

# **DRAFT**

## **DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**REPORT ON: RE-DESIGN OF ADOLESCENT SERVICES IN DUNDEE**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK**

**REPORT NO: 662-2010**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report outlines how the Social Work Department proposes to re-configure and re-focus its services to adolescents in order to ensure resources and services are effectively targeted in line with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee approves the following recommendations;

2.1 The remits of the Rowans Team, Community Support Team and Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS) are amalgamated with both management and staffing numbers reduced to create a Community Adolescent Team (CAT) which has case holding responsibility. The teams would be reduced from a current total staffing establishment of 14.5 staff to 7.5 staff. This would make best use of professional resources and enable a consistent focus on adolescents who are deemed to experience or present high levels of risk by virtue of their exposure to or involvement in risk taking or offending behaviour.

2.2 The 2 Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) Social Workers who are currently placed in a locality team join the new CAT. They would retain a remit to specialise in cases active to the NHS CAMHS service and although this would not involve a financial saving, it would add to the range of expertise available to address the most complex adolescent issues. Their current caseloads, consisting mostly of adolescent cases, would transfer with them.

2.3 The disestablishment of the Youth Justice Coordinator and admin support and re-deployment of the current post holders into equivalent posts which reflect their experience and skills. Functional leads in relation to Youth Justice will be retained, either by the current post holder and/or by other staff at equivalent grades. There would be an emphasis on retaining successful youth justice partnerships, forums and processes.

2.4 The age of transition from the Choice Team to Criminal Justice Services is reduced from 17.5 years to 16 years so that the majority of young offenders who are subject to Court Orders are supervised by Criminal Justice Social Workers.

2.5 The reduction of contracts with SACRO to deliver Restorative Justice, with VOYCE to deliver support to victims of youth crime and anti-social behaviour and with Includem to deliver ISMS, in line with consistently reduced figures for youth crime in the City, an associated reduction in referral numbers and the principle of best value. There would be an emphasis on retaining an important focus on victims and community reassurance.

- 2.6 The staffing establishment of the Throughcare and Aftercare Team is increased to meet the needs created by the additional number of young people qualifying for such services, particularly those accommodated in kinship carer placements. This ensures a continuing focus on the needs of adolescents who have previously been looked after and accommodated.
- 2.7 The amalgamation of Children's and Criminal Justices has also allowed for a number of efficiency savings with resources being deployed more flexibly and effectively.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The combined total immediate saving in respect of the specific recommendations in this report to re-configure and re-focus Social Work services and reduce contracts would be £530,000. Services would be targeted more consistently at high risk cases, the expectation is that this will result in longer-term savings associated with reduced external placements, including secure admissions.

### **4.0 MAIN TEXT**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Currently, there are a range of Social Work services whose remit is to either wholly or partially work with adolescents. They include the Choice Project, which works with young offenders on statutory supervision through Children's Hearings and in some instances, the Court; the Community Support Team, which offers planned evening and weekend support to families of children of all ages from 0-16 years; the Rowans Team, which works with young people at risk of being accommodated; and the ISMS, which works with young people who are deemed to be at risk of secure accommodation. A number of young offenders are also supervised on statutory Court Orders within Criminal Justice Services.

The Rowans, Community Support Team and ISMS do not have case responsibility and work in conjunction with staff in the locality teams, with an average of 220 adolescents supervised by the locality teams, there is potentially a duplication of effort across the City. Given that a high number of staff within these Teams are social work qualified, it is no longer felt that this approach is making best use of professional staff, particularly as higher numbers of adolescents are becoming looked after often on an emergency basis often resulting in external placements. There were 23 such admissions in 2009-2010.

Equally, whilst the referral source and/or legal status of the child or young person receiving support from one of these teams may differ, they typically present with very similar needs. The knowledge, skills and ethos required to address those needs are also the same and could be collectively developed by amalgamating the Rowans and Community Support Teams and ISMS into one Community Adolescent Team (CAT). This team would focus on young people aged 12-16 years whose behaviour presents as being out with adult control but who are not engaging in offending. The highest risk locality cases would be transferred to this team to help ensure the young people are supported holistically and intensively by dedicated workers. The addition of the 2 CAMHS workers would promote a broader skills base and more integrated approach.

This development would also enable the locality teams to focus on preventative work with even younger children. Work in relation to the scope of the Family Support Centres is underway to ensure provision is made for the most vulnerable of families in the evenings and at weekends.

The redeployment of affected staff would be undertaken in consultation with Personnel and the Unions. However, it is proposed that the staffing establishment of the Throughcare and Aftercare Team is increased by one part-time member of staff to meet increasing demands in this area of work. This will not incur any additional costs.

