

To: SOCIAL WORK (OPERATIONS & SERVICES) SUB-COMMITTEE	Subject: SOCIAL WORK SERVICES FOR DEAFBLIND PEOPLE: DEAFBLIND SCOTLAND IDENTIFICATION PROJECT.
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK	
Date: 6 DEC. 2001	Ref: skm/dm

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. To advise Committee of the contents of an interim report (Appendix 1) to identify the number and needs of people living in North Lanarkshire with a dual sensory impairment prepared by Deafblind Scotland

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. In December 2000, Deafblind Scotland (part of Deafblind UK) held their advisory group meeting in North Lanarkshire that was attended by some elected member representatives and social work officer. Subsequent discussions highlighted the need to conduct further work to better identify the needs of deafblind people in the authority.
- 2.2. The Identification Project was jointly commissioned from Deafblind Scotland by North Lanarkshire Council and Lanarkshire Health Board in March 2001 following Committee approval on 6th March 2001. A Project Officer was appointed by Deafblind Scotland in May 2001.
- 2.3. The definition of 'deafblind' used by the Project is:

"Persons are regarded as deafblind if they have a severe degree of combined visual and auditory impairment resulting in problems of communication, information and mobility."

3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. Deafblind Scotland have worked closely with North Lanarkshire Council's Sensory Impairment Teams in devising letters and simple questionnaires which have been sent to service users the teams had contact with this year. Also included is a Deafblind Scotland leaflet entitled "Do you find it hard to both see and hear?"
- 3.2. Alongside this, Deafblind Scotland have led an awareness raising campaign via wide distribution of the above mentioned leaflet and a series of Deafblind awareness sessions throughout North Lanarkshire.
- 3.3. A letter and simple questionnaire has been sent to 327 people who have had contact with either the Hearing Impairment Team or the Visual Impairment Team since April 2001 and 98 (30%) people have responded to date.

3.4. There are 12 known deafblind people within North Lanarkshire and it is estimated from the work so far that approximately 33 people meet the above definition and require a further assessment of need.

3.5. Work still to be undertaken includes:

- i. Joint Assessment visits with the Sensory Impairment Teams.
- ii. Provision of staff awareness training.
- iii. Continue with the publicity campaign to raise awareness among the general public.

The final report will be submitted by 31st March 2002 and reported to Committee.

4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1. There are no further financial implications other than the funding of £8,000. It is likely that there will be resource implications arising from the final report which will be reported to a future committee.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Committee is asked to:

- (i) request the Director of Social Work to provide a further report to Committee in respect of the Project; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of this report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
26 November 2001

For further information on this report please contact D. Mackay, Manager, Adults
(TEL: 01698 332067)

North Lanarkshire Identification Project

Interim Report October 2001

Project Outline

Aims:

- To identify people of all ages who have a dual sensory impairment living within North Lanarkshire
- To assess and report on the needs of those identified

The project aims to identify, make contact with and assess the needs of deafblind people living in North Lanarkshire. Since Deafblind Scotland has been carrying out an agreed programme of activities, which over a period of time will increase awareness and thus begin to establish the number and identity of people with a severe dual impairment. The twelve month project to be completed by April 2002

Representatives from North Lanarkshire Social Work department attended a Scottish Advisory Group On Deafblindness (SAGOD) meeting held in Motherwell on 4th December 2000 where several deafblind people spoke about their needs. The representatives were concerned that there may be a large number of deafblind people unknown to North Lanarkshire. A project proposal was submitted to Duncan Mackay. Funding was agreed and Julie Campbell took up post as Project Officer in May 2001.

Progress meetings with North Lanarkshire Social Work department have taken place on 4th May, 22nd May, 10th September and 23rd October.

It was agreed that for the purpose of identifying deafblind people the definition of deafblindness from 'Breaking Through Report' (Deafblindness Services Liaison Group 1989) would be used.

"Persons are regarded as deafblind if they have a severe degree of combined visual and auditory impairment resulting in problems of communication, information and mobility"

During June and July a list of statutory organisations, voluntary organisations and community groups were collated. Following this, basic information on the project was distributed to Social Work, Hospitals, GP's, Audiology Clinics, and Ophthalmology Clinics, Residential Homes, Sheltered Housing, Primary and Secondary Schools, Community Groups, Lunch Clubs and Libraries.

