

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO SEX OFFENDERS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 24 OCTOBER 2002	Ref: JS/MN	

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek committee approval for proposed developments in relation to work with sex offenders and domestic violence, challenging men's abusive behaviour.

### BACKGROUND

- 1.2. In 1998 Lady Cosgrove chaired an expert panel on sex offending with the aim of developing a cohesive framework for dealing with sex offenders.
- 2.2 A number of sub groups were established to undertake work on a range of specific issues. The committee on serious, violent and sexual offenders was chaired by Lord McLean. The proposals from this committee deal with sentencing disposals and the future management and treatment of a small group of high risk offenders.
- 2.3 The reports from both the McLean and Cosgrove committees have been presented to Committee in the past, and the comments within these reports have influenced the direction of developments within North Lanarkshire in relation to working with sex offenders and high risk offenders.
- 2.4 Following the publication of the Scottish Executive document "Tough Options", many Local Authorities throughout Scotland were grouped together with one or more neighbouring Local Authorities to co-ordinate and deliver Criminal Justice Services. North and South Lanarkshire were grouped together to work in partnership and earlier this year published the Lanarkshire Plan for Criminal Justice Social Work Services. These developments have previously been presented to Committee.
- 2.5 As part of the Lanarkshire Criminal Justice Plan the grouping highlighted bids to the Scottish Executive for developmental plans within various areas of Criminal Justice, including working with sex offenders and domestic violence. Although not receiving the amount requested by both Authorities, additional funding was granted to allow some developments in this area of work.

## 3 PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 As part of the Joint Criminal Justice Plan, North and South Lanarkshire Social Work Criminal Justice Services submitted a bid for a range of service developments, including the development of services in relation to working with sex offenders and domestic violence. Additional funding of £136,000 has been allocated to the grouping, by the Scottish Executive, for both Authorities. This consists of £96,000 to fund a programme challenging men's abusive behaviour and £40,000 for work with sex offenders. Both amounts are less than the original bid and both Councils have sought clarification on how the levels were agreed. It has been agreed between the authorities to distribute the funding on an equal basis (£48,000 plus £20,000, totalling £68,000 each).

- 3.2 Details of this allocation were discussed at the Criminal Justice Joint Planning Forum in June of this year.
- 3.3 Both Authorities have developed services in these fields in different ways. Within North Lanarkshire it is proposed that the £68,000 share of the funding be used to create two dedicated posts of Groupworker, Grade AP4/5/QSW. These workers, at a total employee cost of £60,000, will deliver programmes in relation to work with sex offenders and domestic violence. The remaining funding (£8,000), will be used to purchase appropriate Programme material and licences.
- 3.4 To ensure consistency of approach, external bodies with expertise in working in these areas are currently working with both Authorities to develop services.
- 3.5 The external bodies are Change and The Criminal Justice Social Work Development Centre for Scotland.
- 3.6 Change is an organisation which offers consultancy and training to Criminal Justice Service staff and partner agencies in working with men convicted of violence towards their wives or female partners, and in developing appropriate services for women partners. Change is currently funded by the Scottish Executive to deliver a National Training Initiative to promote effective practice in this area.
- 3.7 The Criminal Justice Social Work Development Centre for Scotland has been established to assist in the development and implementation of evidence based practice in Scotland. It aims to ensure that the most up-to-date knowledge and advice about 'What Works' in reducing offending is available in Scotland to assist agencies in planning, designing and evaluating evidence led provision. The Development Centre is funded by the Scottish Executive.
- 3.8 Both programmes currently planned will be informed by a victim perspective. In relation to challenging men's abusive behaviour, the work will be developed in conjunction with the Domestic Abusive Forums of both Authorities. In relation to the work with Sex Offenders links will be established with the Child Protection Committees.
- 3.9 North Lanarkshire Criminal Justice Social Work Services, have made significant developments in working with high risk offenders. There is a formal risk assessment procedure in place, and extensive risk assessment training. North Lanarkshire has established a written Council protocol in conjunction with the police, in relation to the management of sex offenders in the community. There are focused groupwork programmes addressing sexually abusive behaviour and domestic violence. At Social Work headquarters a post of Senior Officer, High Risk Offenders has been established

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

- 4.1 The establishment of these two posts would contribute to enhancing the Social Work Criminal Justice Services current provision in North Lanarkshire and would improve the service available with emphasis on community safety.
- 4.2 The cost of the two proposed posts (£60,000) will be met from North Lanarkshire's share of the additional funding (£68,000), indicated in 3.1, secured from the Scottish Executive.
- 4.3 These posts will be supervised by the Senior Officer, High Risk Offenders.
- 4.4 These posts will require 7 ½% irregular hours payment as they will offer service outwith core hours.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the contents of this report.
- (ii) Agree the establishment of the posts as outlined in par 3.3.
  - 2 posts of Groupworker Grade AP4/5QSW with 7 ½ % irregular hours payment.
- (iii) Request the Director of Social Work to prepare a future report detailing the progress of the services outlined.
- (iv) Remit to Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee for consideration.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**13 September 2002**

*For further information on this report please contact S Devlin, Manager, Criminal Justice, Children & Families TEL: (01698 332032)*