

**DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE - 15 NOVEMBER 2004  
HOUSING COMMITTEE - 15 NOVEMBER 2004**

**REPORT ON: CRITERIA FOR PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTATIONS**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK & DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**

**REPORT NO: 652 - 2004**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The report outlines the developing issues regarding the assessment for and provision of equipment and adaptations. The report recommends changes which will ensure equity and consistency of provision across a broad range of needs.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Social Work and Housing Committees:-

2.1 approve the revision to assessment and provision arrangements

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 Most of the anticipated additional cost of implementing the changes outlined in the report (total cost estimated at approximately £100,000) will have to be met from the Housing Revenue Account's Capital Plan or Private Sector Grants as appropriate. Future years budgets will require to be amended accordingly. It is expected that there will be some additional pressure on the Social Work Department's Revenue Budget but this will be funded through the existing Community Care Budget.

**4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This proposal further extends the promotion of health and social inclusion and empowerment for disabled people.

**5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Policy requires to be developed in a manner which takes account of increasing public expectation with regards to social inclusion and additional statutory duties. It must also benefit users consistently across client groupings.

## 6.0 MAIN TEXT

- 6.1 The Social Work Department's criteria for the provision of equipment rests on Report Number 893/97. It addresses our responsibilities under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Scotland) Act 1972. Its main focus is on supporting and maintaining functional independence with regard to physical disability. As a result, the Occupational Therapy Section's focus has been on the physical aspects of disability and it has been staffed and budgeted to date with that in mind.
- 6.2 However, as public expectations and statutory duties have developed, there have been increasing expectations of service delivery from the Occupational Therapy Section. People have also looked to equipment/adaptation based solutions to a wider range of issues.
- 6.3 The development of social care for people with high degrees of dependence has seen significantly more need for equipment to support paid carers. This has led to a closer working relationship between Occupational Therapy and Home Care Sections. This has improved service delivery but there is a resultant budgetary pressure. Approximately £110,000 is spent on bathing equipment with a significant proportion of this for use by carers. Within this there is also equipment being provided to facilitate outside agencies to provide care.
- 6.4 Increased regulatory requirements through Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) and insurance standards have meant that additional routine checks have to be carried out. This has not in any way altered service delivery but it has created additional administration and a budgetary pressure of approximately £5,000.
- 6.5 The provision of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 with regard to disabled children as well as developing practice with mentally ill and learning disabled people ("Same as You" Report) has created increased expectations and responsibility for the local authority.
- 6.6 The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 has created a broader duty to children with disabilities. Shifts in policy and practice has also seen a reduction in the number of children in residential care, an increasing number of children with behavioural issues being managed at home, and the Family Placement Section being involved with an increasing number of disabled children. There is often an equipment or adaptation component to the care arrangements. Assessment of this extends beyond the current remit of the Occupational Therapy Section and in some cases beyond their expertise. On occasions, referrals have been received which are requesting straightforward risk assessments for managing behaviour.
- 6.7 Developments in Learning Disability Services and Mental Health have resulted in requests for equipment and adaptations with regard to choice and behavioural management. This has created problems where carer preferences are for a particular course of action but where a functional assessment produces a different conclusion. Most frequent examples of this are for the provision of showers as they are "easier to manage", and the carer's wishes to stay in housing which is unsuitable, with an expectation that the department will resolve any difficulties.
- 6.8 By continuing to provide equipment or adaptations only to physically disabled people the Council would be failing in its statutory duties to disabled people who have other forms of disability.
- 6.8.1 Any extension of the Council's criteria for provision will result in increased commitments, which will result in increased waiting time for provision or will require additional expenditure. The main burden for this will rest with housing providers ie City Council Housing Department (for Council tenants), Housing Department Private Sector Services Unit (for owner occupiers) and Housing Associations (for tenants).

- 6.9 In order to address this broader agenda, it is proposed that:
- 6.9.1 Occupational Therapists within the Social Work Department continue to be responsible for the assessment of physically disabled people and deal with the provision and/or recommendations for equipment and/or adaptations.
- 6.9.2 Existing criteria will continue to apply for physically disabled people.
- 6.9.3 Where the individuals have other needs extending beyond their physical disability, the Occupational Therapist's assessment will be supplemented by the assessment of the Social Worker/Care Manager who will have regard to the other aspects of disability and any statutory welfare duties.
- 6.9.4 Where the individual has no physical disability the Social Worker/Care Manager will assess with regard to other aspects of disability eg attention deficit disorder, autistic spectrum, phobic conditions etc.
- 6.9.5 For "Looked After and Accommodated" children, or children who are otherwise our responsibility, the Occupational Therapist will assess the child in their temporary or proposed home. The responsibility for funding will rest with the Family Placement Section who are best placed to decide the merits of equipping or adapting a temporary home. There may be occasions when the foster carers have access to normal adaptation funding but this will need to be considered on a case by case basis.
- 6.10 As a consequence the Council will be agreeing to provision not only to address physical disability issues, but also in situations where the alleviation of emotional or psychological distress or behaviour management are factors.
- 6.11 In all cases the Occupational Therapy Section will ensure that any recommended provision is consistent with general safety and is practicable within the individual's home.
- 6.12 The Council will advise other housing providers affected on the change in policy.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

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

## **8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 None.

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Director of Housing

Date: 5 November 2004  
Alan G Baird  
Director of Social Work

Date: 5 November 2004