

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 24th September 2007

REPORT ON: YOUTH JUSTICE ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 468 - 2007

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report provides information about the 2006/07 Annual Report of Dundee's Youth Justice Strategy Group.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee:-

2.2 note the content of this report

2.3 note and approve the Youth Justice Annual Report, a copy of which is available for inspection in the members' lounge

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report does not directly impact on the Council's Sustainability Policy

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The efforts described within the Annual Report are helping to reduce youth crime and are thereby promoting community safety within Dundee. They also assist in achieving improved outcomes for children and young people involved in, and affected by, youth crime.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Report 230-06 outlined Dundee's Youth Justice Strategy for 2006-2008. It notes Dundee's strategy to reduce youth crime involves prevention, diversion, intensive responses to persistent and serious offending, and responding to victims of youth crime. It also notes that there is a range of services and processes that are geared up to reducing the amount of youth crime in Dundee.

6.2 The Youth Justice Strategy Group - the multi-agency that oversees Dundee's efforts to tackle youth crime - has continued to implement this strategy. It continues to have an overview of all the various inter-agency efforts to reduce juvenile offending and these efforts are reflected in an Annual Report for the year 2006-07.

- 6.3 The main points of note within the Annual Report include,
- A reduction in persistent offender numbers from last year (05/06) of 16% (80 down to 67), with a 3 year reduction of between 2003/4 to 2006/7 of 38% (from 109 down to 67)
 - A reduction from last year in the number of offence referrals from the Police to SCRA from 1968 to 1467 (down 25%)
 - The main types of crime committed by children in Dundee during 2006/07 were assault, breach of the peace, vandalism and theft
 - A reduction across all offence types reported to SCRA, in particular offences contrary to the Road Traffic Act - typically riding motor bikes, mini-motos or cars without a licence/insurance etc - which reduced from 268 the previous year down to 159 in 06/07, a reduction of 41%
 - Six children were considered for an ASBO during 2006/07, with 2 application made and granted, with the remainder receiving various other disposals and services through the Children's Hearing including Intensive Support and Monitoring (ISMS), placements in foster/residential/secure care, and/or other forms of monitoring or supervision
- 6.4 The report also highlights some of the positive work across agencies within communities in Dundee. Specifically, during 06/07 developmental work has included,
- new arrangements for care and risk management conferences for children who have been involved in sexual or violent offending;
 - an inter-agency detention protocol, for cases children who are detained by the police
 - an information-sharing protocol, to ensure information about a child's offending is speedily passed by the Police to all those who are working with the child
 - the introduction of the new Police Restorative Warning scheme
 - a pre-referral screening protocol, which outlines a new route for the Police to refer direct to agencies as an alternative to referring to the Children's Reporter,
- 6.5 The new Police Warning scheme and the screening protocol commenced in October 2006, and since then the rate of offence referrals to SCRA has fallen by approximately 40% per month. This has led to a number of efficiencies across the system, including quicker interventions for early offenders and more time for the key agencies to concentrate on persistent and serious offenders. This redesigning of services has been commended by Audit Scotland as a national good practice model, and at a local level this has been greatly welcomed by the Police, children, parents and the relevant diversionary services.
- 6.6 There is now a wider range of options available to the Police than previously, including a Warning letter, a Restorative Warning by a specially trained Police officer, referral to Reporter, referral to Procurator Fiscal, or referrals to diversion involving SACRO, Home School Support Service, the Compass scheme and Anti-Social Behaviour Team.
- 6.7 Since the new arrangements have been put in place, there has also been a reduction in overall offence referrals (including formal warning letters and formal warnings) of 11%.
- 6.8 New activity planned for this coming year includes the offer of speakers from the various youth justice services to undertake presentations to community meetings/groups to explain this annual report, and to talk about how the youth justice system works.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation has been undertaken with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning), Head of Finance, the Directors of Housing, Education, Leisure and Communities, and all the agencies and organisations represented on the Youth Justice Strategy Group.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report 230-2006 to the Policy and Resources Committee
Report 595-2006 to the Social Work Committee

Alan Baird
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31 August 2007