

ANGUS COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE.....17 APRIL 2001  
PERSONNEL AND PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE.....1 MAY 2001

FUNDING FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES 2001/2002 AND DEVELOPMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK  
AND THE DIRECTOR OR PERSONNEL

**ABSTRACT**

This report advises members of the Social Work Committee of the funding allocation from the Scottish Executive for social work criminal justice service and recommends an increase in the social work staff establishment in Criminal Justice Services of 1.5 social workers as a result of new funding for diversion and the anticipated continuing increasing workloads.

**1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:

- (i) notes the funding allocation for social work criminal justice services.
- (ii) approves the establishment of 1.5 social worker posts (SCP 27-35).
- (iii) notes the letter sent to the Executive by the Director of Social Work.

It is recommended that the Personnel and Property Services Committee agrees to:

- (i) establish 1.5 social worker posts (SCP 27-35).

**2 INTRODUCTION**

As members are aware Social Work Criminal Justice Services provide a range of community based disposals for use by the courts, including Probation Orders for offenders who are thought likely to benefit from a programme aimed at addressing offending related behaviour or problems; Community Services – unpaid work as an alternative to custody; and Supervised Attendance Orders for those people unable to pay fines. Criminal Justice Services also provide services to courts, especially preparation and presentation of Social Enquiry Reports which aim to provide information and analysis of offender's circumstances, personality and behaviour to aid in the sentencing process.

During the financial year 2000/2001 all of the principal criminal justice services have shown an increase in activity, with numbers of SER's, Supervised Attendance, Community Service and Probation predicted as showing increases over the full financial year of 30%, 8%, 17% and 8% respectively. Whilst the existing social work establishment have managed to absorb the increasing workloads for much of the year, latterly the volume of work has necessitated the use of sessional staff. The increase in demand for service has been consistent and shows no sign of subsiding.

The Grant Allocation for Angus Criminal Justice Social Work Services for year 2001/2 shows an overall increase of around £55,000, including allowance for inflation of 3%. This, however, contains new funding of £19,361 for Diversion and £16,044 for bail Supervision. The total allocation for 2001/2001 is £831,382. There remain concerns

relating to the level of funding to Angus Criminal Justice Services from the Scottish Executive and these are outlined in a letter to the Executive from the Director of Social Work (copy attached to this report).

Despite these concerns it is essential to continue to develop the efficiency and effectiveness of our services and meet new demands.

Guidance regarding Bail Supervision is expected to be issued within the next few weeks. However it is anticipated that the Bail Supervision Scheme, when it commences, will be closely linked with the new Young Offenders Team.

With respect to diversion, Angus will be developing a scheme within the early part of the financial year 2001/02. Diversion services have been provided on a trial basis over the past two years in certain areas of Scotland, and have now been extended to cover the whole country. Diversion involves provision of services to offenders eg drugs/alcohol counselling, employment counselling, input on victim awareness etc which serve as an alternative to prosecution. Early contact with the Procurator Fiscals in Angus has indicated enthusiasm on their part for an alternative to taking certain offenders to court.

### **3 PROPOSAL**

In order to develop an effective diversion service additional staffing resources are required. An increase in staff will enable the development of an Angus Diversion Scheme. This scheme will be developed with full consultation with the Angus Procurators Fiscal, and will target the four priority client groups indicated by the Scottish Executive – women offenders, drug related offenders, young offenders and mentally disordered offenders.

The increase in workloads will be managed and absorbed with additional staff, and diminish the need for use of sessional or temporary staff. It is therefore recommended that 1.5 social worker posts are established in criminal justice services.

### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed increase to the staff establishment will cost around £42,000.

This cost will be met from the additional funding provided by the Scottish Executive in 2000/01 and the funding for 2001/02.

### **5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

The availability of Diversion to certain offenders, and selection of offenders by the Procurators Fiscal will need to comply with Human Rights Legislation. Specifically, Article 6 (Right to a Fair Trial) and Article 7 (No Punishment without Law) will be considered when the Diversion Scheme is developed.

### **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.

### **7 CONCLUSION**

The funding allocation to social work criminal justice services for 2001/2002 will enable a diversion service to be established and the increased volume of work to be managed.

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.