

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Lanarkshire Criminal Justice Grouping
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 22nd August, 2000	
REPORT AUTHOR: John S. Scott, Principal Officer, Criminal Justice	
REF: Co_0082	

1. PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to :

- inform the Committee of the up to date position regarding the development of the Social Work Criminal Justice Grouping for Lanarkshire.
- seek approval for the proposals contained in this report, and to inform the Scottish Executive of these.

This report provides information to the Committee on the proposals of the Director of Social Work for North Lanarkshire, and the Executive Director of Social Work Resources for South Lanarkshire, regarding the broad management structure for the Lanarkshire Grouping for Social Work Services in the Criminal Justice System.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 It was announced by the Minister for Justice, Jim Wallace, in October 1999, following consultation on the Tough Option, that Criminal Justice Services would remain with local authorities, but would require to work in 'groupings' with other authorities, with a likely implementation date of April - June 2001. This has since been revised to an implementation date of September 2001. The Groupings have been asked to provide information on the proposed structure for services by September 2000.

2.2 The Minister has agreed with the COSLA proposal that management arrangements should be established to meet the needs of the particular Grouping, and accepts that there will be several management arrangements across Scotland.

development.

- Agreement on the establishment of joint funding arrangements for the delivery of core and support services.

3.3 Service Delivery - Support Services

Arrangements for the review of service delivery arrangements will flow from the approval of recommendations concerning management and reporting. As noted above, it is preferred that core services remain at local level, but scope is seen to review the shape of the range of Criminal Justice support services. These services are delivered or co-ordinated centrally at present, and could be reshaped to suit the new grouping. The most significant issues are noted below :

3.3.1 Court Services

Combining Court Services for Lanark, Hamilton and Airdrie Sheriff Courts and considering associated services, such as Bail Information and Bail Supervision alongside this makes obvious sense.

There are relatively small numbers of Court based staff and bringing them together increases mutual support, co-ordination, and development of Court based services. Most Court staff are based in South Lanarkshire, and it would be relevant to manage Court services from that authority. This service is currently subject to a Best Value review co-ordinated between North and South Lanarkshire. Both authorities are also waiting for the outcome of a Social Work Services Inspectorate inspection of Court Services at Hamilton Sheriff Court. Both the review and inspection will be relevant to recommendations for the restructure of this service. These will be brought forward to Committee for consideration in the next few months.

3.3.2 Supervised Attendance

Different arrangements exist for the delivery of Supervised Attendance. South Lanarkshire delivers the programme in house, while North Lanarkshire purchases provision from APEX, Scotland.

It is proposed to undertake a joint Best Value review of this service in the current financial year, to consider the best way forward for this service. Proposals for the future delivery of this service will be brought a future meeting of the Committee.

3.3.3 Community Service

Various options exist which would improve the functioning of Community Service. These include options to decentralise case management to local level, consistent with other core Criminal Justice Services, but to maintain centralised placement

3. PROPOSALS

3.1. Principles

- While the two authorities have quite different structures for the delivery of Social Work services, both regard it as important to maintain the integration of the core Criminal Justice services of assessment and case management with other Social Work services at a local level.
- Management arrangements, and reporting to the political process require to be sensitive to the wider arrangements made for other Social Work services, in the light of the importance of integration noted at the bullet point above.
- Arrangements need to show efficiency and consistency of planning and service delivery across the Grouping.

3.2 Management, Planning, and Reporting Arrangements

3.2.1 Several options were considered for management of Criminal Justice Services. These include the management of services across Lanarkshire by one manager, and the concept of lead authority delivering services across Lanarkshire.

3.2.2 Following consideration of the available options, it is proposed that each local authority retain responsibility for management of its own Criminal Justice Service, reporting to existing political mechanisms, but that this be re-established within a strengthened framework for joint planning and delivery of services..

3.2.3 This arrangement would include the following core elements :

- The establishment of a joint advisory group comprising elected members from each authority, the Director and Executive Director of Social Work, the Principal Officers Criminal Justice, and representatives of other Criminal Justice agencies and the voluntary sector.

The focus of the group would be consultation on the development of Social Work Criminal Justice Services and consideration of links with the wider Criminal Justice System. It is proposed that the group meet twice per year, and that the group and the Social Work Criminal Justice planning process be supported by a planning officer dedicated to this service.

- The continuation of existing joint planning arrangements for the development of services such as supported accommodation, addiction, young people at risk, bail, sex offenders, mentally disordered offenders, groupwork, training, and staff

arrangements to ensure economies of scale. This, and other available options will be considered over the remainder of this financial year, with recommendations brought forward to Committee.

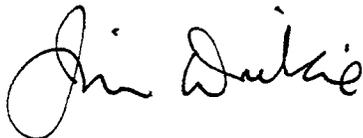
3.3.4 Groupwork Services

It is important to ensure that there is consistency in the delivery of Groupwork programmes for those made subject to statutory orders. Options exist to centralise services across both authorities or to decentralise to local level. These options will be appraised during the remainder of this financial year, with proposals brought forward to Committee.

4. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to :

- Approve the proposals made above for the management and reporting of Criminal justice Services for the new Lanarkshire Grouping.
- Approve that these proposals be submitted to the Scottish Executive.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
July 26th 2000

For further information contact John S Scott, Principal Officer, Criminal Justice (01698 332029)