

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE REPORT: REDUCING RE-OFFENDING - NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF OFFENDERS
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 24 AUGUST 2006	Ref: JS/LMcK	

1. Purpose of Report / Introduction

To advise Committee of the Scottish Executive report on "Reducing Re-offending, National Strategy for the Management of Offenders".

2. Background

- 2.1 The National Strategy for the Management of Offenders was launched by the Minister for Justice, on 23rd May 2006. Its aim is to reduce both the amount of re-offending and the amount of serious harm caused by those already known to the criminal justice system.
- 2.2 The Strategy is to cover the planning period to March 2008. A further three year strategy will then take this work forward for the period 2008– 2011.
- 2.3 The recently established Community Justice Authorities bring together Local Authorities, the Scottish Prison Service and key partners to create an integrated, flexible and shared system of offender management.
- 2.4 The new National Advisory Body will shape long term strategy to achieve the reduction in re-offending.
- 2.5 The current target is a 2% reduction in reconviction rates in all types of sentences by March 2008.

3. Proposals / Considerations

- 3.1 The National Strategy covers all those in the Criminal Justice system, including those coming into the adult system from the Youth Justice system.
- 3.2 The Strategy proposes that Justice services be developed under five inter-linked themes:
 - 1. Setting priorities
 - 2. Working together in new ways
 - 3. Developing and supporting the workforce
 - 4. Communication
 - 5. Measuring, learning and acting

3.3 Within each of the themes, the Strategy highlights the need for co-operative working and identifies the tasks for the new Community Justice Authorities, Local Authorities, the Scottish Prison Service, the new National Advisory Body, the Scottish Executive and other partner bodies. The National Strategy highlights that all partners will have a common set of objectives and identifies expected high level outcomes. The strategy recognises that to deliver such a wide range of service improvements will require the time, effort and commitment of leaders and practitioners in the field of offender management.

3.4 The outcomes fall into three categories:

- Outcomes for communities,
- Outcomes for offenders,
- Outcomes in the system.

3.5 Outcomes for Communities include:

- Increased community safety and public protection through a consistent approach to managing offenders on community and custodial sentences
- Increased public confidence in the effectiveness of work with offenders
- Improved understanding of community disposals
- Improved understanding of the role of prisons
- Improved satisfaction for victims, sentencers and beneficiaries of work by offenders
- Appropriate care of victims, including appropriate and timely information
- Timely information and, where appropriate, involvement for the families of offenders

3.6 Outcomes for Offenders include:

- Sustained or improved physical and mental well-being
- The ability to access and sustain suitable accommodation
- Reduced or stabilised substance misuse
- Improved literacy skills
- Employment prospects increased
- Maintained or improved relationships with families, peers and community
- The ability to access and sustain community support, including financial advice and education
- The ability to live independently
- Improvements in the attitudes or behaviour which lead to offending and greater acceptance of responsibility in managing their own behaviour and understanding the impact of their offending on victims and their own families

3.7 Outcomes in the System include :

- Effective CJA's in place, promoting a consistent approach to offender management and systematic co-operation between offender management agencies and supported by a system of integrated case management, with input from custodial and community services
- Wider partnership or rehabilitative services in place, including addictions, housing, health, education, training and employment

- A standard approach to the methodology and use of tools which are widely accepted for risk assessment and management embedded into practice and any risk of serious offending identified and a management plan effectively communicated to all relevant agencies
- A range of high quality, evidence based interventions based on the principles of effective practice, matched to the level of assessed risk and need, supported by better tracking of the impact of interventions on individuals, from which we build up a clearer understanding of what works
- A workforce with the appropriate skills mix, targeted appropriately
- Processes and systems which facilitate the sharing of information
- A robust framework for quality assurance, performance management and outcome measures for area plans.

4. Financial / Personnel / Legal / Policy Implication

- 4.1 The Lanarkshire Grouping is now operating under the auspices of the shadow Community Justice Authority of which the Convener of Social Work is Vice Convener.
- 4.2 The Grouping is in the process of completing the Justice Plan for 2007 / 2008 along with partners from the Scottish Prison Service and under the direction of the Community Justice Authority, Chief Officer.
- 4.3 Funding for Criminal Justice Social Work services is 100% funded by the Scottish Executive,, funding levels remain an issue and to fully address outcomes as described in the Strategy will require additional financial investment by the Scottish Executive.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1. Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Note the content of this report.



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Director of Social Work
 13th July 2006

For further information on this report please contact Mary Fegan, Head of Social Work Services, (telephone 01698 332001) or Jim Scullion, Service Manager, Justice (Telephone 01698 332040)

A copy of the report has been lodged in the member's library.