

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 Committee Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Thursday, 14 March 2013 at 2.20 p.m.

Present: Councillors Elaine Robertson and Anne Horn (Argyll and Bute Council); Councillors Gemma Welsh (East Dunbartonshire Council) and Councillor Jonathan McColl (West Dunbartonshire Council).

Attending: **Argyll and Bute Council:** Louise Long, Head of Service (Children, Families, Young People and Criminal Justice); Jon Belton, Assistant Partnership Manager and Kirsteen Green, Planning and Evaluation Officer.

West Dunbartonshire Council: Norman Firth, Criminal Justice Partnership Manager; Janice Rainey, Business Partner Corporate Functions, Ruth Pryce, Unpaid Work Team Manager and Nuala Borthwick, Committee Officer.

East Dunbartonshire Council: Keith Gardner, Service Manager, Criminal Justice.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Gail Casey (West Dunbartonshire Council) and Councillor Michael O'Donnell (East Dunbartonshire Council); Jackie Irvine, Head of Children's Health, Care and Criminal Justice Services (West Dunbartonshire Council) and Megan Harris, Argyll and Bute Alcohol and Drug Partnership.

Councillor Elaine Robertson in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Committee held on 13 December 2012 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

PRESENTATION ON COMMUNITY PAYBACK ORDERS - UNPAID WORK AND OTHER ACTIVITY REQUIREMENT

Ruth Pryce, Unpaid Work Team Manager, Criminal Justice Social Work provided a presentation on Community Payback Orders (CPO) - Unpaid Work and other Activity Requirement.

It was noted:-

- that the objectives of CPO Unpaid Work and other activities were:-
 - (a) to provide courts with a credible based penalty with potential to achieve an outcome and reduce re-offending;
 - (b) to ensure courts have access to credible alternatives to custody, achieve a high degree of credibility with public and judiciary as a high quality intervention, balancing payback for crimes, addressing offending behaviour and improving opportunities; and
 - (c) improve chances of desistance by providing opportunities to develop interpersonal and vocational skills to enhance employability prospects;
- that the Unpaid work team in Dumbarton (which also covers Helensburgh/Lomond) manage in excess of 200 orders at any one time (providing both individual and group placements) and currently operate 35 work squads per week, 52 weeks per year;
- that two/three squads per week relate to fiscal work orders;
- that group placements (work squads) include environmental/biodiversity work, ground clearance, landscaping and slabbing, gardening, painting and decorating and joinery work;
- that individual placements include charity shops, residential and day units for the elderly, churches and voluntary groups and clubs that require unpaid help;
- Work is provided through partner agencies, social work services, other local authority departments, community groups/councils, environmental trust, voluntary organisations and self referrals; and
- Other activities provided to those people not ready for work placement included group work activities commissioned and delivered by 'Turnaround'. Also provided are activities such as community literacy and numeracy, employability services, link into colleges and alcohol and drug services.

Following discussion and having heard Ms Pryce and Mr Firth, Criminal Justice Manager in answer to Members' questions, the Chair, Councillor Robertson, thanked Ms Pryce for her informative presentation. Thereafter, Ms Pryce left the meeting.

CUSTOMER CONSULTATION 2011/12

A report was submitted by the Director of the Community Health and Care Partnership providing an update on the feedback from customers of unpaid work during the 2011/2012 Partnership consultation.

Having heard the Planning and Evaluation Officer, Argyll and Bute Council in further explanation of the report and in answer to questions from Members, the Joint Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve and implement the performance action plan;
- (2) to note that the Partnership continues to consult with customers and to collate feedback received; and
- (3) to note the suggestion by Councillor McColl that members of the Joint Committee would be happy to assist in publicising the unpaid work scheme.

WOMEN'S SAFETY AND SUPPORT SERVICES

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership providing information on progress and developments with regard to the Women's Safety and Support Service.

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

- (1) to note the progress made in terms of the support available to women affected by domestic abuse and other forms of gender based violence;
- (2) to congratulate the Service on winning a COSLA Bronze Award and a Scottish Social Services Council Care Accolade Award for its innovated practice in terms of its proactive approach and contribution to improved outcomes for women;
- (3) to note that domestic abuse would be prominent in the agenda of the new national police service; and
- (4) to request that the Partnership Manager bring further reports regarding the response and contribution of the Women's Safety and Support Service to their attention at future committees.

REDESIGNING COMMUNITY JUSTICE: A CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership:-

- (a) advising of the Scottish Government's proposals for the redesign of the Community Justice Services; and

- (b) seeking agreement on the Community Justice Partnership's formal response.

Following discussion and having heard the Partnership Manager - Criminal Justice and the Head of Service (Children, Families, Young People and Criminal Justice), Argyll and Bute Council in further explanation of the report and in answer to questions from Members, the Joint Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the response from the Criminal Justice Social Work Partnership Joint Committee to the Scottish Government in respect of the consultation on redesigning Community Justice Services as provided at Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) instruct the Partnership Manager to submit the response to the Justice Department on behalf of the Joint Committee;
- (3) that comments provided by the Head of Service (Children, Families, Young People and Criminal Justice), Argyll and Bute Council in relation to accountability, governance and the role of the Chief Social Work Officer be included in the response under the heading 'Any additional comments'; and
- (4) that an accompanying letter be issued with the formal response from the Chair of the Joint Committee outlining the reasons for the Joint Committee's preferred option.

REVENUE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT 2012/2013 AS AT PERIOD 9 (31 DECEMBER 2012)

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership providing an update on the financial performance of the Criminal Justice Partnership to 31 December 2012.

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

- (1) that the Partnership Manager – Criminal Justice would investigate the possibility of an overspend in the CJA budget and thereafter circulate an update to members of the Joint Committee on the current budget position once issues concerning virement of budget lines were resolved; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

RE-CONVICTION RATES - 2011-2012

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership providing information on the reconviction rates within the Partnership as at 2011/2012.

Following discussion and having heard the Planning and Evaluation Officer in further explanation of the report and in answer to questions from Members, the Joint Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the reduction in re-conviction rates from 2006-2007 (baseline year);
and
- (2) to thank officers for their hard work in providing a good quality service.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

REDUCING RE-OFFENDING CHANGE FUND

The Chair, Councillor Robertson, advised that the formal bid submitted by Alternatives – West Dunbartonshire Community Drug Project for funding from the Reducing Re-offending Change Fund had been unsuccessful.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note with disappointment that the bid had been unsuccessful; and
- (2) that Councillor Robertson be provided with any available feedback from the Scottish Government on the public service partnership bid.

The meeting closed at 4.03 p.m.