

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE: 20 MAY 2004

YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICES

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of additional funds being made available to further develop Youth Justice Services in East Ayrshire, and to seek approval for the action intended.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A number of reports in relation to Youth Justice Services have been approved by Committee in the past: Social Work Committees 14th September 2000 (Item 6, Page 1229); 9th April 2002 (Item 7, Page 2493); 7th November 2002 (Item 5, Page 2895); 18th March 2004 (Item 11, Page 644).

- 2.2 Each of these reports has advised Committee of developments in Youth Justice including the funds made available to the Council through allocation of the Children Services Development Fund (Youth Crime). For the financial year 2004-2005, an additional £106,000, for the allocation of Youth Justice/Anti Social Behaviour Resources, is being added to the Social Work budget to support:

- Restorative Justice;
- Programmes to support under 16's on Anti Social Behaviour Orders;
- Implementation of Youth Justice National Standards;

- 2.3 2005-2006 £130,000 has been allocated to continue these developments.

3. INTENDED ACTION

3.1 Restorative Justice

- 3.1.1 Restorative Justice aims to encourage young offenders to face up to their offending throughout the participation in schemes which enable them to address the offences they have committed. £40,000 of extra funding for the year 2004-05 and £39,000 for the year 2005-06 would allow the expansion of restorative justice services and programmes for young people. The aim is to increase the number of places provided, and add capacity to take on more types of cases including working with more serious and persistent offenders. This would include working in partnership with existing SACRO Services. After discussions with partner agencies a full report will be submitted to Committee.

3.2 Programmes to support under 16's on Anti Social Behaviour Orders

3.2.1 Under 16 year olds subject to Anti Social Behaviour Orders will be supported by a Supervision Requirement imposed by a Children's Hearing. £26,000 additional funding for the year 2004-05 and £52,000 for the year 2005-06 will allow for additional training for staff, and the expansion of services to provide a range of intensive programmes designed to help young people change their behaviour. After discussion with partner agencies a full report will be submitted to Committee.

3.3 Implementation of National Standards

3.3.1 Multi-agency Youth Justice Teams are currently working towards implementation of National Standards for Youth Justice by 2006. Additional funding of £40,000 for the year 2004-05 and £39,000 for the year 2005-06 will facilitate completion of comprehensive assessments and preparation of reports to the Children's Hearing delivered within required timescales and delivery of a range of programmes to ensure that every Supervision Requirement is implemented.

3.3.2 To meet the requirements noted at 3.3.1 and the increasing level of demand faced by existing services; to manage the need to turnaround reports more speedily and to meet the targets of National Standards, it is proposed that the Youth Justice service recruits one additional qualified social worker to deal with additional workload.

3.3.3 The primary focus of the additional Social Work post would be to address the Implementation of National Standards including assessment reports for the Children's Hearing and assist with the delivery of offence focused work for young offenders.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Costs associated with the proposed additional staff post will be met from the £40,000 allocated for Implementation of National Standards for the year 2004-2005 and £39,000 for the year 2005-2006 for the further development of Youth Justice Services.

4.2 Proposals regarding the balance of £66,000 for restorative justice and anti-social behaviour orders will be brought to a future committee.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The strengthening of Youth Justice Services requires the recruitment of one additional qualified social worker.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 To meet the increasing demand being placed on Youth Justice Services in implementation of National Standards, including preparation of comprehensive assessments, and managing more efficiently the turnaround time for reports to the Children's Hearing, and delivering a range of programmes, it is proposed that one additional social worker be appointed.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that Social Work Committee:-

- (i) approve the proposed staff increase referred to at 3.3.2;
- (ii) refer the staffing proposed for further consideration to the Corporate Governance Committee;
- (iii) require the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services to report back to Committee on progress being made; and
- (iv) otherwise note the content of the report.

John Mulgrew
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services
Enc (0)
23rd April 2004

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

For further information please contact Bill Eadie, Senior Manager, Operations Social Work Services, Council Offices, Civic Centre, John Dickie Street, Kilmarnock. (Tel: 01563 – 576728)

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JACKIE DONNELLY