Currently, a number of young people within the Criminal Justice System are supervised by the Choice Team. Typically, these are young people with multiple needs who have been previously looked after and are placed on Probation Orders at a young age. However, it is important to note that those young people who are placed on Community Service or Supervised Attendance Orders by the Courts are supervised by social work staff within Criminal Justice Services. Changes brought about by the Criminal Justice and Licensing Bill will come into effect in January 2011 and will radically change the way in which offenders are supervised in the community by introducing a new Community Payback Order (CPO) which will replace Probation, Community Service and Supervised Attendance Orders.

The majority of offenders who receive a CPO will be expected to undertake both elements of unpaid work and supervision aimed at reducing the likelihood of re-offending. In order to accommodate these changes, it is proposed that the age of transition from the current Choice Project to Criminal Justice is reduced from 17.5 to 16 years. This would allow the Choice Team, which has have a proven track record in working with young offenders, to focus more intensively on early adolescents and would enable staff within Criminal Justice to ensure the new CPO is introduced consistently. The intention within Criminal Justice is to introduce a more focused approach to young offenders which will ensure the specific needs of this younger age group can be addressed effectively.

It is also proposed that the singleton worker who has responsibility for co-ordinating the allocation of additional support hours for ISMS is located within the Choice Team and their responsibilities extended to include case holding responsibility.

#### 4.2 **Partnership and Commissioned Services**

In Dundee, youth crime has reduced considerably in recent years, with 1,091 victims in 2008-09 and 640 in 2009-10. This represents a fall of 41% and is testament to the excellent work of the Youth Justice Partnership (YJP), which has a number of innovative and nationally acclaimed forums and processes in place. Each of these reflects the national strategy on Preventing Offending by Young People and they cover Early and Effective Intervention, Prevention, High Risk, Victims and Performance Management. The work of the YJP also now forms part of the Integrated Children's Services (ICS) Plan. There is a well embedded infrastructure in place and a commitment to maintaining progress, with key leads being identified in an all encompassing and more detailed Youth Justice Plan.

Accordingly, it is proposed that the Youth Justice Coordinator post plus admin support are disestablished and that the post holders are re-deployed to equivalent posts. Crucially, in order to maintain important forums and processes, functional leads for all key aspects will be retained. This will include the preparation of an annual Youth Justice Plan for ongoing coordination and monitoring by the Youth Justice Partnership and implementation by partners.

The YJP has also developed and overseen 3 sizeable commissioned services for SACRO to deliver Restorative Justice (£195,000), VOYCE to deliver Victim Support (£63,000) to all victims of youth crime and Includem to deliver ISMS (£206,400). The contracts have been developed in consultation with partners and restorative justice in particular is a key aspect of the national strategy.

There is an associated target of offering a restorative option to 60% of identified young offenders in the current ICS Plan. However, as a reflection of falling youth crime, in 2008-09 and 2009-10 the levels of activity and unit costs were as follows;

<u>Service 2008-09 Cases/Unit Costs</u>	<u>Service 2009-10 Cases/Unit Costs</u>
SACRO 145 referrals - £1,344	SACRO 131 referrals - £1,488
VOYCE 109 cases - £ 577	VOYCE 64 cases - £ 984

The referrals to SACRO last year resulted in 81 young people actually participating in an intervention. Whilst customer feedback on the services is good, at a total of around 5 referrals and/or cases a week for both contracts combined there is clear scope to either reduce or terminate them altogether and replace them with an internally delivered service. In this instance, it is proposed that they are reduced by 40%, involving a £78,000 saving on the SACRO contract and a £25,200 saving on the VOYCE contract.

Conversely, given the high and extremely expensive numbers of young people still being accommodated in external placements, it is proposed to retain the majority of the ISMS Includem contract at this stage. This would provide intensive, extra support, especially during out-of-hours periods when the young people are most at risk. It is proposed to reduce this contract by 10%, involving a saving of £20,640.

#### 4.3 **Summary**

In accordance with Getting it Right for Every Child, Social Work services should target high risk cases and failure to provide effective services to this group can result in further escalation and expensive external placements. However it is suggested that service delivery can be enhanced by ensuring more focused and targeting of services and that better use is made of social work qualified staff. The proposals outlined in this report aim to re-configure and re-focus services to adolescents in a clear, consistent and cost effective manner. Due to reductions in youth crime, the lowering of ages of transition and integration of CAMHS, they are achievable without reducing capacity to meet current levels of demand. They are also achievable without compromising a successful youth justice strategy.

#### 5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and will be made available on the Council website - <http://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv/equimpact/>.

#### 6.0 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Director of Finance have been consulted in preparation of this report.

#### 7.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 <http://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv/equimpact/>

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