

ANGUS COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE
PERSONNEL & PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE

16 January 2001
30 January 2001

YOUTH CRIME INITIATIVES

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL

ABSTRACT

This report seeks Committee approval for the establishment of posts associated with the Scottish Executive Review of Youth Crime.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:

- 1 notes the contents of this report;
- 2 approves the proposals outlined in this report; and
- 3 instructs the Director of Social Work to report to committee at a future date on the progress of the developments.

It is recommended that the Personnel and Property Services Committee:

- 1 approves the establishment of 1 Senior Resource Worker post (SCP 35-38);
- 2 approves the establishment of 3 Resource Worker posts (SCP 27-35); and
- 3 approves the establishment of a part-time (0.5 FTE) Clerical Assistant post (GS1/2).

2 INTRODUCTION

In November 1999 the Scottish Executive commissioned a Review of Youth Crime. The Review report was published on 9th June, as was the Scottish Executive's response to the review report.

Committee members are referred to report number 994/00 presented to committee on 3rd October 2000, which outlined proposals for the development of services in response to the Review of Youth Crime.

In order to develop services to young offenders the Scottish Executive is making available £3.5 million to local authorities through the Children's Services Development Fund in the current financial year (2001/2002). This sum comprises £3m for the development of services for persistent young offenders and £0.5m for the development of local strategic plans in this area.

The total funding being made available to Angus in 2000/2001 is £51,000.

The Executives Response to the Review of Youth Crime details future funding of £5 million for 2001/2002, £6 million for 2002/2003, £11 million for 2003/2004 and £16 million for 2004/2005. No specific details of the objectives for this future funding are given.

A further £1 million will be available through Criminal Justice Services in 2001/2002 for the development of bail information and supervision schemes for 16 and 17 year olds.

2 PROPOSALS

The Review report makes a number of recommendations regarding the development of services for young people involved in offending behaviour. A graduated range of responses to this issue is identified.

Prevention – effective universal provision for all children and their families.

Early Intervention – quick targeted assistance for individual children whose behaviour or family circumstances indicate vulnerability towards offending and other problems.

Diversions – from both the Hearings and the Court System.

Intervention – only when necessary and at the right time and right level.

Participation – more joint action to create safer communities.

The funding to local authorities at this time is identified as being to address the issue of persistent offending. In Angus it is proposed to amalgamate the funding being made available through the Children's Services Development Fund and Criminal Justice Services in order to develop a specific Young Offenders Project in Angus which will provide a service for children and young people aged 12 – 17 years who are involved in persistent offending.

The key elements of the proposed Young Offenders Project will be:

- Persistent young offenders' programmes for young people aged 12-17. This may comprise two distinct programmes according to age.
- Individual programmes for young people subject to supervision requirements through the hearings system.
- Bail information and supervision scheme (16 and 17 year olds)
- Other specific programmes developed in response to identified need.

The project will also respond to crisis situations to help prevent the reception into accommodation or custody of young people involved in offending behaviour.

The focus of any direct work with the young people will be:

- Challenging Offending Behaviour
- Reparation and Victim Awareness
- Education and Employment
- Constructive use of leisure time
- Social relationships

Any programmes developed will require to be focused and structured with clear, stated aims and objectives and be subject to close evaluation and monitoring. This type of approach will ensure credibility with the referring agencies and allow for adherence to the "what works" principle.

The Bail Supervision Scheme will be established on the principles of focused intervention, which addresses both the characteristics of the offender and the problem behaviour.

The Project will be open to referrals from the children's hearing system; the court system or direct referral from case social workers. Access to the Project will also be via the Authority Reporter or the Procurators Fiscal on a voluntary basis as a direct alternative to prosecution or referral to a children's hearing.

Detailed referral criteria for the project and appropriate standards will be required to be developed at an early stage in the project development.

