

ANGUS COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

20 August 2002
10 September 2002

MONEY ADVICE SERVICES IN ANGUS
REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

ABSTRACT

This report presents proposals on how an additional £50,000 provided by the Scottish Executive for money advice services should be utilised.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work and Policy and Resources Committees:

- 1 note the contents of this report;
- 2 instruct the Director of Social Work to report the review outcome to the committee;
- 3 approve the allocation of £10,000 from these funds to Angus Citizens Advice Bureau;
- 4 approve the appointment of 1.5 full-time equivalent Welfare Rights Officers (money advice).

2 INTRODUCTION

Reference is made to Report No 1181/01 responded to the recommendations of the Working Group on the Replacement for Pounding and Warrant Sales (Striking the Balance). Following on from "Striking the Balance" the Scottish Executive announced that an additional £3 million would be made available for additional debt advice services across Scotland. Angus Council's allocation is £50,000 for 2002/03.

Ministers were concerned to ensure that the extra funding would be reflected in the development of additional debt advice services, on top of any existing provision.

The Executive outlined brief guidelines on how this additional funding should be used:

- Resources were intended to support specialist money advice, rather than generalist advice;
- Local authorities could use the funding to enhance their own and independent sector advice services, and should consider whether there was a choice of provider for debtors;
- There was an expectation that authorities would discuss the use of the resources at local level with local money advice agencies;
- There was need for a commitment to co-operate (from local authorities and other providers) with any future initiatives on quality standards for money advice and any future development of a common statistical platform.

3. PROPOSALS FOR THE USE OF THESE FUNDS

Following the Scottish Executive's guidelines a meeting was held between representatives of Angus Council, Angus Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Angus Money Advice Service, these organisations being the providers of money advice in Angus.

The following proposals are based on these discussions:

That £10,000 per annum of the additional £50,000 provided by the Scottish Executive for money advice be used to supplement the service currently provided by Angus CAB and that the remaining £40,000 per annum be utilised within Angus Council's welfare rights team to employ 1.5 welfare rights officers (money advice).

Angus Money Advice Service is currently funded until 2005 by the Community Fund. They are however keen to work in partnership with Angus Council and Angus CAB to provide a comprehensive money advice service for the whole of Angus.

The three organisations have agreed to adhere to jointly agreed quality standards that will be monitored on a quarterly basis

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The full cost of these proposals will be £50,000, which will be covered by the new monies made available from the Scottish Executive (see appendix 1 for details).

5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.

6 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration, and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

The Personnel Manager has been consulted on, and is in agreement with, the staffing proposals contained in this report.

7 CONCLUSION

This additional money will enhance the existing money advice service provided by Angus CAB with the addition of an equivalent of 0.5 additional full time money advisor with administrative support. In addition Angus Council will employ 1.5 Welfare Rights Officers (money advice) through the welfare rights team.

This use of this funding will enhance money advice provision throughout Angus, provide choice for debtors seeking advice and enable a joined up working partnership between Angus Council, Angus CAB and Angus Money Advice Service.

W B Robertson
Director of Social Work

NOTE No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Details	SCP	WTE	£
Welfare Rights Officer (Money Advice)	27-30	1.5	34,500
Start up costs			5,500
Additional Funding for Angus CAB for money advice			10,000
Total Costs			50,000