

AGENDA ITEM No. 6

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: THE ALEXANDER RESOURCE CENTRE	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK			
Date: 28 OCTOBER 2004	Ref: MB/KL		

## 1. Content and Purpose of Report

To advise Committee of the proposed closure and transfer of services from the Alexander Resource Centre, a former hospital in Coatbridge, owned by NHS Lanarkshire.

## 2. Background

2.1 North Lanarkshire Council has a lease arrangement with NHS Lanarkshire to provide or facilitate the following services from the Alexander Resource Centre:

- Day care for older people
- Day care for people with physical disabilities
- Office accommodation for Social Work Restorative Justice staff
- Accommodation for 40 community and voluntary groups.

2.2 There are no longer any hospital services provided on the site and NHS Lanarkshire wish to dispose of it and realise the capital asset. The buildings themselves are not fit for modern purpose. The lease has been extended on an annual basis as NHS Lanarkshire recognised that time was needed to relocate services in a way that was appropriate and sensitive to the needs of service users and community groups.

2.3 In September 2004 NHS Lanarkshire Board approved proposals to close the site, subject to consultation with the local Health Council, and give the Council twelve months notice to quit. Representations by the Leader of the Council, that this timescale was contingent upon NHS Lanarkshire providing replacement older people day care facilities at Coathill Hospital within that timescale, were accepted.

## 3. Relocation of Services

3.1 As part of the "Joint Future" agenda to better integrate Social Work and Health services, it is planned to provide NHS day hospital and Social Work day care services in the same location. Premises are being extended at Coathill Hospital to this end, attached to modern day hospital facilities that opened last year. This will create, for the first time in North Lanarkshire, proper links between related day services for older people with health and care needs.

3.2 The day care service for people with physical disabilities is being redesigned to deliver a community support model in keeping with the outcome of the Best Value Review of Independent Living services, previously reported to Committee. This is consistent with the direction of day services for people with other disabilities. It would seek to achieve social inclusion whilst maintaining important features of the existing service such as friendships and peer support.

- 3.3 Plans to transfer Social Work Restorative Justice staff to Council owned premises in Hunter Street, Bellshill are progressing, and provision for this has been made within the 2004/5 capital plan.
- 3.4 As indicated in a previous report to Committee, the Director of Social Work wrote to service users, carers and voluntary groups to advise and clarify the position of the Council. In respect of voluntary groups, officers from Social Work and Community Services will assist the groups to find alternative premises. A small group has been established to assess their respective, and diverse, needs and secure suitable alternative accommodation.

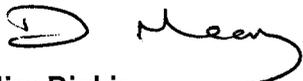
#### 4. Personnel/Finance/Legal Implications

- 4.1 The personnel implications in relation to the relocation and reprovision of services is currently the subject of liaison with trade unions. Initial discussions have also taken place with Community Services concerning services provided by that Department.

#### 5. Recommendation

- 5.1 Committee is asked to:
- (i) endorse the approach taken to relocate services based at the Alexander Resource Centre;
  - (ii) remit this report to Community Services Committee for their interest and consideration; and
  - (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

PP



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**11 October 2004**

For further information on this report please contact Mike Burns, Operations Manager, on telephone 01236 622166