

5 DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT FUND: EXTENSION TO TRAINING/ INFORMATION POSTS (AN76-2002)

In March, 2000 Dundee City Council submitted a bid for funding under the Domestic Abuse Service Development Fund. Although submitted in the name of Dundee City Council the bid had been developed jointly by partners in the Dundee Domestic Abuse Forum (DDAF).

The bid fell into two parts, namely, funding through Scottish Homes for the provision of replacement refuge accommodation and also for the creation of posts within Dundee Women's Aid to provide training, information and advice to victims, potential victims and other stakeholders. The accommodation part of the bid was unsuccessful, although a further bid for amended proposals was submitted in March 2001. The outcome of this bid is awaited. The other element of the original bid was successful, however, and the post holders have been in place since July 2000.

A grant of £25,720 from the Scottish Executive was matched by funding from partners in the DDAF, resulting in a total of £51,440 to support the project over two years. During that time a programme has been developed which is designed to respond to the needs of agencies and organisations in every field.

Some 400 Housing and Social Work staff are currently receiving basic awareness training and 40 key workers have been identified for full in-depth training. Training is being developed with the Education Department for staff and pupils and the need for a designated domestic abuse liaison officer in the Home School Support Service has been identified. Following a marketing exercise training has been given to:-

- Community Education Students
- Social Work Students
- Probationary Police Officers
- Student Midwives
- Clinical Nurses

In December 2001, following an invitation from the Scottish Executive to all local authorities a bid was submitted by Dundee City Council for a two year extension to the project. The proposal was again developed jointly with partners in DDAF. This bid was for a Scottish Executive grant of £19,360 in each of two years to be matched by funding from the partners in DDAF, thus providing a total, over the two years, of £77,440.

Initially the Scottish Executive refused to support the bid. They did so on the grounds that they were developing a National Training Strategy and were not prepared to support any training posts until this strategy was in place. The Council has subsequently been advised that they have reconsidered the position and are of the view that the proposals in the Council's bid will inform the development of the National Strategy and are prepared to support the bid.

The intention over the next two years is to develop further the training being provided in Housing and Social Work and to extend it to other departments of the Council. For example, Personnel, recognising that domestic abuse is a workplace issue, are committed to ensuring that all Personnel staff are fully trained to provide advice and support to victims in the workforce and to managers required to manage the consequences in the workplace.

Training for Police and Health staff will be extended and developed and training initiated for Procurator Fiscal staff. Proposals are being developed with Neighbourhood Resources and Development Department to provide training and advice to local community groups and activists thus enabling them to assist and participate in the strategy, recognising the important role that the community at large can play in eliminating domestic violence.

Significant progress has been made over the last two years. General awareness of domestic abuse has been raised. The skills and expertise within agencies has been increased. Mechanisms and procedures are being developed which will enhance the quality of the service being provided to victims and children. This progress provides a platform for further enhancement over the coming two years.