

ANGUS COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE7th October 1997
PERSONNEL & PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE....21st October 1997

**SELF-MANAGED PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME ESTABLISHMENT
OF PART-TIME POST**

**JOINT REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND THE
DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL**

ABSTRACT

This report outlines a proposal to change a full-time post, presently Voluntary Services Officer, to two part-time posts, these being:

- 1) Voluntary Services Officer
- 2) Welfare Rights Officer

This change will enable the Self-Managed Personal Assistance Scheme to be further developed and will enable the Social Work Department to implement the Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996 by piloting a scheme in Angus.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:

- i) Notes the content of this report and approves the changes outlined within the report.

It is recommended that the Personnel and Property Services Committee:

- i) approves the deletion of post no. 06/10, full-time Voluntary Services Officer.
- ii) approves the establishment of a part-time Voluntary Services Officer post (18.5 hours).
- iii) approves the establishment of a part-time Welfare Rights Officer post (18.5 hours).

2 BACKGROUND

A Voluntary Services Officer post has been part of the establishment of the Social Work Department since the inception of Angus Council. It existed within Tayside Regional Council however, the postholder at that time not only undertook duties relating to the recruitment and ongoing support of volunteers and other matters relating to the voluntary sector but also assisted in the development of support networks for carers and introduced the Self-Managed Personal Assistance Scheme.

Due to changes in personnel prior to Local Government Reorganisation and since Angus Council came into being, the work relating to carers has been incorporated into the Strategic Planning and Commissioning Team, with a Development Officer fulfilling this role. The Self-Managed Personal Assistance Scheme has been co-ordinated by a Resource Social Worker in the Community Care section of the department.

The work with volunteers has been effectively co-ordinated by a part-time Voluntary Services Officer, supported by a Voluntary Services Assistant.

3 PROPOSAL

There are opportunities to expand the Self-Managed Personal Assistance Scheme.

The Personal Assistance Scheme (previously Independent Living Scheme or ILS, now PAS) is a way of enabling individuals with severe disabilities, who need a high level of personal assistance, to live in their own homes.

Due to the rigidity of the qualifying criteria for the use of the Independent Living (1993) Fund there has been a low number of successful applications to this source of funding. Money has been transferred to Local Authorities from the Scottish Office to promote independent living. The Personal Assistance Scheme is designed to use this money in a flexible and imaginative way, to give individuals with disabilities independence, power and real choice over their personal care services.

The co-ordination of this scheme, as noted above has been carried out by a Resource Social Worker who has undertaken this role as part of his wider duties and as such has only been able to develop the scheme on a limited basis.

In order to further develop the scheme it is proposed that a dedicated part-time Welfare Rights Officer post is established to undertake this work. In addition such a post would have responsibility to introduce a Community Care (Direct Payments) Scheme in Angus, initially on a pilot basis. The Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996, which came into force on 1st April 1997 gives local authorities the power to make direct cash payments to some individuals in lieu of community care services they have been assessed as needing to enable them to secure for themselves, the relevant services.

It is intended that this power to use direct payments is introduced on a pilot basis to assess its effectiveness.

The effect of the proposals outlined above would be to delete the current Voluntary Services Officer post from the establishment of the Social Work Department and establish a part-time Voluntary Services Officer post (18.5 hours) and a Welfare Rights Officer post (18.5 hours).

It should be emphasised that the present postholder of the Voluntary Services Officer post works on a part-time basis (18.5 hours). It is also relevant to note that this Officer and the proposed Welfare Rights Officer post will be part of the Strategic Planning and Commissioning Section.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report as it should be noted that the existing post in the establishment is graded AP4 and that the two part-time posts will be graded AP4.

5 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

6 CONCLUSION

The changes to the staffing establishment of the Social Work Department outlined in this report will enable a more effective co-ordination and development of the Personal Assistance Scheme and

will enable the Department to introduce and pilot a direct payment scheme for the potential benefit of users of community care services.

19th September 1997

W.B. Robertson
Director of Social Work

J. Torbet
Director of Personnel

NOTE

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 this report.