



May 2011

Northern Community Justice Authority e-update

Welcome to the Northern Community Justice Authority (NCJA) e-update. These brief updates are published quarterly following on from our Northern CJA meetings and will cover the main topics discussed at the meetings and also include other relevant developments from across the NCJA and nationally.

For more detailed information on matters discussed at the CJA meetings please visit our website at www.northerncja.org.uk where you will find the meeting minutes and reports. If you would like information published in this e-update please contact the **NCJA Information Officer** (<mailto:Peter.willox@aberdeenshire.gov.uk>).

Annual Report and Area Plan launch

All 8 CJAs attended a reception hosted by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice at the Scottish Parliament on 24 February 2011 to launch these Annual Reports and their 3 year **Area Plans** for 2011-14. The NCJA **Annual Report 2009/10** is also available on our Website.



Community Payback

The 1 February 2011 saw the commencement of the new Community Payback Orders (CPOs) which give courts a range of options for sentencing offenders. CPOs replaces Probation Orders, Community Service Orders and Supervised Attendance Orders. A CPO consists of a number of requirements from which the court may select one or more in deciding on the make up of the order. The requirements are:

1. Unpaid work and other activity requirement;
2. Supervision requirement
3. Programme requirement;
4. Residence requirement;
5. Drug treatment requirement;
6. Alcohol treatment requirement;
7. Mental health treatment requirement.

Unpaid work and other activity requirements can be imposed for between 20 and 300 hours. Orders can be made for a period of between 6 months and 3 years

except orders consisting solely of unpaid work and other activity. The latter requirement must be completed within 3 months for a level 1 requirement and 6 months for a level 2 requirement unless the court otherwise determines at the point of sentence. A level 1 requirement has an unpaid work element of 20-100 hours and a level 2 requirement has an unpaid work element of 101-300 hours.

Community Integration Units

In 2010 the Scottish Government announced the creation of local Community Integration Units (CIUs) at HM Prisons Aberdeen and Inverness which would house small numbers of women from the respective areas who were nearing the end of their sentence. Those assessed as suitable would get the benefit of being nearer home and allowing access to and engagement with services in the community. The proposal was designed to help develop the longer term strategy for managing the transition of women offenders back into the community, and will inform the development of new community facing prison regimes.

Since the Units opened in June 2010 occupancy numbers have varied, in the Highland area this is mainly due to the lower numbers of women in prison. However at the time of writing there were 5 women in their Unit. Currently the Aberdeen Unit is full with 8 women in residence.

Both Units are supported by a range of partners providing a range of services including local authority Criminal Justice Social Work other agencies e.g. Job Centre Plus, education providers and the voluntary sector. Part of the criteria for transfer to the Units is that substance misuse issues have been addressed and any programme delivery has been completed.

HMP Grampian

HMP Grampian, Scotland's first fully community facing prison is scheduled to be built in Peterhead with a planned opening date of September 2014. In preparation for this the NCJA has been working closely with the Scottish Prison Service, and the New Prisons Team in particular in the early stages of the development. An HMP Grampian Community Steering Group has been brought together and is chaired by the CJA Chief Officer.

Membership of the Group include Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils, with representation from CJSW, Transport, Community Planning, Scottish Prison Service, Grampian Police, NHS Grampian, Scottish Court Service, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the Alcohol and Drug Partnerships.

As the development progresses other agencies and 3rd sector organisations will be brought in to work on agreed workstreams which include, Family Support Services, Health and Wellbeing, Employment, Learning and Lifeskills, Social Work and Throughcare and Community Support.

Young People Who Offend – Whole System Approach

The Aberdeen Youth Justice Development Programme exemplifies the partnership approach to meeting the needs of children, young people, families and communities. It is all about improving outcomes and making sure services are efficient, effective and responsive.

Key to the success of the project is early intervention combined with the provision of integrated services, effective court case management, a dedicated court support worker and the provision of an assertive outreach service.

Diversion from prosecution is an important part of the process for 16 and 17 year olds who have been reported to the Procurator Fiscal. As with pre-referral screening, relevant information is discussed in order to decide on an appropriate course of action which can be:

- Prosecution;
- Diversion from prosecution - either to SACRO or the Youth Justice Fieldwork Team;
- Other Fiscal direct measure – fiscal fine or formal written warning;
- No further proceedings - existing arrangements are meeting the identified needs or not in the public interest to proceed.

Pre-referral Screening is still at an early stage however there is already a reduction in offence referrals to the reporter (65% on average) which prevents unnecessary report writing, frees up staff time and young people are receiving more appropriate services.

Community Services plough on

Across the Northern CJA area during the last half of November and most of December the winter weather took a real grip with significant snowfalls across the North and East causing severe disruption to travel, business and schools. To assist the most vulnerable in our communities all seven local authorities turned to Community Services for help. In Aberdeenshire alone more than 650 hours of work was carried out, with 101 offenders participating.



Across Scotland during the first 4 weeks of the bad weather over 15,000 hours of work from clearing snow at homes for the elderly, to helping make safe paths for people with disabilities, to gritting access routes to health centres, in the second week of December over 1,300 offenders have been out repaying their dues to communities they have harmed.

Prince's Trust in the Northern CJA

The Prince's Trust in Scotland aims to help and support disadvantaged young people who are not in education, employment or training. Their Team programme for 16-25 year olds who are unable to sustain employment, further education or training is a 12-week course that gives youngsters self-belief, skills, qualifications and more. In the NCJA area they are regularly run in Aberdeen and Peterhead by Aberdeen Foyer.



In terms of early intervention their XL programme works with 14-16 year olds who are educational underachievers, poor attenders, at risk of exclusion or simply lacking in all self-confidence. It is a two year commitment for young people in S3 and S4, completed in place of one Standard Grade, aimed at re-engaging them into education. This is run in partnership with Local Authorities and schools across Scotland. In the NCJA area XL is operating in schools in the four mainland authorities.

The Trust also give Development Awards to those needing financial assistance to access education, employment or training as well as the 'Get Into' programme for specific employment areas.

Other news

On 15 March 2011 the Scottish Government released the latest **Summary Justice Reforms** (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/03/SJRJan09Dec10>) performance report. The report contains a synopsis of summary criminal justice system performance against a range of key performance indicators for Summary Justice Reform. It uses data gathered from the eight Scottish Police Forces via the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS), Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) and Scottish Court Service (SCS).

Related to Summary Justice Reforms were the publication of evaluation reports on **Direct Measures** and **Fiscal Work Orders**
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/339672/0112278.pdf>
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/339704/0112293.pdf>

Also in March Scottish Government issued the Community Payback Orders **Practice Guidance** as part of the National Outcomes and Standards for social work.
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/344043/0114450.pdf>

A slightly controversial topic being consulted on at the moment is the **future of policing in Scotland** the consultation closes on 25 May 2011.
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/341417/0113500.pdf>

The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research recently published a study on 'Understanding the Drivers of Female Imprisonment in Scotland'. The accompanying briefing document can be accessed below and the full report is available on their web site - www.sccjr.ac.uk.

Northern Community Justice Authority,
The Annexe, Woodhill House,
Westburn Road
Aberdeen
AB16 5GJ

Tel: 01224 665780

Web site: www.northerncja.org.uk

E-mail: NorthernCJA@aberdeenshire.gov.uk