

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT**

To: SOCIAL WORK (OPERATIONS AND SERVICES) SUB COMMITTEE		Subject: SOCIAL WORK PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2003/04	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK			
Date: 29 JUNE 2005	Ref: MF/JM		

1. Purpose of Report/Introduction

To advise Committee of a more detailed review of the statistical information provided by Audit Scotland in relation to Social Work Performance indicators for the period 2003/04.

2. Background

- 2.1. Social Work (Operations and Services) Sub Committee of 22 February 2005 considered the findings of the report Housing and Social Work Performance Indicators 2003/04. The Social Work indicators referred to within the report relate to home care, the use of qualified staff in care homes, social enquiry report and community service.
- 2.2. Committee noted the progress being made in relation to the range of Social Work services and requested a further report on areas which may require improvement with recommendations to address each area of activity being presented to Committee for consideration.

3. Areas for consideration

- 3.1. A more detailed review of the reports findings does not indicate any areas of significant concern within Council services nor suggests the need for remedial action.
- 3.2. The following section provides further background in relation to the services reported to Committee on 22 February 2005.
 - 3.2.1 Home Care

The Committee report of February 2005 noted significant progress, above the national average, in relation to activity such as the flexibility of the service, weekend, evening and overnight services for those of 65 years.

The number of service users in North Lanarkshire Council receiving personal care was lower than the national average. Comparison is affected by the differing interpretation of "personal care" categorised by different Local Authorities. Within North Lanarkshire the number of service users receiving personal care has increased from as follows:

- 31.03.2003 1,432
- 31.03.2004 1,604
- 31.12.2005 1,762

The statistics reflect a steady increase in the provision of personal care. A national comparison for the 65+ age group for the 31 March 2003 date is not available as the indicator changes for 2004.

3.2.2 The use of qualified staff in care homes

Qualified staff within residential homes for older people is significantly above the national average and the Department has employee development plans in place for staff to ensure the continuous development of a "competent, confident workforce"

The percentage of qualified staff in residential care for adults is significantly below the national average. The percentage has reduced from that in 2001/02 reflects the Council's move from residential to community based care (the modernisation programme has been reported to Committee)

3.2.3 Social Enquiry Reports (SER's)

The Committee report of February 2005 noted that 82.9% of Social Enquiry Reports were allocated to social work staff within two days. Whilst this is slightly below the Scottish average of 86.6% there has been an improvement in the Council's performance over the past year.

This figure needs to be considered in the context of an increasing demand by the Courts for SER's against no growth in resources (funding is retrospectively allocated). The Director of Social Work has raised the issue with Justice staff at the Scottish Executive who fund Local Authority Justice Services. The North Lanarkshire Justice Grouping will be inspected from August 2005 when the issue will be further highlighted.

The increase in SERs requested by Courts are noted below:

- 2003/04 - 3, 366
- 2004/05 - 4, 241 (submitted 3, 447, some due dates post 1 April)

3.2.4 Community Services

The Committee report of February 2005 noted the Council performed above the Scottish average in relation to Community Service.

Requests for Community Service Orders by the Courts continue to increase reflecting a confidence by sentencers in the service provided by the Department. The service also receives positive feedback from community members about the service provided.

Members may wish to consider a presentation on Community Service provision in North Lanarkshire at a future Committee.

- 3.3. A further review of the Audit Scotland report does not indicate any areas of significant concern about the current performance of services.
- 3.4. In respect of the funding of Justice services, the Director of Social Work in pursuing this issue with the Executive.
- 3.5. Overall, service provision appears to be above the national average and progressing.

4. Financial / Personnel / Policy Implications

- 4.1 Funding for Justice services is retrospective and is not responsive to service growth. This is being pursued with Scottish Executive representatives.
- 4.2 General findings from the report indicate that the Department is complying with legislative / policy responsibilities.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1. Committee is asked to:
 - (i) give consideration to a presentation on the Department's Community Service provision to a future committee
 - (ii) otherwise note the contents of the report



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
6 June, 2005

For further information on this report please contact Mary Fegan, Head of Social Work Services on telephone 01698 332001.

A copy of the report can be found in the members library