

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Social Work Committee – 20 March 2006

REPORT ON: Management of Offenders, etc. (Scotland) Act Implementation of Community Justice Authorities

REPORT BY: Director of Social Work

REPORT NO: 181- 2006

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update in relation to the key issues arising from the Management of Offenders etc. (Scotland) Act specifically in relation to the creation of Community Justice Authorities.
- 1.2 Background information was presented to the Social Work Committee in June 2005 (Report No. 24-2005) and January 2006 (Report No. 21-2006)

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work committee:-

- 2.1 Note the developments.
- 2.2 Nominate 2 Elected Members to serve on the Tayside Community Justice Authority, which comes into place, in shadow form, from April 2006 with full implementation from April 2007
- 2.3 Notes and approves the involvement of the Director of Social Work to the National Advisory Board.
- 2.4 Requires the Director of Social Work to report back to Committee on the progress made by the Community Justice Authority prior to full implementation in April 2007.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no implications for the Council, as Community Justice Authorities will receive ring-fenced funding directly from the Scottish Executive. However, in recognition of the fact that there will be costs associated with planning for the introduction of the new Community Justice Authorities, the Tayside Criminal Justice grouping has received an additional £15,000 from the Scottish Executive. From April 2007 the Community Justice Authority will have responsibility for the dispersal of funding for Criminal Justice Social Work Services.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The policy objectives of meeting needs locally and of reducing crime and ensuring people are safe and feel safe are reflected in the Act.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Members are reminded that there will be eight Community Justice Authorities across Scotland with Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross forming one such authority. Each Community Justice Authority will be made up of Elected Members from the constituent local authorities supported by a Chief Officer. Responsibilities will include: -

- preparing an area plan for reducing re-offending
- monitoring the performance of Local Authorities and the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) in complying with the area plan and co-operating with each other.
- allocation of budget
- promoting good practice and issuing direction to Local Authorities and making recommendations to SPS if performance is assessed as unsatisfactory
- overseeing Prison Visiting Committees in terms of membership and reporting functions

6.2 The work of the Community Justice Authorities will be overseen by a National Advisory Board chaired by the Justice Minister. This body will develop common objectives and a national strategy to reduce re-offending. The Director of Social Work in Dundee City has been invited to be a member of this group.

6.3 Local Authorities will retain operational responsibility for Social Work Services in the Criminal Justice system but these functions can be transferred to the Community Justice Authority by Statutory Instrument.

6.4 The constitution for the Tayside Community Justice Authority will be 2 elected members from each of the authorities with a quorum of 4. Each Councillor member will have one vote. Membership should reflect the fact that reducing re-offending does not lie with any one agency or section and the contribution that Housing, Education and Communities can make in addition to that of Social Work should be noted.

6.5 The first tasks of the Community Justice Authority will be to appoint a Chief Officer, prepare an area plan to reduce re-offending and involve partner agencies. The post of Chief Officer will be advertised in March.

6.6 It has been agreed that Dundee City will continue to act as the Host Authority in the shadow year and officers from the three Councils are working closely on the emerging details. An Interim Support Officer has been identified to support the work of the Community Justice Authority pending the appointment of a Chief Officer.

6.7 The Community Justice Authority will also bring together a range of partner agencies who have a role to play in reducing offending and re-offending. Work is underway to identify those agencies and establish how best to involve them and a programme of briefings/consultations will be arranged for later in the year.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and the other authorities within the Tayside Grouping have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- The following Background Papers were relied upon on preparation of this report: - Consultation Report on Community Justice Authorities and Committee reports 24-2005 and 21-2006.

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Date: 10 March 2006