

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Action in Partnership: Tackling Drugs in Scotland
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 24 August 1999	
REPORT AUTHOR: George McNally	
REF: GMCI/JMCF	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Social Work Committee of the publication of a report by the Government, "Action in Partnership" which sets out proposals for tackling drugs in Scotland.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Action in Partnership report sets out Scotland's drugs strategy against the background of the UK Drugs White Paper, "Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain". It also builds on the Ministerial Drugs Task Force Report of 1994 and the steps taken since 1997 to understand and tackle Scotland's drug problems more effectively.

3 THE STRATEGY

- 3.1 There are four key principles on which the strategy is founded:-

◆ Inclusion

The report recognises that drug misuse takes place throughout society but flourishes where individuals and communities feel marginalised. It states that deprivation is not the sole cause of drug misuse but is a significant contributor and therefore tackling Scotland's drug problem has to be integrated with tackling social exclusion.

◆ Partnership

Partnership is the key to achieving co-ordinated and effective work, and is therefore encouraged at every level of implementation through suitable mechanisms and unifying action.

◆ Understanding

There is a recognition that anti-drugs work needs to be based on well targeted and accurate research and information which drives policies and programmes.

◆ Accountability

There is a clear expectation of what results are required and who should be responsible for achieving them through a process of evaluation.

4 OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PRIORITIES

4.1 In addition to the four key principles, the report sets out a number of objectives which tie in with the UK aims and key objectives agreed by Ministers in all four countries in the UK White Paper. Specific targets are set for agencies against each of the objectives.

4.2 The objectives and action priorities are comprehensive and far reaching, some examples include:-

- ◆ reduce the acceptability and incidence of drugs misuse among school children and young people.

Every school to provide appropriate drug education for all pupils in line with national and education authority advice.

- ◆ Strengthen and protect communities from drug related crime and the fear of drug related crime.

Ensure cohesion between community planning, community safety partnerships, children's service plans, community care plans and input from drug action teams.

- ◆ Reduce the health risks to individuals and communities from drug misuse, and reduce related infectious diseases.

Provide effective shared care and integrated drug misuse services, to include substitute prescribing of oral methadone with proper project management.

- ◆ Reduce access to drugs amongst all age groups.

Reduce the growth manufacture, importation and distribution of drugs for illicit use in Scotland. Support international efforts to stem the flow of drugs into the UK.

4.3 The Action in Partnership report contains 24 separate objectives. The objectives will be pursued through a total of 30 action priorities.

5 DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

- 5.1 The Government expect Drug Action Teams (DAT) to be the focal point for local action on drug misuse. The DAT will take the lead in effective joint working with Local Authorities, Health Boards and the other key agencies on planning and providing services aimed at drug misuse.
- 5.2 As part of its responsibilities the DAT will be expected to prepare Annual Corporate Plans as an integral part of their strategic planning arrangements. Such plans require to fully reflect and dovetail with other local planning arrangements and should be the basis for allocating resources locally in support of the implementation of the strategy.
- 5.3 DAT and individual agencies are requested to set local objectives drawn down from the national objectives. These should be regarded as the key planning tool for binding together the efforts of all the local agencies towards the necessary achievement of precise outcomes.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Publication of the Action in Partnership report is welcomed. It sets out objectives and action required for tackling drug misuse in Scotland. It creates the framework for all the agencies involved in this field to work jointly and effectively in tackling the full range of issues which contribute to drug misuse. Concerted partnership arrangements will no doubt greatly impact on the problem and assist individuals and communities to overcome the issues which cause so much hurt and harm both in human and resource terms.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Committee is requested to:
- i) note the terms of the report
 - ii) to request the Director of Social Work to bring forward a copy of the DAT Corporate Action Plan when this is produced.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Action in Partnership: Tackling Drugs in Scotland
Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain (White Paper)
Ministerial Drugs Task Force Report 1994



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17 August 1999

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