

## NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

## REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Youth Crime Review Assessment - Its a Criminal Waste - Stop Youth Crime Now  Scottish Executive Response
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 21st November, 2000.	
REPORT AUTHOR: Sandra Paterson, Principal Officer (Child Care)	
REF: SP/HS	

**1. PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the proposals in the above document and to provide a response to the questions posed in the document (see Appendix 1).

**2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 In November, 1999 the Scottish Cabinet used a strategy session which focussed on issues relating to Youth Crime in Scotland. As a result of the Cabinet's deliberations, a review of youth crime was commissioned. The remit was to assess the extent and effectiveness of options currently available to Children's Hearings and Courts in cases involving persistent offenders and to look at the scope for improving the range and availability of options aimed at addressing the actions of persistent young offenders.

**3. THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE RESPONSE**

- 3.1 The Scottish Executive accepted all the reports main recommendations. They reflected that there is a range of responses needed to underpin the work with young people who offend and that no single solution will work in isolation.
- 3.2 They accepted that -
- \* the range and availability of effective quality assessed interventions and programmes needed to be expanded
  - \* that there needed to be suitable services to bridge the transition from the children's hearing system to the criminal justice system
  - \* that the children's hearing system needed to be renamed

- \* that there required to be an expansion of bail information, supervision schemes and pilot diversion schemes for all 16/17 year olds
- \* the need for a budgeting pilot scheme which would refer as many 16/17 year olds to the hearing system
- \* the need for a national strategy
- \* the need for inter disciplinary strategic local plans
- \* the establishment of multi agency teams to consider youth crime issues
- \* that they undertake audits of demand, resources, funding and training needs
- \* the need for a national resource to disseminate best practice
- \* that the age of criminal responsibility be raised to twelve years which is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- \* that the use of fine as a penalty for young offenders be reviewed
- \* that bridging pilots be rolled out across Scotland.

These proposals were accepted within the context that young people be held accountable for their actions

#### **4. TIMESCALES FOR THE ACTION PLAN**

- 4.1 It is intended that the Scottish Executive consult on the report, and finalise a national strategy framework by March, 2001.
- 4.2 It is expected that local plans will be prepared and implementation commenced by March, 2001.
- 4.3 Expansion of the range of programmes will take place up until March, 2005.

#### **5. FINANCE**

- 5.1 The first part year's costs which will be delivered through the Children's Development fund is £252,000 for North Lanarkshire rising to £360,000 full year costs. Other Criminal Justice monies are due to be made available at this time. The proposals for these monies are the subject of a separate Committee report.

**6. SUMMARY**

6.1 The Scottish Executive has welcomed the proposals in the document and is seeking guidance on only a few issues as indicated in Appendix 1.

**7. RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 Committee is asked to -

- note the contents of this report
- approve North Lanarkshire's response.



**JIM DICKIE  
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK  
OCTOBER, 2000**

## APPENDIX 1

### North Lanarkshire Council's Response to the Document It's a Criminal Waste - Stop Youth Crime Now Scottish Executive Response

#### 1. *The Renaming of the Children's Hearing System*

To take account of the welfare and justice elements it could be renamed "The Hearings System for Children and Young People in Need of Guidance and Support".

#### 2. *Views on what a National Strategy Should Cover*

As well as those referred to in the original Stop Youth Crime Now document the national strategy should cover the following areas -

- the development of a risk assessment framework
- guidance on what works and dissemination of research and good practice
- an evaluation framework which can be used locally but be applied nationally to encourage bench marking
- the development of training packages which can be adapted to local use
- ensuring that all developments in legislation and policy are co-ordinated within the different sections of the Scottish Executive to ensure that all local authority departments are working from the same legislative basis and within a similar social inclusion framework with these young people
- the piloting of research programmes.