

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 16 SEPTEMBER 2002

REPORT ON: PILOT SCHEME FOR ANGUS COUNCIL TO ACCESS SECURE ACCOMMODATION AT THE ELMS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 690- 2002

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report seeks approval for a pilot scheme which gives Angus Council access to secure accommodation within The Elms. This provision of secure accommodation to another Local Authority would be under a Service Level Agreement.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that The Social Work Committee

2.1 Notes and approve the contents of this report and in particular agree to a six month pilot scheme which will give Angus Council access to one place when available in secure accommodation within The Elms in Dundee

2.2 Instructs the Director of Social Work to provide a report to Committee evaluating the operation of the pilot scheme.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Income generated from the recommendations outlined in the report will allow Dundee City Council to maintain the required level of placements through re-investment in the corporate residential schools and secure care budget.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

This will allow young people resident in Angus who meet the criteria for secure accommodation to be closer to their families and communities.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

This will allow more young people to access secure accommodation more appropriate to their needs and within their own communities.

6 BACKGROUND

6.1 The Elms Secure Unit is a four bedded facility which received its interim licence to operate as secure accommodation on 21 January 2002.

- 6.2 In The Elms' Statement of Functions and Objectives, it is stated that admissions will, in the main, be local children however, there may be times when other authorities will require access to a secure bed. Admissions in this case will be based on the unit being able to meet the needs of the young person and there being an agreed exit strategy. The Elms has had a number of approaches from other authorities to date.
- 6.3 The numbers of young people requiring secure care can vary but there is often pressure of demand nationally on secure beds. Good child care practice dictates that no young person requiring secure care should be detained in inappropriate accommodation if vacancies exist in secure units. This is the expectation of the Scottish Executive on the use of secure beds. A secure unit close to the young person's community is the preferred option in most cases because it gives opportunity for a safe and planned integration back into their own community.
- 6.4 In offering one secure care place when available to Angus Council, The Elms would operate to its full capacity on a consistent basis.
- 6.5 The scheme would operate for six months on a pilot basis in the first instance. This would provide the Council with the information necessary to determine whether a longer term arrangement can be made with other Local Authorities in the best interests of young people requiring secure accommodation in the Tayside area.
- 6.6 This proposal has advantages for both authorities and will further enhance the already good relationships and working practices between the two Councils.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation has been held with the Directors of Education and Social Work in Dundee and Angus. The Directors of Finance and Support Services have also been consulted.

8 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.

9 SIGNATURE

A G Baird
Director of Social Work

Date

5 September 2002