

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: INDEPENDENT SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS FOR SELF DIRECTED SERVICES IN NORTH LANARKSHIRE
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK	
Date: 24 AUGUST 2006	Ref: MD/CQ

1. Purpose of Report / Introduction

The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of progress made in developing independent support for self directed services in North Lanarkshire. This service is required to provide information, support and practical assistance in the establishment and management of direct payments, within the wider context of promoting Self Directed Services.

2. Background

- 2.1. The term Self Directed Services is used to describe all arrangements for individualised services. It encapsulates a philosophy that promotes the full inclusion and participation of each person in their communities. The term is used to describe arrangements whereby a service is individually planned, designed and funded. It is at the forefront of the Executive's drive towards personalised services and is a leading example of best practice in the United Kingdom.
- 2.2. Significant progress has been made in promoting Self Directed Services and self determination through quality person centred planning and the creation of a range of services designed to respond flexibly to individual need, notably supported living, supported employment and day opportunities. Self Directed Services further includes direct payment arrangements whereby the Council makes a payment to a person who has been assessed as needing services, rather than provide service directly. The payment made can be used to purchase service from a provider organisation of choice, or can be used to employ staff directly.
- 2.3 Progress on creating a user led organisation able to support people to consider, set up and maintain a self directed service, particularly a direct payment arrangement, was last reported to committee in August 2004.

3. Proposals / Considerations

- 3.1. A user lead group formed in response to the need for local provision of support was formed and formally constituted in the summer of 2004.

- 3.2 The group aim to provide a service which offers an inclusive philosophy, be user led and be accessible to all who require it. It will provide people with information, support and advice about all matters pertaining to Self Directed Services and will signpost individuals and network with other organisations. It will offer an individualised service before, during and after the process of securing a direct payment. On a practical level they will be able to offer training and practical assistance such as payroll service and assistance with recruitment of personal assistance.
- 3.3 Committee approved the creation of the service and the allocation of £73,732 per annum to meet ongoing running costs.
- 3.4 The tasks associated with guiding potential recipients of direct payment through the legislative implications of such arrangements are complex. They include ensuring safe practices in relation to employment and health and safety legislation, being a good employer when personal and intimate support is required and generally managing staff in a fair and open manner.
- 3.5 The user led organisation have worked with national support bodies to ensure they are ready to provide such a service in an effective manner locally. Over the past 18 months however the national bodies have changed and Direct Payments Scotland are no longer operational. Consequently the group have struggled, even with significant support, to progress in the ways originally envisaged.
- 3.6 Work with the local Self Directed Services Support Organisation has concluded that there is a need to progress with two main tasks.
- 3.7 Firstly the Self Directed Services Support Organisation must identify a partner to support the practical and structural elements of providing a service in North Lanarkshire. Within agreement reached with a partner the recruitment, management and retention of staff must be addressed along with demonstrating the ability to maintain up to date, legally sound information, advice and practical support to the provision of direct payments.
- 3.8 The organisation must also demonstrate that the constituency that reflects the range of people eligible to consider a direct payment is fully representative. Such representation must address both the direction and delivery of service and that people's views are taken fully into account within the wider user and carer partnership arrangements within North Lanarkshire.
- 3.9 It is proposed that the local support organisation demonstrates that they have fulfilled these objectives by 31st December 2006. If they are unable to, it is proposed to enter into an open tendering process to ensure local provision of independent advice and support is not delayed further.

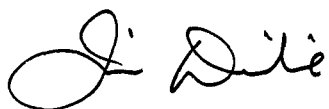
4. Financial / Personnel / Legal / Policy Implications

- 4.1. There are no additional implications to advise.

5. Recommendations

5.1. Committee is asked to:

- (i) Remit the Director of Social Work to conclude this piece of work and report to a future Committee accordingly; and
- (ii) otherwise note the content of this report.



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Director of Social Work
1 August 2006

For further information on this report please contact Morag Dendy, Development Co-ordinator, Tel (01698 332075)