

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT**

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Lanarkshire Criminal Justice Grouping
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 3rd October 2000	
REPORT AUTHOR: John S. Scott, Principal Officer, Criminal Justice	
REF: Co_0087	

1. PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with further information regarding the development of the Social Work Criminal Justice Grouping for Lanarkshire.

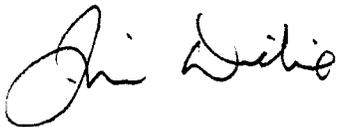
This report provides information to the Committee on the proposals of the Director of Social Work for North Lanarkshire, and the Executive Director of Social Work Resources for South Lanarkshire, regarding the broad structure for management and political accountability, for the Lanarkshire Grouping for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

2. COMMENT

The various Criminal Justice Groupings in Scotland have been asked to provide information on the proposed structure for services, to the Scottish Executive by September 2000. A detailed report was approved by the Social Work Committee in the last cycle. The Appendix to this report sets out the response which was provided to the Scottish Executive.

3. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to note the response provided to the Scottish Executive.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
Sept 2000

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

The Tough Option

Response from North and South Lanarkshire Council

Introduction

North and South Lanarkshire Council are committed to making progress on the Grouping arrangement proposed by "Tough Option" recognising that it offers the opportunity for improved use of scarce resources and simplifies the approach for our planning partners. We believe that the best way of taking the debate forward is on an incremental basis ensuring minimum disruption to service delivery and that the issues of accountability and effective service are fully addressed.

This reflects the considerable steps already taken by the two authorities to ensure a joint approach to service development. We have already jointly carried out best value reviews on aspects of service delivery; jointly commissioned services; have developed a joint training plan; have a joint approach to the development of service for mentally disordered offenders; and have established a joint multi-disciplinary strategy group to inform our work with sex offenders.

Grouping

The grouping will be North and South Lanarkshire Council. This grouping will take responsibility for strategic planning, ensuring consistency in standards and the development of a quality agenda.

The basic delivery of SER, probation services and throughcare supervision will continue at existing local Social Work Offices and the accountability of workers for that activity will be to their employing authority. The service will however be delivered within a common framework and ensure a consistency in approach and in standards. This framework is set out in the recent Best Value Review of Probation jointly carried out between the two authorities.

The grouping will investigate the possibility of running central services on a joint basis. We are currently jointly involved in developing a bail service, a service for young people who offend, and substance misuse services. We have recently completed a Best Value Review of the court services and it is our intention to run one service across the Lanarkshire Area.

Both Councils also intend to jointly review diversion and SAO under Best Value and will give consideration to running these on a joint basis.

South Lanarkshire Council has undertaken a Best Value Review of Community Service. Both Councils recognise there may be some benefit in exploring the options for joint service delivery although that needs to address concerns to ensure the reparation element of Community Service remains relevant to each Council area.

In relation to strategic planning and planned developments of new services, as and when new monies come available it would be our intention to commission these on a joint basis.

Management Arrangements

Each Council will remain responsible for managing its own local office service delivery. In relation to jointly managed services, such as the Court, an agreement will be reached between the Councils with one Council assuming responsibility on behalf of both. The Joint Planning Structure will take responsibility for ensuring that there is a consistency in approach.

Political Accountability

Each authority will continue to report to their relevant Social Work Committee. However, complimentary to the joint planning structure, a single strategic planning group will be set up involving the two chairs of Social Work from each authority. This group will receive the joint plan and progress on achieving objectives will be reported to the group at six monthly intervals. This group will approve matters for reference on to the respective Social Work Committees. Elected members from each Council will participate and will chair the group on a revolving basis. Key partners will be invited to participate including the Sheriffs Principal, Sheriff Clerks, Procurator Fiscal and Police. It is intended that this strategic planning group will meet from November 2000.

Progress On Other Matters

Most of the issues identified in Jim Wallace's letter of the 4th May 2000 have been addressed above.

Further discussion is required on the implications of the single financial allocation. There are budget differentials between North and South Lanarkshire, which require to be addressed. Both Councils also submit that each allocation does not fairly reflect the volume of work undertaken. If this issue is not addressed it is likely to make progression on the grouping difficult.

The Strategic Planning Group will allow one point of entry for the Independent Sector and other related agencies. We will set up a provider forum for the Independent Sector to ensure maximum participation from all partners. Early consideration will be given to the most effective way of involving the relevant Health Boards and Health Trusts. The Sheriff Principal and Sheriff Clerk from Glasgow will be invited to participate to ensure that the needs of Rutherglen/Cambuslang are addressed.

The delivery of services through local Social Work Offices will allow links to other relevant services in Social Work and Housing, in particular, to be maintained.

Conclusion

It is the view of North and South Lanarkshire Council that the arrangements proposed allow the basis for joint working with minimum disruption to service delivery. It is likely that the links between the grouping will evolve over time and the balance of work that is jointly undertaken will increase.