

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Social Work Committee - 17 January 2005
Personnel Committee - 17 January 2005

REPORT ON: Social Work Department - Establishment of First Contact Team

REPORT BY: Director of Social Work and Assistant Chief Executive
(Management)

REPORT NO: 22-2005

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise the Committees of the results of the First Contact Team pilot and to seek approval to establish a First Contact Team for older people in Dundee. Furthermore, approval is sought from the Personnel Committee to develop and adopt a systems approach to service improvement across all Council departments.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Social Work Committee approves:-

2.1.1 the establishment of the First Contact Team;

2.1.2 the establishment of an Information Management Centre resource to aid the sharing of single shared assessment across community care services.

2.2 It is recommended that the Personnel Committee approves:-

2.2.1 the establishment of the following:-

3 posts of Social Care/Home Care Assessors, grade AP3, £17,852 - £19,590;
1 post of Part Time Social Care Worker (30 hours per week), SCP16-23, £12,132 - £14,475;
1.5 posts of Clerical Assistant, grade GS1/2, £10,365 - £13,671;

2.2.2 the development and adoption of a systems approach to service improvement across all Council departments.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The costs of the First Contact Team will be £199,600 in a full financial year. This will be met through the reorganisation of the Community Care budget. This will include the re-aligned staff resources and additional budget allocation. The budget for the team is detailed in Appendix 1.

3.2 The cost of the development and adoption of a systems approach to service improvement across Council departments will be contained within departments' Revenue Budgets.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The establishment of the First Contact Team seeks to divert community care resources towards those most in need. It makes efficient and effective use of local authority resources by responding quickly to identified need.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The First Contact Team project was initially established in April 2004, becoming fully operational in June 2004. The team was developed following a systems review of the referral and assessment processes in place across Health and Social Work, prior to the introduction of Single Shared Assessment for Older People.

- 6.2 The review noted that there was confusion as to the point of entry into Social Work services, and that, as a result, multiple referrals for individual service users were made causing delays in the assessment of need and the allocation of services. By bringing together a multi-disciplinary team of staff from Social Work and Health, the project group worked together to identify the steps within the process.

- 6.3 The review was facilitated by Vanguard (Scotland) Ltd., and the review group recommended the development of a multi-disciplinary First Contact Team. This team would respond to initial referrals to the Social Work Department. The First Contact Team would undertake assessments of need for older people, including the identification of the resources required to meet this need. In addition the team would screen out inappropriate referrals, provide accurate information for other assessors/service providers, and ensure that a prompt response to all referrals was provided.

- 6.4 The First Contact Team was based within the Nethergate Centre, and managed by the Senior Social Worker of the Access Team. The Access Team currently provides a one-stop access to Social Work services across all client groups. By basing the team within the Nethergate, this ensured that there was a central point of access both geographically and procedurally. The team accepted written and telephone referrals from all sources and worked within the principles of Single Shared Assessment.

- 6.5 The team consisted of:-

- 1 Social Worker (Full time)
- 2 Care Managers (Full time)
- 3 Social Care Organisers (Full time)
- 1 Social Work Assistant (Full time)
- 1 Social Care Worker (Full time)

In addition, a District Nurse attended each afternoon, providing guidance and input into health needs and services.

- 6.6 The service was publicised through a series of presentations across NHS Tayside, Social Work and Housing, and these were attended by a wide range of staff including District Nurses, Community Mental Health staff, Housing Officers, Day Hospital staff, Day Care staff, Care Managers and Home Care Organisers.

7.0 EVALUATION OF THE FIRST CONTACT TEAM PILOT

- 7.1 The evaluation of the team consisted of an analysis of the statistical data available, a telephone survey of recipients of the service and a survey of service providers and assessors who worked alongside the First Contact Team. The evaluation identified that:-

- The team received and responded to 1,070 referrals and enquiries between May and December 2004.
- The team completed assessments, on average, within 2.4 days from receipt of referral.
- The team moved to service request, on average, within 2.7 days from the receipt of referral.
- 98% of the recipients of the service were satisfied with the service they received. Although not always receiving a resource service immediately, the prompt response and action to their request for assistance was the focus of praise.
- Other agencies found the introduction of the First Contact Team to have a positive impact on service users for similar reasons to those above.
- Social Care and Care Management services reported a reduction in inappropriate referrals, a decrease in the time taken to implement services and an increase in the appropriateness of the information received leading to a prompt response.
- Some service providers reported an increase in the ability to review current care packages provided.
- The multi-disciplinary approach to the team led to an improvement in joint working and the quality of assessments undertaken.
- The "waste demand" within the system was examined.

