

# **DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Social Work Committee - 20 October 2003  
Personnel and Management Services Committee - 20 October 2003

**REPORT ON:** Social Work Department - Throughcare Service for Ex-Prisoners - Establishment of Posts

**REPORT BY:** Director of Social Work and Assistant Chief Executive (Management)

**REPORT NO:** 607-2003

## **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report outlines the background to the new throughcare service and the services to be provided across the Criminal Justice Partnership area, and details the services to be provided within Dundee City Council. The report seeks approval of the plans for the service and the establishment of two new posts

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Social Work Committee approves the plans for the service.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Personnel and Management Services Committee approves the establishment of the following posts:-
- 1 post of Social Worker, graded AP4/5 + 1, £19,632 - £24,888;
  - 1 post of Support Worker, graded AP2, £15,582 - £16,866.

## **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The cost of establishing the above posts will be £11,750 in 2003/04 and £47,000 in a full financial year. This will be met in full from additional grant allocation provided by the Scottish Executive as part of the Criminal Justice Services' 100% funding arrangements.

## **4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None.

## **5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

## **6 BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS**

- 6.1 Circular no: Scottish Executive Justice Department 12/2002, issued in December 2002, laid out new duties for local authorities with regard to throughcare provision for long term prisoners (i.e. those serving sentences of 4 years or more) and prisoners subject to supervised release orders (SRO).
- 6.2 Throughcare is the provision of a range of social work and associated services to prisoners and their families on sentence or remand, during sentence and on release.
- 6.3 A Tripartite Group, consisting of representatives from the Scottish Executive Justice Department, Scottish Prison Service and Association of Directors of Social Work concluded that there was potential for improvement in the current system. Scottish Ministers have endorsed these recommendations which are aimed at strengthening current throughcare arrangements whilst developing a broader agenda to manage more effectively the transition from prison to community.
- 6.4 The main impact for local authorities arises from the requirement to provide a Supervising Officer for all long-term prisoners and prisoners subject to SRO, from the point of sentence. The Supervising Officer will have an enhanced role throughout the sentence including prison visits, family contact work, and an increased emphasis on co-ordination and case management. Overall there will be more emphasis on the importance of information exchange between the prison and the supervising authority.
- 6.5 Local authority Criminal Justice Social Work Services were asked to submit plans for this enhanced service. The Scottish Executive has provided some additional funding to cover these new duties, allowing the Tayside Criminal Justice Partnership an indicative budget of £138,500.
- 6.6 These funds will provide a single additional worker in each Local Authority (on the understanding that the workload in Dundee, which has circa 50% of all statutory throughcare cases, will be recognised in any future funding). In addition a Support Worker based in East Port House will provide a tenancy support service to all throughcare cases. The new arrangements place a particular emphasis on the needs of prisoners' families. The Tayside Criminal Justice Partnership is working with Families Outside (formerly the Scottish Forum for Prisoners and their Families) to develop a service specification to address these needs.
- 6.7 These proposals have been developed with SPS and will be overseen by a multi-agency Throughcare Network. The Plan was approved by the Steering Group of the Tayside Criminal Justice Partnership on 30 June 2003. The Scottish Executive approved the Partnership Throughcare Plan on 12 August 2003 and the new arrangements will be implemented as soon as staff are in post.
- 6.8 In order to fulfil its additional responsibilities, Dundee City Council Criminal Justice Social Work Service will need additional staffing. The post of Social Worker is being created to fulfil the additional professional responsibilities.
- 6.9 In addition an analysis of the issues facing ex-prisoners returning to the community indicates that a major concern is the ability of those prisoners to sustain accommodation. It is proposed therefore to create the post of Support Worker, attached to East Port House to provide out-reach support to throughcare clients. This post will provide service to throughcare clients from across the Criminal Justice Partnership.

- 6.10 The implementation of the throughcare plan will significantly impact on the lives of ex-prisoners, strengthen their ability to avoid re-offending and contribute to their effective re-integration into the community.

## 7 **CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and the trade unions have been consulted in 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.

## 9 **SIGNATURE**

Alan G Baird  
Director of Social Work  
Date 10 October 2003

J C Petrie  
Assistant Chief Executive  
(Management)  
Date 10 October 2003