

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE : 27 JANUARY 2005**

### **SCOTLAND'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLAN**

#### **Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise Committee on the report of the Scottish Executive, "Scotland's Criminal Justice Plan" and of the continued progress of the Ayrshire Criminal Justice Partnership in addressing the issues arising from the consultation on offending and the proposal for a single agency. A copy of the report is available at the Members Information Point.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Social Work Committee received a previous report in 20 May 2004 (Item 17, Pages 166-177), regarding a consultation event held by the Ayrshire Criminal Justice partnership on the proposal from the Scottish Executive to establish a single agency to deliver Criminal Justice Services in Scotland. The consultation event was one of a number of similar events, hosted by Criminal Justice Partnerships, as part of the Scottish Executive's consultation on its proposals.
- 2.2 Having concluded the consultation exercise, and discussed the outcomes of the consultation with CoSLA, the Scottish Executive has now published its Criminal Justice Plan for Scotland.
- 2.3 The Plan addresses a number of key themes; Protecting Communities and Preventing Crime, Tackling Drugs in our Communities, Reform of Scotland's Courts, Effective Interventions and Sentences which Fit the Crime, and Integrated Services for Managing Offenders.
- 2.4 The plan seeks to address the causes of crime whilst ensuring that the key agencies work more effectively together to reduce reoffending rates which are currently amongst the highest in Europe.

#### **3. INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR MANAGING OFFENDERS**

- 3.1 The proposals within this section of the plan will directly impinge upon the Criminal Justice Services which are managed by local authorities. The Scottish Executive has dropped the proposal to establish a single Criminal Justice Agency for Scotland as a result of the feedback from the consultation exercise on the Single Agency and strong representation from CoSLA in how to best meet future criminal justice standards.

- 3.2 The Scottish Executive plans to introduce legislation which will create Community Justice Authorities, responsible for ensuring the consistent and effective delivery of criminal justice social work services across a defined geographical area. There will also be a new statutory framework to place the Scottish Prison Service and Local Authorities under specific new obligations to work closely together to manage offenders seamlessly and reduce reoffending.
- 3.3 There is no indication at this stage of the number of Criminal Justice Agencies that will be established across Scotland. The Scottish Executive has indicated however that criminal justice staff currently employed by local authorities may continue to be so employed. Legislation will be introduced in the current session of Parliament to establish the changes although there will be further consultation on the number and boundaries of the new Criminal Justice Authorities.

#### **4. AYRSHIRE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP**

- 4.1 In parallel with the initial consultation the Criminal Justice Partnership commissioned a piece of work on the future direction of criminal justice services in Ayrshire. Given that the initial criminal just partnership was due to expire in March 2005. This will result in a new partnership agreement being brought to Committee in March 2005 for approval.
- 4.2 The new agreement will run for a period of two years or until the establishment of the Criminal Justice Authority. The review of the Partnership Agreement and the proposals flowing from it will place the Partnership in a strong position to deliver on the new agenda being set for Community Justice Authorities and have anticipated the need for greater involvement of stakeholders in delivering the reducing offending agenda. As part of the new agreement it is proposed that a single manager will be appointed by the Ayrshire Criminal Justice Partnership to take forward strategic planning and management of the service within a revised governance structure that recognises the need for greater partnership working across all criminal justice agencies.

#### **5. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial or legal implications arising from this report.

#### **6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Nil.

#### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Social Work Committee is asked to:
- (i) note the proposals in the Scottish Executive report for the future management arrangements of criminal justice services;

- (ii) note that the Ayrshire Criminal Justice Partnership has conducted a review of its structure and that a revised partnership agreement will be submitted to committee in March for approval; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

**John Mulgrew**  
**Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**  
**5 January 2005**  
**Enc (0)**

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

A copy of 'Supporting Safer, Stronger Communities - Scotland's Criminal Justice Plan' is available at the Members Information Point.

For further information please contact:  
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**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JACKIE DONNELLY**