

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 17 February 2003
PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE
- 10 February 2003

REPORT ON: COMMUNITY ALARM SERVICE

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

REPORT NO: 78-2003

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To review the staffing of the Community Alarm Service.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee approves

2.1 the service developments within the Community Alarm Service;

2.2 the amended outline budget for the service as described in the attached appendix

It is recommended that the Personnel and Management Services Committee approves

2.3 the re-designation of the post of Social Care Officer, residential grade, SCP 16-23 (£13,976 - £16,673) to Community Alarm Worker with no change of grade

2.4 the re-designation of a post of Home Care Organiser graded AP3 (£16,673-£18,296) to Community Alarm Organiser with no change of grade.

2.5 the establishment of 28.8 Community Alarm Workers hours per week residential grade SCP 16-23 (13,976 - £16,673)

2.6 the establishment of a post of Community Alarm Organiser graded AP3 (£16,673 - £18,296)

2.7 the extension of a part-time (18.5 hrs), to full-time Clerical Assistant graded GS1/2 (£9,680 - £12,899)

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the additional proposals will be £69,600 in a full financial year and £11,600 in 2002/03. This will be met from the Social Work Department budget.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

The proposed changes are intended to support frail, vulnerable individuals to remain in their own home for as long as they choose to do so and their assessed needs can be met with appropriate services including effective response to emergencies.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

This service allows the department to contribute to the support and emergency care of older people and other vulnerable adults over a 24 hour period frequently reducing the burden of care on mainly women carers in the community. The service is offered to everyone who requires this support.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

Current service

- 6.1** The current structure reflects the needs of the service when it was initially established through Tayside Regional Council.
- 6.2** There are a number of factors which required a review of these arrangements:
- a) Transfer of location to the purpose built site at Clepington Road.
 - b) Increasing frailty of service users
 - c) Volume of reviews which field workers (care managers, social work assistants, first response team, etc) were not able to undertake.
 - d) Integration of the service with other crisis response services such as Early Supported Discharge Team, Combined Care At Home, Out Of Hours Service and other emergency services
 - e) *Supporting People* regulations which differentiate 'care' services from 'support' services for future services
- 6.3** The service acts as both a 'call centre' and as a mobile response in emergencies. Currently, Social Care Officers handle calls, identify service users needs, providing reassurance as necessary, arrange a response directly or from a relative or from one of the emergency services. The Alarm Service always requires to have someone to take calls, 7 days per week, 24 hours per day.

6.4 The mobile response teams operate as mobile wardens during the hours that wardens are not on duty: typically between 1500 - 0800. Approximately 40% of all mobile responses are for service users who live in sheltered accommodation.

The mobile response teams use 2 vehicles to carry out their visits. The workload of these vehicles was also reviewed. It was noted that the system requires peak availability and, together with the need to install systems and carry out assessments and reviews where there is no active involvement of any other social work practitioner, it was felt that 2 vehicles continue to be needed. The usage of the vehicles continues to be monitored.

A significant volume of calls require manual handling support to service users. Most of these situations require 2 people to comply with Health and Safety regulations and it would, therefore, be impracticable to recommend less than 2 people for each mobile response team.

6.5 The installation of alarms is also undertaken by the Social Care Officer teams outwith peak call demand. The Social Care Officers undertake the clerical input of service details into the computer system as part of the installation process. The night shift carries out most of the configuration of the alarm units. Each installation also requires a site visit to confirm the unit is working. This whole process takes an average of 1 hour and 10 minutes. The Social Care Officers carry out most of the assessments, which is the first part of the installation and the site visit to confirm the unit is working. It therefore makes sense that they complete the configuration.

6.6 Plans are being developed for the replacement of batteries and alarm call equipment which will be outwith warranty for service and repair. This will be linked to the rolling service review programme to be undertaken by community alarm employees.

6.7 The Tunstall control centre has significantly reduced the paperwork required of employees as all information is recorded and generated electronically. However, this has resulted in the Social Care Officers undertaking routine clerical inputting tasks particularly as more detailed information on service users is required to be recorded on the system to ensure that decisions which need to be taken in emergencies have as full a context as possible.

6.8 The rota for the deployment of Community Alarm staff has been adjusted to allow the most effective deployment of staff across a 24 hour day and to comply with Health and Safety regulations in respect of regular night shift working. This rota will also allow all the changes described above to be accommodated. The rota was the subject of detailed discussion with staff and trade unions. The additional hours required to implement this rota in full are 28.8 hours per week.

Service development

- 6.9** All the tasks described above meet the designation of 'support' task rather than care task as defined within the Supporting People regulations. To ensure that the public and staff are clear that this is an emergency call service who will provide support rather than be able to stay and provide personal care on a continuing basis, it is proposed to redesignate the posts within the service - the Social Care Officer posts (22.9 FTE) to be re-designated Community Alarm Worker and the supervisor post to be designated Community Alarm Organiser. This reflects the changed emphasis in the service.
- 6.10** Further, it is proposed that an additional post of Community Alarm Organiser AP3 be established to manage the significant increase in volume and complexity of the workload since the service was launched; and because of the 24 hour nature of the service; the need to have development time to introduce further services to support older people and other vulnerable adults to meet the *Supporting People Regulations*; and the need to develop more sophisticated equipment and supportive responses to people with a range of physical and mental health needs.
- 6.11** The growth and development of the service, together with the importance of recording up to date information electronically so that emergencies can be dealt with appropriately and consistently; the management and stock control of increased numbers of alarm systems and the requirements of the Data Protection Act, mean that additional clerical support will be needed to release workers to carry out care and support tasks as described above. Changing the existing Clerical Assistant GS1/2 post from part-time to full-time will enable this to be achieved.

7.0 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Directors of Housing and Finance and the relevant trade unions have all been consulted about the content of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

J.C. Petrie
Director of Personnel and Management Services

4 February 2003

Alan G. Baird
Director of Social Work

4 February 2003

FINANCIAL APPENDIX

PROPOSED STAFFING BUDGET

Staffing	FTE	Hours	SCP	Salary £	Full Year £
Community Alarm Organiser	2.0	37.0	26	18,296	36,600
Community Alarm Worker	19.1	708.0	19	14,984	286,200
20% Cover	3.8	141.6	19	14,984	56,900
Clerical Assistant GS1/2	1.0	37.0	10	12,296	12,300
Night Hours Premium					24,700
				Total Pays	416,700
				NI & Superannuation	69,200
				TOTAL	485,900

EXISTING STAFFING BUDGET

Staffing	FTE	Hours	SCP	Salary £	Full Year £
Community Alarm Organiser	1.0	37.0	26	18,296	18,300
Community Alarm Worker	22.2	821.4	19	14,984	332,600
Clerical Assistant GS1/2	0.5	37.0	10	12,296	6,100
				Total Pays	357,000
				NI & Superannuation	59,300
				TOTAL	416,300
				Additional Full Year Cost	69,600