

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE : 19 February 2001

REPORT ON: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ARREST REFERRAL SCHEME

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 124-2001

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of a proposal to develop an Arrest Referral Scheme for Dundee in partnership with National Children's Home.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:

- 2.1 Approve the above development proposal for establishment of an Arrest Referral Scheme within Dundee City.
- 2.2 Instructs the Director of Social Work to report back to the Social Work Committee following the review of the scheme and the decision on long term funding.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications for Dundee City Council. Funding has been obtained from Tayside Police (£25,000) and the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (£25,000) for each of the first 2 years of the scheme. A submission has also been made to the Scottish Executive for additional and continued funding.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The proposal impacts on key theme 9 which acknowledges the right of "people to live without fear of personal violence from crime or persecution".

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equal opportunity implications regarding employment. The Arrest Referral Scheme would be equally available to male and female offenders.

6.0 BACKGROUND

Drug Abusers are defined as a priority group by the Scottish Executive as the cost of drug related crime is increasing.

Arrest Referral seeks to provide a service for drug users at the point of arrest as this is often their first contact with the Criminal Justice System. Arrest is a crisis point for the offender and their motivation to address the underlying causes of offending should be greatest.

Arrest referral has been used in England and has demonstrated effectiveness in reducing the cost of drug related crime to the community. Discussions have taken place at a local level between Police, National Children's Home and Social Work. Tayside Police support the proposal of arrest referral being available in Dundee and then to Angus.

Arrest Referral Schemes work to turn people away from their dependence on drugs by the provision of a co-ordinated range of services appropriate to the assessed level of need of the offender.

Perth and Kinross Council, Tayside Police and Scotland Against Drugs presently fund an Arrest Referral scheme. This scheme is managed by the National Children's Home (NCH) Alternatives to Custody Project Leader, who is based in Dundee.

7.0 PROPOSAL

It is proposed that an Arrest Referral Scheme be extended to Dundee. It is expected that the scheme will be in partnership with Tayside Police and NCH and managed by the existing NCH Project Leader.

The aims of this proposal are:

- To target drug abusers as a vulnerable group, identified by the Scottish Executive.
- To provide a community based service that seeks to reduce the level of drug related crime.
- To assist offenders develop skills and attitudes that will facilitate an offence free lifestyle.
- To strengthen the service to drug abusers within partnerships across the three councils.

8.0 CONSULTATION

Chief Executive, Director of Support Services and Director of Finance.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

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.

10.0 SIGNATURE

Director of Social Work _____

Date _____