

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: YOUTH CRIME – ACTION PLAN	
From: JIM DICKIE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2002	Ref: MH	

## 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise the Social Work Committee of further recommendations by the Scottish Executive in respect of youth crime. This 10 point action plan was announced to the Scottish Parliament on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2002.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The Youth Crime Review and the Scottish Executives Response – “IT’S A CRIMINAL WASTE – STOP YOUTH CRIME NOW” was published in June 2000. This highlighted the strengths and successes of community based initiatives. Local Authorities were allocated a 4 year £23.5 million investment to develop strategies and services to tackle youth crime.
- 2.2 The Social Work (Operations and Services) Sub Committee was advised of Scotlands Action Programme to Reduce Youth Crime 2002 on 9 May 2002. This Action Programme set out priorities to reduce youth crime, build safer communities, increase public confidence and give victims a greater say in the system.
- 2.3 On May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2002 the Ad Hoc Ministerial Group on Youth Crime was set up to assess progress and consider whether developments required to be made to improve on the work being carried out by local authorities and announced the ten point action plan.

## 3 Proposals

- 3.1 On 26 June 2002 the Cabinet agreed a tiered approach to Tackling Youth Crime.

**To tackle persistent offending:** A small number of persistent offenders are responsible for a disproportionate amount of youth crime. Action will be targeted at this group, including:

- 1 **A pilot of Specialist Children’s Hearings** to fast-track persistent offenders under 16;
- 2 **A Youth Courts feasibility project** for persistent offenders aged 16 and 17, with flexibility to deal with 15 year olds;
- 3 **Reviewing the scope for using Restriction of Liberty Orders, Anti Social Behaviour Orders and Community Service Orders** for persistent offenders;

**To promote community safety and order:** We need a range of ways to deal with disorder and offending in the community. This will include:

- 4 **A Safer Scotland Police Campaign on high visibility policing, covering Youth Disorder**, to increase visibility and provide community re-assurance;
- 5 **Spread best practice, and establish firm standards, for community based projects** funded through the Action Programme, Better Neighbourhood Services Fund Programmes and Making Communities Safer programmes;
- 6 **Consideration of a Scottish wide application of a system of Police warnings**, and a detailed exploration of restorative cautions approach, perhaps through piloting.
- 7 **Re-configuring the secure accommodation available nationally to provide groups of girl-only accommodation, further consideration of additional places and improving the range and provision of programmes in secure units.**

**To promote the effectiveness of the system:** While many aspects of the youth justice systems are working well, there are some key pressures which must be addressed:

- 8 **A set of national standards to operate between Local Authorities, the Criminal Justice System and Children's Hearing**, covering reporting, timescales and follow up;
- 9 **Promote parental responsibility**, through voluntary measures and in the longer term to consider the feasibility of introducing further statutory obligations on parents.
- 10 **Measures to increase the speed of referral to the courts** will be considered, and introduction of specific targets discussed with the Judiciary.

#### **4. North Lanarkshire Position**

- 4.1 North Lanarkshire's allocation from the Youth Crime Review in 2002/03 is £357,000 and this will double in 2003/04.
- 4.2 North Lanarkshire Council has embraced and implemented many of the priorities in the Action Programme.
- 4.3 In terms of preventative work a range of programmes and interventions are delivered by Young Persons Support Units and related services, collaborative work with Community Services, the New Start Scheme and a number of joint initiatives with Education have in addition promoted the social inclusion agenda.
- 4.4 In a joint initiative with South Lanarkshire, the Council has commissioned SACRO to extend a reparation and mediation service for 11 to 18 year olds.
- 4.5 Intensive services for young offenders have been purchased from Barnardo's, Chosi Project and Includem.
- 4.6 Youth Justice teams are currently being developed within each geographical area of the Authority. These will provide a more focussed service targeting youth crime and developing services that address local needs.

- 4.7 The development of an authority wide Addiction Service for Young People at Risk (The Rushes) will work in tandem with the Youth Justice Teams and Young Person Support Services and will add to the Youth Offending Strategy
- 4.8 In collaboration with Community Services and Education, Social Work is working on a bid to the New Opportunities Fund for a service to promote the role of sport in diverting young people aged 5-16 from crime or behaviour likely to lead to crime.
- 4.9 An Officer/Member Group to review Social Work Services for vulnerable children and young people in North Lanarkshire was agreed at the Social Work Committee on 9 May 2002. This group will provide regular reports to the Children's Services Strategy Group which has a sub group focussing on young people who offend. A final report detailing recommendations by the Officer /Member will be made to a future Committee.
- 4.10 Implications are likely to arise from the 10 Point action plan. The next step for the Scottish Executive is to appoint an implementation team and provide an implementation schedule. Information on this and North Lanarkshire's response will be highlighted to the Committee.

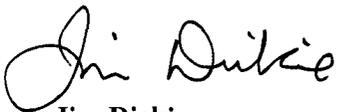
## **5. Personnel/Finance/Policy/Legal Implications**

- 5.1 North Lanarkshire's allocation from the Youth Crime Review in 2002/03 is £357, 000 which will double in 2003/4.
- 5.2 Reports will be provided to Committee on the proposed use of the funding.
- 5.3 North Lanarkshire's strategy to tackle youth crime and support young people at risk is an integral part of the corporate agenda on children and young peoples services. The Children's Services Strategy Sub Group will shape and oversee the framework of support services to assist in achieving targets and expected outcomes from this 10 point action plan
- 5.4 Difficulties in the recruitment and retention of Social Workers will impact on aspects of the Youth Crime Review.

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1. Committee is asked to

- (i) note the contents of this report and
- (ii) to request the Director of Social Work to initiate a further report following the publication of the Scottish Executive's implementation schedule.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**11<sup>th</sup> July 2002**

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