Staffing

It is proposed the project should comprise:

- ❖ 1 Senior Resource Worker
- ❖ 3 Resource Workers
- ❖ 0.5 Clerical Assistant

Initially, the Senior Resource Worker, Clerical Assistant and 1 Resource Worker will be appointed, with the remaining posts being filled as further funding is made available. Staff will be expected to work during the evenings and to respond flexibly to crisis situations, including some work at weekends. It is therefore proposed that the grading of these posts are reviewed, when sufficient operational experience has been gained to allow these factors to be quantified.

The Senior Resource Worker will have responsibility for establishing the project, developing appropriate models of intervention, developing appropriate systems for monitoring and evaluation and providing day to day direct line management and supervision for project workers. In addition the he/she will undertake a substantial element of direct service provision, and will take on management responsibility associated with future expansion of the project,

The Resource Workers will undertake direct work with young people involved in persistent offending behaviour, holding and maintaining case records as appropriate and contributing to the wider case planning activity for specific young people.

The operational team will require office accommodation. Property Services have identified suitable premises in Arbroath that are available for lease, and this will be reported separately to the Personnel & Property Services Committee on 30 January 2001. Allowance has been made for the costs in the financial implications below.

Strategic and Service Development

The Review of Youth Crime highlights the need for effective strategic management in the development of services for young people involved in offending behaviour. This includes the development of a local Strategic Plan. Committee Report no. 994/00 outlined plans to establish a Planning and Review Group for Children and Young People involved in Offending Behaviour as part of the current Children's Services Planning structure.

It is also recognised that there are many cross cutting issues which impact on youth crime, in particular alcohol and substance misuse, and it will therefore be essential to ensure that appropriate links are made between this initiative and the Community Safety and Substance Misuse Strategy Group, the Angus Drugs Steering Group and the Angus Alcohol Steering Group. It will also be necessary to maintain and develop the active participation and support of key stakeholders such as the local Sheriffs, Procurators Fiscal, the Authority Reporter and senior officers of relevant council departments and partner agencies.

The Director of Social Work is in discussion with the Director of Personnel to determine the most effective way of ensuring the strategic development and management of this process.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Scottish Executive has indicated that Angus Council has been allocated £51,000 for the financial year 2000-2001. At this point in the financial year, it is not feasible to fully utilise this allocation. However, it is intended that the recruitment and set-up costs, along with some development costs already incurred, will be charged to this allocation.

The allocation for 2001-2002 has been confirmed as £76,000. Information about allocations for future years is awaited, however the costs will be contained within the sums made available.

Additionally, it is envisaged that funding will be available within the allocation for Criminal Justice Services.

Full details of the costs of the proposals can be found in Appendix 1

4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

5 CONSULTATION

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

6 CONCLUSION

The Scottish Executive Review of Youth Crime together with the new funding being made available offers the opportunity to develop new services to address the issue of Youth Crime. It offers the opportunity to address offending behaviour as well as the underlying needs of the young people concerned. This report sets out proposals for the development of a young offenders project in Angus.

W B Robertson
Director of Social Work

J Torbet
Director of Personnel

26 March 2001

NOTE: The following 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 this report.

It's a Criminal Waste Report of Advisory Group on Youth Crime, Scottish Executive, June 2000.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

	Initial Phase 2000-2001 <u>£'000</u>	2001-2002 <u>£'000</u>	Full Implementation <u>£'000</u>
Senior Resource Worker (SCP 35-38)	2.4	28.4	28.4
Resource Workers (SCP 27-35)	2.1	24.8	74.4
Clerical Assistant (GS1/2)	0.5	6.1	6.1
Travel & Subsistence	0.8	4.0	8.0
Accommodation	2.0	10.5	12.5
Supplies & Services		5.0	5.0
Set-up costs	10.0		
Project development	8.0		
	<u>25.8</u>	<u>78.8</u>	<u>134.4</u>
Funding Available:			
Children's Services Development Fund	51.0	76.0	
Criminal Justice Services		To be confirmed	