

ARGYLL, BUTE AND DUNBARTONSHIRES' CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Argyll, Bute and Dunbartonshires' Criminal Justice Social Work Partnership Joint Committee held in Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Thursday, 8 March 2012 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Elaine Robertson (Argyll and Bute Council); Councillor Gordan Low (East Dunbartonshire Council) and Councillor May Smillie (West Dunbartonshire Council).

Attending: **Argyll and Bute Council:** Kirsteen Green, Planning and Evaluation Officer.

West Dunbartonshire Council: Anne Ritchie, Head of Children's Health, Care and Criminal Justice Services; Norman Firth, Criminal Justice Partnership Manager; Robert Aitken, Finance Officer - CHCP and Nuala Borthwick, Committee Officer.

* Arrived later in the meeting.

East Dunbartonshire Council: Freda McShane, Children & Families Manager.

Apology: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Gail Casey and Jonathan McColl (West Dunbartonshire Council); Councillor Michael O'Donnell (East Dunbartonshire Council), Councillor Andrew Nisbet (Argyll and Bute Council), Jon Belton, Assistant Partnership Manager, Argyll and Bute Council and Adrian Gray, Business Unit Accountant, West Dunbartonshire Council.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Councillor Robertson, Chair, welcomed everyone in attendance to the meeting and, with the permission of the Committee, advised that an urgent item of business would be considered at the end of the agenda.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Committee held on 12 January 2012 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

The Partnership Manager provided an update on progress concerning the commissioning of the Prison Based Social Work Service (PBSW) in HMP Low Moss.

It was noted:-

- (1) that an internal solution had been agreed with the Scottish Prison Service involving the use of agency workers which would commence on Monday, 12 March 2012;
- (2) that it was planned that the first tranche of serving prisoners would be moved to the prison on Monday, 18 March 2012 and thereafter, following a 2 week bedding in period, the prison would start taking new prisoners direct from court by which time the prison would have the necessary staff in place; and
- (3) that the Partnership Manager, in consultation with the Children and Families Manager, East Dunbartonshire Council would arrange for Members of the Criminal Justice Partnership to visit the prison.

With reference to the item under the heading 'Community Payback Sports Facilities Fund' and in response to a question raised by Councillor Robertson concerning the opportunities to link with the Employability Team in order to maximise any bid opportunities in Argyll and Bute, the Partnership Manager advised that a report/briefing note would be provided to Members of the Partnership in this regard.

Note:- The Head of Children's Health, Care and Criminal Justice Services entered the meeting during consideration of the above report.

COMMISSIONING STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership advising of initial progress and amendments to the Criminal Justice Partnership Commissioning Strategy approved by the Committee in September 2011.

Following discussion and having heard the Partnership Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to approve the revised Partnership Commissioning Strategy;
- (b) to request that the Partnership Manager reports on progress under the existing arrangements within the annual review in September 2012; and
- (c) to request that every effort is made to ensure press coverage of project work undertaken by the unpaid work teams across the Partnership authorities.

PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK 2011/2014

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership advising of progress in the first year of the Partnership's Planning and Performance Improvement Framework.

Following discussion and having heard the Head of Children's Health, Care and Criminal Justice Services, the Children & Families Manager and the Partnership Manager in answer to questions from Members, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the Partnership Manager would provide regular updates throughout the year; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

AUDIT SCOTLAND: APPROACHES TO REDUCE RE-OFFENDING

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership advising of the commencement of a performance audit and approaches to reduce re-offending to be undertaken by Audit Scotland.

Having heard the Partnership Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to questions from Members, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to request that the Partnership Manager makes arrangements to contribute to the deliberations of Audit Scotland; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT FOR PERIOD 9 – PERIOD ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2011

A report was submitted by the Treasurer providing information on how key elements within the Criminal Justice Partnership were performing against budget for the period ending 31 December 2011.

Having heard the Finance Officer, CHCP in further explanation of the report and in answer to questions from Members', the Joint Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

RE-OFFENDING AND RE-CONVICTION RATES 2010/11

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership informing of the Criminal Justice Partnership's progress in reducing re-offending and meeting the national target of a reduction in re-conviction rates of 2% by 2011.

Having heard the Partnership Manager in further explanation of the report, the Joint Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the Partnership would continue to evaluate re-offending and re-conviction rates using available information and would report annually to the Joint Committee thereon;

- (2) that the Partnership would continue to reflect the aims and objectives of the National Outcomes and the Community Justice Authority for reducing re-offending in the Partnership Strategic Plan; and
- (3) to note the discussion that had taken place in relation to the requirement to look at preventative work to tackle re-offending and the suggestion that the Alcohol and Drug Partnerships could be involved in any such future preventative work.

URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

The Chair, Councillor Robertson, in terms of Section 50B (4) (b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as inserted by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, decided that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency on the grounds that the action to be taken required early consideration.

SHORTFALL IN RETENTION FIGURE FOR 2011/12 BUDGET NORTH STRATHCLYDE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY (NSCJA)

The Joint Committee heard from the Finance Officer, CHCP who reported on the unexpected shortfall in the NSCJA retention figure owed to the Scottish Government at the end of the financial year 2010/2011.

It was reported that the difference in the figure resulted from a variation in accounting treatment between the NSCJA and its partner authorities and the Scottish Government in relation to the methodology for calculating the retention figure.

Following discussion and having heard the Finance Officer in answer to questions from Members, the Joint Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the accounting adjustments that required to be made amounted to £121,000 within the relevant authority accounts (i.e. Renfrewshire, East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute Councils);
- (2) to note that the Directors of Finance within the relevant authorities would take the matter forward to agree on how the accounting adjustments would be made;
- (3) that, for background information, a copy of the report submitted to the Criminal Justice Authority at its meeting on 9 March 2012 be appended to these minutes; and
- (4) that a report would be submitted to the Partnership Committee in June to update Members on the necessary actions taken to correct the financial position.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Criminal Justice Partnership Joint Committee would be held on Thursday, 7 June 2012 at 2.00 p.m.

VALEDICTORY

The Chair, Councillor Robertson, informed the Joint Committee that this was the last meeting of the Criminal Justice Partnership prior to the Local Government Elections on 3 May 2012 and therefore took the opportunity to thank Members and officers for their work, advice and commitment to the Joint Committee during this period.

In response, Councillor Smillie on behalf of the Joint Committee, thanked Councillor Robertson for her time as Chair of the Joint Committee.

The meeting closed at 3.40 p.m.