Throughout August, Deafblind Scotland wrote to request meetings, all letters were adaptations of standard identification project letters agreed by North Lanarkshire. Consequently, Julie Campbell has met with Social Work, Residential Homes, Sheltered Housing, Community Groups and Lunch Clubs. This is an on going task. Stephen Joyce, Training Manager, has delivered Deafblind Awareness training. A 10-week block of schools training is under way at Coatbridge High and training is in place for St Margaret's High and St Ambrose High.

Stephen is currently delivering a programme of Deafblind awareness sessions within North Lanarkshire, dates for staff training have still to be arranged.

The project creates awareness in a number of ways but in particular by distributing the leaflet "Do you find it hard to both see and hear" in places where people gather. This is an on-going task.

Progress to date

It was agreed that Deafblind Scotland would carry out initial visits to assess if the person fitted the deafblind definition. Thereafter joint assessment visits would take place. In addition it was agreed that no initial services would be offered other than Deafblind Scotland membership benefits to those who wished to become a member.

Deafblind Scotland members

Deafblind Scotland has 12 members at present living within North Lanarkshire. These members were written to, offering them a visit. 9 people requested a visit and these were carried out by Deafblind Scotland staff.

Deafblind people known to North Lanarkshire

Isabel Davie was supplied with an agreed letter to be sent to all deafblind people known to North Lanarkshire. 12 people were written to, offering them a visit. Deafblind Scotland received 6 written responses and three phoned responses. 6 people were visited by Deafblind Scotland staff. Three of the replies from the deafblind people known to North Lanarkshire were also known to Deafblind Scotland. The other 6 were previously unknown to Deafblind Scotland.

Self Referrals (through Do you find it hard to both see and hear leaflets)

7 people have self-referred using the "Do you find it hard to both see and hear" leaflet. These people will be written to and visited.

Hearing Impaired and Visual Impaired only

As a control group it was agreed to contact those with a single sensory impairment to check if there may be signs of a second impairment. This was done by the Visual Impaired and Hearing Impaired teams, sending a Deafblind Scotland single page questionnaire to all who had asked for help since April 1st 2001. In total 197 visual impaired and 130 hearing impaired people were written to. The questions were very basic and designed to give an indication that there might be a second impairment.

Response

98 response forms have been received

35 Hearing impaired

63 Visual impaired

Methodology

The questionnaire asked the hearing impaired if they had problems seeing in the dark or reading the newspaper.

If ticked yes to both questions they would be visited

If ticked yes to one of the questions they would possibly be visited

If ticked no to both questions then we would take no further action.

A similar methodology was used with visually impaired people. The question to visually impaired people asked if they had problems hearing on the telephone or knowing someone was at the door. A similar classification exercise was used as for hearing impaired.

If respondents answered no to both questions but returned a "Do you find it hard to both see and hear" leaflet we would check on the level of sight and hearing loss by sending a more in-depth questionnaire.

Breakdown of action

Hearing Impaired		Visual Impaired	
Visit	10	Visit	27
Possible visit	05	Possible visit	10
HI more info required	03	VI more info required	06
HI no further action	17	VI no further action	20

Visits have been organised geographically and where possible will be carried out by only 2 staff members to give consistency to the reports. 7 visits have been carried out to date. Visits are scheduled to be completed by the end of November.

Interim Findings

Existing deafblind members in North Lanarkshire	12
Referred from HI and VI teams list	06
Self-referrals to date	07
From control group – those expected to fit definition	10

North Lanarkshire Population: 322,000
The expected incidence ranges from 2 – 4:10,000 (from Breaking Through Report)

Expected number of Deafblind people: 64 - 128

The expected minimum number of deafblind people in North Lanarkshire will be 64. We are confident 33 will be identified by the end of November from the work already undertaken. While no detailed assessment of need has been carried out, it is evident that some people may benefit from additional services.

Action

- Complete majority of visits by 30th November.
- Undertake joint assessment visits December till February.
- Mount publicity campaign
- Provide training to Social Work/Health/Education and others December till February
- Meet Tuesday 4th December to discuss findings and to arrange joint assessment visits and workplan project to completion
- Collate information and submit final report by March 31st 2002