

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: NATIONAL PLAN FOR ACTION ON ALCOHOL PROBLEMS
From: JIM DICKIE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 9 MAY 2002	Ref: JD/AMW	

## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 To advise Social Work Committee of the publication and launch of the Scottish Executive's Plan for Action on Alcohol, and of the aims, objectives and proposed milestones therein.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 1999 the Scottish Executive announced targets to reduce drinking over sensible limits by 2005. Within that same year there was the setting up of the independent Scottish Advisory Committee on Alcohol Misuse (SACAM), with the aim of advising the Executive on a new national strategy to tackle alcohol problems.
- 2.2 The Plan builds on the concerns of a wide range of organisations who felt that action was required. These included the Executive, NHS Boards, Local Authorities, the Police, the drinks industry, the licensed trade, business, and the voluntary sector.
- 2.3 The aims are stated as being ambitious, and the need for time acknowledged. Key dates have been set for early priorities.

## 3 PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The report notes that there are many positive aspects to the use of alcohol within Scottish culture, and of the benefits to the economy, industry, and associated trades.
- 3.2 The results of misuse, however, are apparent, and the following are noted as only some of the range of concerns:-
- Effects on physical and mental health
  - Accidents and injuries
  - Violence and crime
  - Drink driving
  - Problems experienced by children and young people
  - People in rural areas
  - Groups such as homeless people.

3.3 The costs associated with alcohol problems in Scotland are said to be around £1 billion each year. The majority of this is accounted for through reduced productivity and human cost, with the remainder being costs to the NHS, Social Work, and the Criminal Justice Services.

3.4 The aims, priorities and planned resources are as follows:-

**Aims:- (short term)** changing attitudes to alcohol, developing support and treatment services, and building capacity to deliver the plan locally.

**(longer term)** reducing consumption by some groups, reducing harmful patterns of drinking, and reducing public nuisance and crime.

**Key Priorities:-** a reduction in binge drinking, and harmful drinking by children and young people.

**Resources:-** new resources will be provided centrally by the Executive in respect of communications and capacity building.

Other resources are said to be available within a range of other Executive programmes. The plan states that the Executive will provide additional funding over time, in respect of resources available.

3.5 Milestones/timescales for action are noted as follows:-

Jan 2002 Funding to develop a national alcohol information resource.

Feb 2002 A National Alcohol Liaison Officer will be in post.

Mar-Apr 2002 Launch communications strategy  
Additional Resources to Alcohol Misuse Coordinating Committee  
Consultation Framework established  
Review of membership of SACAM  
Community Safety Partnership to utilise funding to address alcohol related crime

Autumn 2002 AMCC accountability process agreed

April 2003 AMCC strategies for 2003 – 2006 published

Dec 2003 Executive review progress of plan

Dec 2005 Targets to reduce drinking over weekly limits by adults and children

#### **4 FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Within Lanarkshire, the AMCC will now be referred to as the Alcohol Action Team. In addition the Drug Action Team (DAT) will now become an Alcohol and Drug Action Team (ADAT), ensuring that alcohol related issues are afforded the same emphasis as those in respect of drugs, and are considered in overall service developments.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Committee is requested to:-

- i) Note the content of the report.
- ii) Refer the report to the Corporate Health, Well-being and Care Group for consideration and action.
- iii) Request that the Director of Social Work bring forward a future report advising of the plans for implementation within North Lanarkshire.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**11 April 2002**

*For further information on this report please contacts George McInally, Manager Social Work Strategy  
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