

1 SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT - REMUNERATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS (AN416-2003)

Dundee City Council has a statutory duty to provide Mental Health Officers (MHOs) under the Mental Health (Scotland) Act 1984. All MHOs must be qualified Social Workers and undertake accredited training. Currently, MHOs are expected to undertake MHO duties, which are outwith their job descriptions, in addition to carrying out the full range of duties of their substantive posts.

The workload of MHOs in Dundee is becoming increasingly demanding due to new legislation such as the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) Scotland) Act 2003. These new Acts will introduce significant changes which will impact directly on MHO work and, without exception, will lead to expansion of the MHO role and an increase in workload.

In order to meet these additional demands, it has been identified that there is a need for the Social Work Department to redesign their model of service delivery. A review of this service is on-going and it seems likely that, in the future, a team of dedicated MHOs will be required to undertake longer term work, supported by a rota of MHOs undertaking emergency and short term work.

Until the new model of service delivery is agreed and implemented, the current practising MHOs will continue to carry out their MHO duties in addition to the duties of their substantive posts. To recognise these additional MHO duties and participation in the MHO rota, the Director of Social Work and the Assistant Chief Executive (Management) recommend that these employees receive the equivalent of 2 additional increments in full recompense. These payments will continue until a new model of service delivery is introduced. This is likely to take place by the end of March 2004.

The cost of this recommendation in the current financial year is £9,900, inclusive of employer's costs, and this will be met from the department's Revenue Budget.