In addition, the team managed the referrals relating to older people who were decanted from their home, diverting this workload from the locality care management teams. An analysis of this workload will be fed into the Social Work Housing Liaison meetings for consideration.

- 7.2 District Nursing staff were co-located each afternoon within the team to undertake a guidance and assessment role in relation to health care issues. The integration of this resource was invaluable to the team promoting joint working and a clearer understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each staff group.
- 7.3 During the systems analysis of referral/assessment processes, it was noted that Care Management Teams assessed for local authority day care services. To eliminate unnecessary steps within the assessment process, the referral routes for changed. Day care managers now assess for their own service and will accept the assessment of other professionals where this is available.

- 7.4 The rapid response social/home care services were also examined during the review. This area of service is the subject of ongoing re-organisation and redesign. To aid access to the services, the First Contact Team were able to access this resource directly, thus being able to access crisis services when required.

8.0 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST CONTACT TEAM

- 8.1 The introduction of the First Contact Team has improved the time taken from referral to service request and, in most instances the time taken from referral to service implementation. This has led to a positive experience for service users and internal and external customers of the Social Work Department. It is therefore recommended that the First Contact Team be established on a permanent basis.
- 8.2 The role and function of the District Nursing staff within the First Contact Team will be subject to a further evaluation, with a view to retaining and extending the strong links developed.

9.0 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT CENTRE

- 9.1 One of the key principles of Single Shared Assessment is the ability to share information across agencies to simplify the assessment process and to reduce the number of assessments carried out for individual service users. To aid the sharing of information, an Information Management Centre was established on a temporary basis within the Social Work Department. It is recommended that the function of the Information Management Centre be incorporated into the First Contact Team. By providing a central point of reference, the team will be able to respond to assessment queries, giving advice and information to workers carrying out single shared assessment.

10.0 STAFFING

- 10.1 The level and spread of referral types, and the range of skills and knowledge which each post contributed to the team, were taken into consideration when determining the staffing levels for the First Contact Team. The role of Social Care Organiser in the team was different from that of the Social Care Organiser in the community, as there was no responsibility for managing a team of Social Care Workers. A new post was created, Social Care/Home Care Assessor to reflect the work undertaken and a job description and job specification developed and assessed.
- 10.2 The recommended staffing for the First Contact Team is as follows: -
- 2 Care Managers (Full time)
 - 1 Social Work Assistant (Full time)
 - 3 Social Care/Home Care Assessors (Full time)
 - 1 Social Care Worker (Part time – 30 hours)
 - 1.5 Clerical staff (Full time)

The Care Management and Social Work Assistant posts will be transferred from current services. The Social Care Assessors, Social Care Worker and Clerical support are new posts.

11.0 SYSTEMS APPROACH TO PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

11.1 The systems approach used in this project was facilitated by Vanguard (Scotland) Ltd. The main elements of this type of systems approach are:

- Clearly defining the purpose of the service from a customer/client perspective
- Establishing actual type and level of demand for services from a customer perspective
- Instituting 'end-to-end' measures that more accurately capture customer experiences of the service
- Establishing current capability of the system to deliver against demand
- Establishing the level of 'non-value adding' work in the system
- Using statistical process control charts to help understand variations in performance and the reasons for this
- Creating a team made up of a representative cross section of employees involved in delivery of the service to experiment with new and better ways of working together that will improve the capability of the system
- Implementing the lessons learned through a system-wide redesign
- Continuous monitoring of results against purpose and further redesign if appropriate

11.2 The evidence from the Single Shared Assessment project demonstrates that a systems approach can help employees devote more of their time to work that directly contributes to service delivery. In so doing, services improve, employee job satisfaction increases and resources are freed for further service improvements. Another immediate benefit was greatly improved joint working between Council and Health employees.

11.3 The Council will wish to exploit this potential for achieving efficiency gains and so will seek to apply a systems approach to other areas of service delivery. The Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive (Management) will identify areas of Council services that would most benefit from this approach and provide the necessary facilitation and support to Chief Officers to allow it to be implemented.

12.0 CONSULTATION

12.1 The Chief Executive, the Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

13.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 None.

A. Baird
Director of Social Work

11 January 2005

J.C. Petrie
Assistant Chief Executive

11 January 2005

APPENDIX 1**First Contact Team**

Staff Costs	FTE	Cost in 2005/06
Care Manager	2	58,800
Social Care/Home Care Assessor	3	72,400
Social Work Assistant	1	18,900
Social Care Worker	0.8	15,300
Clerical Assistant	1.5	<u>24,900</u>
		190,300
Non staff costs		
Travel		8,000
Protective clothing		300
Supplies and services		1,000
Total cost		£199,600
Already in budget - 2 Care Managers, 1 Social Work Assistant		77,700
Net additional cost		£121,900