ABSTRACT

This report provides information on the work of Tayside Community Justice Authority in the period 2007-2008 and the planned work to be undertaken as part of the Tayside Community Justice Authority Area Plan 2008-2011 and Action Plan 2008-2009.


1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee:-

(i) notes the content of this report regarding the work of Tayside Community Justice Authority (CJA);

(ii) endorses the work undertaken so far since its inception in April 2007.

2 INTRODUCTION

Historical Background

The Management of Offenders etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 provides the legislative framework for the eight Community Justice Authorities (CJAs) in Scotland. The purpose of Community Justice Authorities is to achieve a more co-ordinated approach to delivering services for offenders at a local level, with the objective of reducing re-offending.

Members are reminded that there are eight CJAs across Scotland with Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross Councils forming one such authority. Each CJA is made up of elected members from the constituent local authorities supported by a Chief Officer.

The Tayside CJA exists to establish a strong partnership between all agencies working within the whole of the Criminal Justice System in Tayside, and has worked with these agencies with the objective of reducing re-offending in the Tayside area. This report endeavours to summarise the work undertaken by Tayside CJA with direct relevance to Angus Council Criminal Justice Services.

Tayside CJA, as it began its shadow year April 2006-2007, made a firm commitment to build relationships with a range of agencies to address the risks and needs presented by the offender population in Tayside, both in prison and in our communities. The Area Plan and Action Plan for 2007-2008 provided an initial

Tayside CJA has further strengthened these shared aims, by providing a forum in which agencies can solve problems together, share best practice, information and expertise. These strong partnerships provide a sound basis through which to address the problem of re-offending in our communities. The partnership arrangements also enable areas for improvement to be identified and to be addressed across the Partnership. These partnership arrangements are being taken forward in the Area Plan 2008-2011, and Action Plan for 2008-2009. Further details regarding partnership work can be found in the Area Plan 2008 – 2011, Part 2 (available in the Member’s Lounge).

Operational Arrangements

Details of the operational arrangements, staffing arrangements and the work of the Chief Officer of the Tayside CJA can be found within the Area Plan 2008 – 2011.

A number of groups have been established to support the CJA in progressing the reducing re-offending agenda across Tayside. These groups are as follows:-

- Area Plan Implementation Group (APIG) – this is the main planning forum, which mentors implementation of the Area Plan Action Plan, and develops partnership working
- CJA Statistics Group – collates and analyses data, and will maintain CJA Statistical Extracts record
- Joint Workforce Development Group – identifies opportunities for staff development, joint training, work shadowing, sharing resources, etc.
- Outcomes Group – as the CJA develops, this group will identify the key local outcomes for the CJA, and align these with the nationally agreed outcomes
- Throughcare Network – this group was established under the auspices of the Tayside Criminal Justice Social Work Partnership, and continues to provide a sound basis through which rehabilitative services within the local prisons, prison social work services, and community based social work can measure performance and develop services. The network has representation from NHS Tayside and Tayside Police.

Angus Criminal Justice Services has been represented on APIG and the Throughcare Network by the Service Manager. Representation on the other three groups is undertaken on a Tayside CJS Partnership basis as agreed at the Tayside CJS Partnership Management Team. All partnership work inevitably creates other strands of work and to this end Angus CJS has been appropriately represented at groups created to explore specific areas of work across the partnership, for example scoping groupwork, provision of information to offenders, links to employability for those undertaking community service orders etc.

As can be seen in the Area Plan 2008 – 2011 links have also been established with Angus Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Angus Partnership On Domestic Abuse (APODA); Community Planning etc. These links seek to enhance the work undertaken by the Criminal Justice Services with offenders.

In terms of accommodation for offenders both resident in the community and also being released from prison, the Tayside CJA has established a short life working
group consisting of those relevant statutory and voluntary agencies associated with housing in the Tayside area with a view to providing agreed accommodation pathways for offenders, linking to support services where required. It is envisaged that the development of a consistent approach will support offenders into sustainable accommodation.

Summary of other areas covered in Tayside CJA Area Plan 2008–2011

Key local criminal justice facts, statistics, and analysis of trends for Tayside CJA area can also be found in the 2008–2011 Area Plan (section 1.7).

Tayside CJA is currently developing its Communication Strategy, recognising that the regular provision of simple and clear messages about the work of partner agencies will improve public knowledge about the criminal justice system, and will have a positive impact on attitudes towards, and confidence in, this system. The Criminal Justice Social Work Services in Angus will work closely with the CJA in developing a communication strategy.

The Chief Officer of Tayside CJA led a Best Value Review on Criminal Justice Social Work funding and this was reported to the Tayside CJA on 19 December 2007. The outcomes of this review have been taken forward by the Tayside CJS Partnership Management Team and will be reported to the Chief Officer of Tayside CJA as required.

The CJA has established a Joint Workforce Development Group to take forward the identification of joint training and sharing across the criminal justice system in Tayside. To this end Tayside CJA has commissioned an independent training needs analysis of all agencies involved in the criminal justice system. The report from this analysis has been presented to the Chief Officer.

Work is being carried out on a national basis to establish a performance framework for all CJAs. The Analytical Services Section of the Scottish Government Justice Department is currently engaged in consultations in relation to these frameworks, and it is envisaged that these measures will be finalised for implementation sometime in 2008.

3 PROPOSAL

In addition to noting the contents of this report, it is proposed that the Committee instruct the Director of Social Work and Health to update the committee as necessary.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications arising as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

6 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report and the Chief Officer of the CJA.
CONCLUSION

The Committee is asked to note the content of this report. Relevant issues contained in the Tayside Community Justice Action Plan 2008–2011 will be incorporated in the Social Work and Health Service Plan.

As can be seen from this report and from reading the Tayside CJA Area Plan 2008–2011 and Action Plan 2008–2009 Tayside CJA is firmly committed to the aims and objectives of the National Strategy for the Management of Offenders.

The first plan in 2007-2008 set a challenging agenda. Partner agencies have committed time, energy and resources to deliver on that plan, both in terms of the tasks and in the spirit of closer partnership working.

The second area plan and action plan takes forward that work, and develops new themes and approaches.

R Peat
Director of Social Work and Health

NOTE: The undernoted 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 a material extent in preparing the above report.