

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE: 7 SEPTEMBER 2006

REDUCING RE-OFFENDING – NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF OFFENDERS

Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the progress of the development of a National Strategy for the Management of Offenders and the implications for East Ayrshire Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 “Supporting Safer Stronger Communities, Scotland’s Criminal Justice Plan” was published by the Scottish Executive in December 2004 and signalled that a National Strategy would be developed to give common direction to all agencies involved in the management of offenders.
- 2.2 In March 2005 the Scottish Executive launched its Consultation on this report, the results of which were published in October 2005.
- 2.3 In March 2006, the Justice Minister launched the National Advisory Body on Offender Management (NAB). A draft National Strategy for the Management of Offenders was discussed at the inaugural meeting of the National Advisory Body on the 20 March 2006 where it was endorsed by the members of the group.

3. NATIONAL ADVISORY BODY

- 3.1 The National Advisory Body is chaired by the Justice Minister and the group includes representatives from key partner agencies in Criminal Justice.
- 3.2 The Advisory Body will play a central role in shaping long term National Strategy, approving the local area plan produced by Criminal Justice Authorities (CJA’s) and the performance reports which CJA’s will eventually produce.

4. THE NATIONAL STRATEGY

- 4.1 The current national strategy introduced in May 2006, has set a target of 2% reduction on reconviction rates in all types of sentences by March 2008. The Scottish Executive have not yet provided the Community Justice Authority with baseline figures from which this 2% reduction will be measured.
- 4.2 The Strategy indicates that services be developed under five interlinking themes:
- (i) Setting priorities
 - (ii) Working together
 - (iii) Developing and supporting the workforce
 - (iv) Communication

(v) Measuring, learning and acting

4.3 The National Strategy identifies the priority groups of offenders and includes a number of expected outcomes for communities and offenders. It also provides the framework for the preparation for the Local Area Plan for Criminal Justice services.

5. POLICY/LEGAL ISSUES

5.1 The National Strategy supports the policy and legal developments contained within the Management of Offenders Etc (Scotland) Act 2005.

5.2 This fundamental shift towards shared management arrangements between the Scottish Executive and Local Authorities requires to be monitored closely.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The National Strategy for the Management of Offenders is the strategic response to the implementation of the Management of Offenders Etc (Scotland) Act 2005 and the initial financial implications of the legislative changes are contained within a separate Committee Report.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The overall objective of the National Strategy is to reduce re-offending. This aspiration is consistent with the Improving Community Safety theme of the Community Plan.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Social Work Committee is asked to:-

(i) note the contents of this report.

Graham Short

Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

(FMCK/LB)

2 August 2006

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (1) Reducing Re-offending - National Strategy for the Management of Offenders 2006.
- (2) Supporting Safer, Stronger Communities – Scotland's Criminal Justice Plan 2004.

Copies of the above reports are available in the Members Information Point.

For further information on this report please contact:-

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