse needs of people with acquired brain injury and their carers. A Job Coach post was approved by Committee on 11th March 2004 and the postholder is in post. Work is ongoing on ensuring this resource is used to best advantage.
- Early discussion has begun with NHS Lanarkshire around the options of undertaking some joint work, eg. the possibility of a joint funded Brain Injury Co-ordinator post

3.4.3 Carers

Moving and assisting was identified as a particular concern for carers with more training required. Again, early discussion has begun with NHS Lanarkshire to identify options in supporting carers and team based staff in this area.

3.4.4 Services to People with Sensory Impairment

- The Scottish Council on Deafness developed a "Sensory Impairment Position Statement" in draft format which highlighted the issues in using the generic term "sensory impairment." Whilst this can be useful, there are specific groups of people who have very different needs, eg. Deaf people whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL). This is an officially recognised language (eg. like Welsh, Gaelic), with over 6000 users in Scotland. The different care groups highlighted in the Position Statement have been reflected in the North Lanarkshire Community Care Plan 2004/5 – 2007/8.
- Support for Deaf people
There has been an opportunity to work with a local Deaf group around some of the issues they face due to the above linguistic barriers. This has led to the development of Deaf Awareness Training sessions for staff in Community

Services and to the production of information about the Best Value Review in a BSL signed format.

3.4.5 Assessment and Care Management

A range of options for redesigning existing services for people with sensory impairment and brain injury are currently developed in order to meet the recommendations of the report.

3.4.6 Equipment and Adaptations

It has previously been reported to committee that the demand for these services increases annually by 15-20%. Given that approximately 70% of the service is provided to people over 65 years, and the demographic changes facing Scotland whereby the number of people over 65 years is due to rise by 46% at the end of 2007, the gap between assessed need and available resources will continue to grow. This service is the subject of regular progress reports to committee, which have detailed the range of work investigating options for future provision and management of services.

3.4.7 Housing, Accommodation and Physical Environment

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) becomes fully implemented in October 2004. Much of the existing guidance around the physical environment works to minimum standards which do not actually meet the needs of all disabled people. In addition, once a person has gained entry to a building, they then need to be able to move around the building and have access to facilities. Initial work has begun on a design brief which would give guidance on access in the widest sense. Given the corporate nature of such guidance, participation is required from key departments across the Council, eg. Housing and Property Department, Design Services and Planning and Environment Department.

3.4.8 Access

Access to services in the widest sense, from environment to communication, is being tabled in the corporate arena, eg. with the NorthWeb website manager to ensure Deaf people can access the website.

3.4.9 Lifestyle, Leisure and Lifelong Learning

Part of the implementation of the Day Opportunities for People with Learning Disabilities has involved partnership working with Community Services. This link has been maximised by highlighting some of the issues raised in this review in respect of independent living.

3.4.10 Health

As already stated some early discussion has taken place with NHS Lanarkshire around the possibility of further joint working opportunities. In addition, the National Audiology Review offers opportunities for greater joint working for people with sensory impairments.

4. Financial / Personnel / Legal / Policy Implications

4.1. A range of service improvements / developments were recommended by the Best Value Review. These recommendations are consistent with national legislation and policy and with Councils' approach to providing care in the community and social inclusion.

4.2. At Social Work Committee on 11 March 2004, funding of £250,000 was agreed to support the initial implementation of the recommendations of the Best Value Review of Independent Living Services. Work is currently underway to prioritise the use of this funding, with the involvement of service users and carers. Specific proposals along with funding implications will be the subject of a future report to Committee.

4.3. As outlined previously, many of the other recommendations and some service developments can be achieved at no additional costs or without additional resources. These will be progressed as part of the implementation plan and will also be the subject of a future report to committee.

5. Recommendations

5.1. Committee is asked to:

- (i) note the contents of this report
- (ii) request that the Director of Social Work submits regular progress reports on
- (iii) the implementation of the Best Value Review of Independent Living Services, and
- (iv) approval for the use of funding made available.



Jim Dickie
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September 2004

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