

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Personnel and Management Services Committee - 21 April 2003

REPORT ON: Social Work Department - Review of Welfare Rights Service Structure

REPORT BY: Director of Social Work and Director of Personnel and Management Services

REPORT NO: 189-2003

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report seeks approval for changes to the structure of the Social Work Department's Welfare Rights Service.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

2.1 the Personnel and Management Services Committee approves the following:-

2.1.1 the establishment of one post of Senior Welfare Rights Officer, Operational, graded PO1-4, £24,888 - £27,015;

2.1.2 the establishment of one post of Senior Welfare Rights Officer, Assessments, graded PO1-4, £24,888 - £27,015;

2.1.3 a 2 year temporary upgrade of one Senior Clerical Assistant post, graded GS3, £13,650 - £14,211, to Administrative Assistant, graded AP3, £17,340 - £19,029;

2.1.4 the regrading of three posts of Welfare Rights Assistant, graded GS1/2, £10,068 - £13,416, to AP2, £15,582 - £16,866;

2.1.5 the deletion of three posts of Welfare Rights Officer, graded AP4, £19,632 - £21,732.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no additional financial implications resulting from these recommendations, as all costs will be met by the deletion of three Welfare Rights Officer posts (see attached Financial Appendix).

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The proposals in this report will promote access to the skills, knowledge and information needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The proposals in this report will promote equal opportunities by ensuring that the community have improved access to services.

6 BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

- 6.1 New policies and legislative changes from the Scottish executive have placed considerable extra pressure on the Welfare Rights Service. The introduction of Supporting People and the Single Shared Assessment thread of Joint Futures coupled with the need for improved local access to welfare rights services has highlighted the need to restructure the service.
- 6.2 The proposal to restructure the service will ensure that the community of Dundee continues to receive advice and support that is of the highest standard whilst allowing the additional challenges to be fully addressed.
- 6.3 The post of Senior Welfare Rights Officer-Assessment will be responsible for all welfare rights related aspects of charging for non-residential care and the anticipated changes resulting from the introduction of Supporting People and Single Shared Assessment. This will include direct supervision of Welfare Rights Assistants, organising and implementing an annual review of financial details of service users, processing of increased numbers of financial assessments, identification of possible benefit entitlements, visiting service users and completion of benefit claims, ensuring an audit trail of claims made and awarded is available.
- 6.4 The post of Senior Welfare Rights Officer - Operational will be responsible for supervising Welfare Rights Officers, managing the technical aspects of welfare rights work including casework audit and establishment of quality standards, provision of technical support to welfare rights staff and outside agencies, development of a welfare rights modular training pack and training programme to be available to all city council staff. Other responsibilities will include development of welfare benefit leaflets and production of a benefits related information bulletin and quick guide.
- 6.5 The posts of Welfare Rights Assistants will carry a fuller role and will undertake the tasks previously undertaken by welfare rights officers in relation to income maximisation and all aspects related to financial assessments. Their role will include providing a full income maximisation service ranging from identification of potential claims through the claims process to assisting with reviews before passing to welfare rights officers at the appeal stage. Extending the role and responsibilities of the Welfare Rights Assistants to include work previously undertaken by welfare rights Officers will enable to service to continue to develop, change and deliver services to a high standard.

- 6.6 The post of Administrative Assistant is a temporary upgrading of an existing clerical post because of increased responsibilities and additional duties. This post will maintain financial client records including inputting of data, checking of financial information and ensuring accuracy of data. The post will have supervisory responsibility for a clerical assistant. The post will have responsibility for production of management information from the client index system, advising on budgeting and budgetary control issues, collection and collation of statistics in relation to money advice clients across the city in addition to normal administrative tasks. It is possible that the additional responsibilities will be in place for a time limited period until April 2005, at which time the grading of the post will be subject to a review.
- 6.7 To offset the cost of these proposals, the Director of Social Work proposes the deletion of three welfare rights officer posts.

7 **CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and the relevant trade unions have been consulted on the preparation of this report.

8 **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.

A. Baird
Director of Social Work

8 April 2003

J.C. Petrie
Director of Personnel and Management Services

8 April 2003

Financial Appendix

Posts - Proposed	FTE	Grade	Salary £	Total £
Section Leader - Welfare Rights	1	PO 7 - 10	31,536	31,500
Senior Welfare Rights Officer	2	PO 1 - 4	24,887	49,800
Welfare Rights Officer	6	AP4	21,733	134,900
Admin Assistant AP3	1	AP3	17,340	17,300
Welfare Rights Assistant AP2	3	AP2	15,583	46,800
Clerical Assistant GS1/2	1	GS1/2	13,415	13,400
	14			293,700
Employer Costs				62,300
TOTAL COST				356,000
Posts - Current	FTE	Grade	Salary £	Total £
Section Leader - Welfare Rights	1	PO 7 - 10	31,536	31,500
Welfare Rights Officer	9	AP4	21,733	195,300
Senior Clerical Assistant GS3	1	GS3	14,211	14,200
Welfare Rights Assistant GS1/2	3	GS1/2	13,109	39,300
Clerical Assistant GS1/2	1	GS1/2	13,415	13,400
	15			293,700
Employer Costs				62,300
TOTAL COST				356,000