

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 19
MAY 2003

REPORT ON: SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT - LEARNING DISABILITY
SERVICES - ESTABLISHMENT OF POSTS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL
AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

REPORT NO: 314-2003

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To seek Committee approval for the establishment of two Local Area Co-ordinator posts within the Learning Disability Services.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the establishment of 2 posts of Local Area Co-ordinator, AP4/5 + 1 (£19,632 - £24,888).

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The cost of these posts will be £55,000 in a full financial year, which will be funded from monies allocated to Dundee City Council from the Change Fund established by the Scottish Executive as part of the review of services for people with learning disabilities.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The proposals will ensure that people with learning disabilities and their families in Dundee receive a co-ordinated and effective service.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The proposals will enhance joint working and provide a more equitable service for people with learning disabilities.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Local area co-ordination is a new way of supporting people with learning disabilities and their families. It has been developed in Western Australia over the last 15 years. The apparent success of the work in Australia has influenced government thinking.

- 6.2 Local Area Co-ordination is one of the key recommendations in the Scottish Executive's review of services for people with learning disabilities. (*'The Same as You?'* 2000).
- 6.3 A multi-agency task group comprised of representatives from statutory and voluntary agencies, and including users and carers, has developed the model of local area co-ordination for Dundee.
- 6.4 The Social Work Department has a care management team and a child health team who work with individuals with learning disabilities and their families. It is intended that local area co-ordination will have independence from care management and children's services, and will form part of an overall local strategy for people with learning disabilities.
- 6.5 Local area co-ordination differs from current care management and children's services in that it makes support available throughout life. The emphasis is on developing an individual's strengths and capacities rather than the need for services, and its main purpose is to develop community supports for individuals.
- 6.6 Targeting resources on those in need of intensive support means those current services alone cannot ensure that everyone, who would benefit from a service, can have access. The Local Area Co-ordinator will provide people with a point of access to services when needed, and where appropriate will work in partnership with Care Managers and other specialists. Specialist support will continue to be available according to individual need. The introduction of local area co-ordination therefore should enable care management and children's services to operate more effectively.
- 6.7 An important function of local area co-ordination will be to make connections with members, groups and agencies from local communities in order to encourage people with disabilities to be included in the community. Thus the investment in local area co-ordination is likely to result in more effective joint working, the avoidance of duplication and an increase in the contribution of community supports. The Local Area Co-ordinator should be a protective factor against crisis admissions to institutional care and also help to avoid a crisis at a time of major life transition. It is anticipated that over time it will reduce inappropriate dependence on formal services.
- 6.8 Within Dundee local area co-ordination will be introduced as part of a phased approach. Establishing two Local Area Co-ordinators in the first instance will enable the Department to evaluate the service. This will assist with longer term planning.
- 6.9 It is proposed that the two Local Area Co-ordinators will work in the Hilltown area of Dundee where they will develop contacts with other services within that community.
- 6.10 Each Local Area Co-ordinator will support 50 people. They will get to know and develop relationships with people with learning disabilities and their families in the locality. Local Area Co-ordinators will assist people achieve their aspirations, and link people into local community resources and formal services as needed. They will work across the boundaries supporting children, families and adults thereby ensuring that there is a smooth transition for children as they move toward adulthood.
- 6.11 The Scottish Executive has established a 'Change Fund' to help Local Authorities put in place the recommendations from the *'Same as You?'* Local area co-ordination has been identified as a priority in Dundee City Council's 'Partnership in Practice Agreement' 2002-3.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Social Work, Director of Finance, Director of Support Services, relevant trade unions and the Learning Disability Strategic Planning Group have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

James C Petrie
Director of Personnel and Management Services

12 May 2003