

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE: 22 MAY, 2003.

AYRSHIRE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES PARTNERSHIP: THROUGH-CARE PLAN

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise Elected Members of the plan for Throughcare services submitted to the Scottish Executive on behalf of the Ayrshire Criminal Justice Social Work Partnership at the end of March 2003, and to seek approval to refer proposed personnel changes and the recruitment of additional staff to the Corporate Governance Committee for further consideration.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The term "Throughcare" is used to denote the provision of a range of social work and associated services to prisoners and their families from the point of sentence or remand, during the period of imprisonment, and following release into the community. These services are primarily concerned with assisting prisoners prepare for release and to help their resettlement in the community whether required by statute as part of a licence or because a prisoner requests such a service on a voluntary basis.
- 2.2** On the back of research by the Central Research Unit which suggested that Throughcare services were under-resourced a Tripartite Group, drawing representatives from the Scottish Executive, Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and the Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW) was set up to consider ways of strengthening current arrangements.
- 2.3** In accepting the recommendations contained in the Tripartite Group's report, Scottish Ministers have made additional funding available to criminal justice social work groupings placing the greater emphasis, during this initial phase of developing Throughcare services, on strengthening the supervision arrangements for all prisoners who will be released from prison subject to a statutory order of Licence. This in effect requires local authorities, unlike current arrangements, to appoint supervising officers to all such prisoners from the start of their sentence.
- 2.4** The Scottish Executive, in planning and guidance documentation issued to local authorities placed a requirement on grouping areas to submit one plan within which they expected to see arrangements to put in place a specialist

Throughcare service, managed across the grouping by a single dedicated manager.

- 2.5** The Throughcare Plan was considered at an Ayrshire Criminal Justice Social Work Services Partnership Management group meeting on 26th March, 2003, and approval given for its submission to the Scottish Executive by the due date of 31st March, 2003.

3 THROUGHCARE PLAN

- 3.1** The Throughcare Plan proposal seeks to meet one of the key principles upon which additional funding is predicated, that of a dedicated team managed by a single manager, while retaining flexibility at local area team level to meet the different needs of the individual grouping partners.

- 3.2** Key features of the plan are:

- East Ayrshire Council acts as the managing authority for the Partnership for all dedicated Throughcare services;
- Partnership arrangement with Premier Prison Services to jointly fund a Team Leader (Throughcare) that will manage both the prison-based social work service and a dedicated community-based Throughcare service;
- The appointment of additional qualified social workers plus admin support to a dedicated team having an Ayrshire wide remit for all pre-release work with serving prisoners and their families.
- The appointment of additional resources to each of the local authorities as necessary to strengthen the existing arrangements for post-release supervision;
- The nomination within each of the local authorities of a senior officer who would have lead responsibility for implementing the Partnership Throughcare strategy;
- The creation of a Throughcare Management Group convened and chaired by East Ayrshire through the Service Unit Manager (Criminal Justice) comprising the nominated senior officers and the Team Leader (Throughcare).

- 3.3** The next phase of Throughcare service development, should further additional funds be made available, will focus on improving the existing arrangements for prisoners and their families who wish to engage with social work on a voluntary basis.

4 FINANCE AND PERSONNEL ISSUES

- 4.1** Throughcare Services are part of the core funding element of the 100% grant made available to the Ayrshire Partnership for criminal justice social work services. The additional resources required as a consequence of the plan will be met wholly from the 100% grant.
- 4.2** The Throughcare Plan requires the current post of Senior Social Worker located within the prison-based Social Work Unit to be re-graded to Team Leader (Throughcare), to reflect the increased responsibilities which would match those of a Team Leader within social work.
- 4.3** There is no additional cost to the Council in agreeing to this change. The current post, which is currently wholly funded by Premier Prison Services Ltd, will in future be paid for on a 50/50 basis by Premier Prisons, and the Ayrshire Partnership through the additional resources being made available for Throughcare. In addition Premier Prison Services has agreed to East Ayrshire Council recruiting 0.5 social work assistant from the saving made on the Senior Social Worker's post, adding to the staff complement within the prison-based Social Work Unit.
- 4.4** As the managing authority for dedicated Throughcare services East Ayrshire is required to recruit 2 additional Social Workers and 1 clerical assistant. The costs will be wholly met through the grant made available by the Scottish Executive for criminal justice social work services.

5 LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** None.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1** The additional funding being made available by the Scottish Executive for the development of Throughcare services is predicated on the basis that the Ayrshire Partnership will introduce a degree of specialism through the creation of a dedicated group of staff operating under a single manager. The Throughcare plan submitted largely meets this requirement.
- 6.2** The plan proposes that additional staff be recruited to a Partnership Throughcare team whose principal area of responsibility will be pre-release work with long-term prisoners and their families from point of sentence. In addition the savings made with regard to the funding of the prison-based Senior Social Worker (Team Leader) allows the recruitment of 0.5 social work assistant to be located within the Social Work Unit at HM Prison, Kilmarnock.
- 6.3** Management of prison-based social work services and community-based pre-release services will be undertaken by East Ayrshire Council through a Team

Leader (Throughcare) post jointly funded with Premier Prison Services. This post, which will also carry a co-ordinating and monitoring role for all Throughcare services across the Partnership area, requires to be re-designated from Senior Social Worker to Team Leader (Throughcare) and re-graded from SO2 to SO5.

7 RECOMMENDATION

7.1 It is recommended that Elected Members:

- (i) refer the staffing proposals within the report to Corporate Governance Committee and;
- (ii)** otherwise note the content of the report.

John Mulgrew
Head of Educational & Social Services
9 May 2003

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

**Ayrshire Criminal Justice Social Work Services Partnership : Throughcare Plan,
March 2003.**

**For further information please contact Donal Flannery, Service Unit Manager
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IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: BILL EADIE