

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 24TH JANUARY 2011

REPORT ON: REPORT ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR MANAGING HIGH RISK OFFENDERS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 26 - 2011

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report summarises the third Annual Report on arrangements for managing high risk offenders across Tayside for the period 1 April 2009 - 31 March 2010.

The Management of Offenders etc (Scotland) Act 2005 introduced a statutory duty on Responsible Authorities - Local Authorities, Scottish Prison Service (SPS), Police and Health to establish joint arrangements for the assessment and management of the risk posed by certain offenders who pose a risk of harm to the public. The Responsible Authorities are required to publish an annual report.

The introduction of Multi Agency Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in 2007 ensures a consistent approach to the management of offenders. Within Scotland the implementation of MAPPA has been phased and currently extends to registered sex offenders and Restricted Patients. Restricted Patients are defined within the Management of Offenders Act as persons who by virtue of their mental health are confined for treatment under current Mental Health legislation.

Work continues nationally to agree the arrangements for violent offenders. It should be noted, however, that locally partners continue to work co-operatively in relation to violent offenders and risk management meetings are held within each local authority area on certain violent offenders.

1.2 A full copy of the report has been passed to each of the Group Leaders, the Lord Provost and the Depute Lord Provost.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee:

2.1 notes the contents of this third annual report and the on-going developments in relation to high risk offenders;

2.2 requires the Director of Social Work to inform the Committee of any developments in relation to violent offenders;

2.3 requires the Director of Social Work to present such reports to Committee on an annual basis.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

- 4.1 Managing risk within the community is a complex task which cuts across the organisational boundaries of many agencies; the public also have an important role and have a responsibility to protect vulnerable members of the community.

Sexual offenders live in every community and although reconviction rates are low it is recognised that the public are concerned about the risks that these offenders present.

- 4.2 MAPPA is the process whereby the assessment and sharing of information on offenders is managed and the Responsible Authorities and Duty to Co-operate agencies within Tayside have an agreed Memorandum of Understanding in place. Duty to Co-operate agencies may come into regular contact with high risk offenders and include, for example, Job Centre Plus and certain voluntary organisations.

Tayside Police and Social Work Departments across Tayside have been partners in managing and assessing offenders for many years. The introduction of the Management of Offenders Act and MAPPA has strengthened this approach and enhanced arrangements across Tayside. MAPPA also ensures other agencies, including Health and the Voluntary sector, are recognised for the significant role they have in relation to the management of certain offenders.

- 4.3 In June 2009 the report on the Multi Agency Inspection "Assessing and managing offenders who present risk of serious harm 2009" was published. This report detailed 19 recommendations for consideration by Scottish Ministers and Agencies. Of the 19 recommendations, one was specific to MAPPA in that it required *'that responsible authorities' establish local strategic boards to oversee the performance management and quality of local MAPPA operations and plan for the future improvement and development of the system.* Tayside has a well established Strategic Oversight Group which has been in place since the commencement of MAPPA arrangements.

- 4.4 Locally one of the major developments in 2009 was the appointment of a dedicated MAPPA Health liaison Officer post through NHS Tayside as part of a 12 month pilot project.

This post demonstrates a considerable commitment on the part of NHS Tayside and recognises the need to improve information sharing with Health given that all registered sex offenders living in the community are registered with Tayside GP practices and have the potential to access a variety of Tayside Services. This post is co-located with the MAPPA co-ordinator within Dundee and has ensured Health representation at all MAPPA meetings across Tayside. The post is unique in Scotland and is currently subject to an external review to determine future viability. The outcome of this will be known by January 2011.

- 4.5 Another significant related development was the **"Keeping Children Safe"** pilot disclosure scheme which was introduced by Tayside Police in September 2009. This scheme enables parents, carers or guardians to enquire whether a person, who has access to their child, is a registered sex offender or poses a risk to that child. The pilot builds on the existing procedures to proactively manage sex offenders through MAPPA and is also linked to approaches to child protection.

By 31 March 2010 the pilot disclosure scheme had received 46 applications of which 6 related to Registered Sex Offenders. Extensive enquiries were carried out into each application resulting in 7 disclosures of information in order to protect children.

The report of the evaluation has now been published and the outcome is that the scheme will be further extended across Scotland.

4.6 Training events are recognised as being a significant way of raising awareness of MAPPA and understanding risk. The MAPPA Co-ordinator, with the assistance of the MAPPA Health Liaison Officer, has carried out several training events throughout Tayside. This includes inputs to Doctor's surgeries and Health Centres ensuring NHS frontline staff are aware of their obligations and the implications of managing high risk offenders.

4.7 The following statistics are of note:

- as of 31 March 2010 there were 294 registered sex offenders within Tayside this is a decrease of 4 offenders since March 2009.
- 287 (97%) of offenders across Tayside complied with their registration requirements, this is similar to the 97% compliance rate of the previous report.
- 246 (83.6%) are assessed as presenting a low or medium risk of harm and the majority are managed by Police only this is an increase of 25 to the previous report.
- 90 offenders are managed jointly by Police and Social Work with 3 offenders requiring senior management involvement as they are assessed as presenting a very high risk of serious harm
- 99.66% of the offenders in Tayside are male
- 30% of the offenders are on statutory supervision
- 65% of the offenders were convicted of an offence against a child aged under 16 years

This confirms that MAPPA continues to work well across Tayside.

4.8 In terms of future developments for 2010/2011 revised national guidance in relation to the operation of MAPPA is anticipated in the near future and will require to be implemented. In addition the MAPPA Health Liaison Officer post will be reviewed. Local Authorities are currently undertaking a self evaluation of their work with high risk offenders as a follow up to the recent thematic inspection and it is anticipated that this will include links to MAPPA. In addition there will be on-going work to ensure the work of MAPPA is widely understood and continues to be closely linked to arrangements for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in relation to sustainability, strategic environmental assessment, anti-poverty, equality impact assessment and risk management.

5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and will be made available on the Council website <http://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv/equimpact/>.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and the Director of Finance have been consulted in preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were relied upon in the preparation of this report:

- Scottish Government's MAPPA Guidance
- Social Work Inspection Agency report Assessing and managing offenders who present a high risk of serious harm 2009.
- Equality Impact Assessment

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work

DATE: 12th January
2011