

Agenda Item	15.
Report No	CLH 12/19

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Care, Learning and Housing

**Date:** 24 January 2019

**Report Title:** **Key Developments in Criminal Justice Social Work Services**

**Report By:** Interim Director of Care and Learning

### **1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report outlines 3 recent key developments in criminal justice social work services. These are: (1) the implementation of a Persistent Offenders Project; (2) bringing the Moving Forward: Making Changes group work sex offender programme in-house; and (3) the successful bid for the Caledonian System domestic abuse perpetrator programme.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note and comment on the developments in the report.

### **3. Persistent Offenders Project**

- 3.1 Following the allocation of ring-fenced funding to criminal justice social work for the development of innovative projects in July 2016, the Persistent Offender Project (POP) was implemented in Autumn 2016 in collaboration with Police Scotland, NHS Highland, Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and Apex Scotland. Originally comprising social workers, a police officer, a prison officer and a Community Psychiatric Nurse (Addictions), it is community-based and uses a combination of home visits, prison visits, motivational interviewing techniques and assertive outreach to encourage persistent offenders with drug and alcohol use issues to engage with services.
- 3.2 The project aims to target people whose drug and alcohol use has a significant impact on their health, wellbeing and social functioning; this includes some of the most vulnerable individuals at high risk of violence, self-harm and suicide, homelessness, social and economic exclusion. The work is intensive, often requiring several meetings with clients weekly or spending prolonged periods of time with them.
- 3.3 A multi-agency Strategic Oversight Group, chaired by the Principal Officer (CJ), meets quarterly ensuring strategic direction, governance and accountability. The decision was taken to set up the project initially in the Inverness area given the limited funding available and to test that the model works.
- 3.4 An evaluation of the project October 2016 – February 2018 completed by the CJSW Research, Quality Assurance and Information Officer and the Highland Drug & Alcohol Partnership Research and Intelligence Specialist, showed:
- It is reaching its target audience, i.e. aged 30+, with alcohol, drug and mental health issues and prolific offenders with complex needs.
  - The team is a cohesive, organised multi-agency team and there is evidence of good partnership working.
  - It is contributing to a reduction in offending. Convicted offences for individuals involved with the Project reduced by approximately 30% from 247 to 173 between 2016 and 2017 for all individuals referred to the Project. 11 out of 17 offenders involved with the Project for six months showed a reduction in convicted offences when comparing pre- and post-involvement with the Project.
  - In the first full year of the project (2017) there was a 27% reduction in economic and social costs of crime (£173,167). When the operating costs are offset against this there is a net gain of approximately £70,117 (10.5%) compared with 2016.
  - The majority of stakeholders rate the service “very good” or “excellent” in the following key criteria: awareness of service objectives and outcomes, approach to assertive outreach and follow up, ability to access services, efficiency, effectiveness, person centred approach and working in partnership.
  - Clients consulted value the input from the team for directing, supporting and prompting access to services particularly on liberation from custody. Clients also emphasised the value of the reliability and trust built between themselves and team members and having help available and accessible when they need it.
- 3.5 Shortlisted for a Highland Council Quality Award in 2018, the judges commented on the “Impressive mix of results...which evidence the impact (it) is having on the lives of persistent offenders in our area.”

### **4. Moving Forward: Making Changes**

- 4.1 Moving Forward: Making Changes (MFMC) is a sex offender group work programme

accredited by the Scottish Advisory Panel on Offender Rehabilitation (SAPOR) in June 2014. It is delivered throughout Scotland. Originally delivered in Highland by the Aberdeenshire Joint Sex Offender Project (JSOP), a decision was taken in early 2017 to bring the programme in-house in order to increase efficiency and improve management oversight. The newly created team has been operational since December 2017.

- 4.2 The team works with adults (18+) who have been convicted of a sexual offence or an offence where there is a significant sexual element, providing regular assessment and programmatic interventions. The primary objective is to reduce the risk of sexual reoffending and increase the opportunity and capacity to meet offender needs by non-offending means. A suitability assessment is carried out as part of a criminal justice social work report and attendance is on a Community Payback Order programme requirement or as a condition of a prison licence.
- 4.3 MFMC takes approximately two years and is in 3 parts: (1) pre-programme work (e.g. pre-cursors to change; introduction to the keep safe plan); (2) essential modules (e.g. introduction to thinking styles and self-management; introduction to healthy sexual functioning); and (3) optional modules (e.g. social supports; relationship skills).
- 4.4 Between December 2017 and December 2018, there were 45 referrals. These resulted in: 5 long term prison sentences (>4 years) with Extended Sentences; 13 short term prison sentences (<4 years) with a short-term sex offender licence; 15 Community Payback Orders with a requirement to complete the programme; 10 with other community-based disposals and no requirement to complete MFMC; and 2 are awaiting sentence. No Highland specific outcome data is available.
- 4.5 A national evaluation of the programme published in August 2018 (Scottish government) showed at least 911 men were recorded as starting MFMC (81% in the community), with 98% assessed (at the start) as moderate or high risk of future sexual offending. The report provides evidence that most men who completed it (69%) were rated as having a lower risk score by the end of the programme.

## **5. Caledonian System**

- 5.1 Caledonian System is a pioneering programme that has been proven to change the behaviour of domestic abuse perpetrators. It was the first offender-rehabilitation programme to be accredited by SAPOR and has been delivered in parts of Scotland since 2011 and aims to reduce the risk of re-offending and improve the lives of the women and children. It is a direct alternative to custody given after an accused has been convicted of a domestic abuse related offence. Participants will be on a Community Payback Order and take part in one-to-one and group sessions with expert social workers for a minimum of two years.
- 5.2 In March 2018, the Scottish government announced an extra £2.8 million to expand the programme. The Highland CJSW bid, developed in partnership with the 4 Women's Aid services in Highland, was successful and announced in August 2018 by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice.
- 5.3 An intensive period of recruitment for men's, women's and children's workers and specialist training is currently underway. The programme will be managed by criminal justice social work and delivered in partnership with Inverness Women's Aid who will host the women's and children's workers. It is anticipated the programme will go-live in late Spring 2019.

- 5.4 An evaluation published in November 2016 (Scottish government) showed at least 941 men had started the men's programme since 2011 and 598 women had taken up the offer of support from the women's service; 686 children were linked with the 941 men recorded in the monitoring data. The report showed men who have completed the programme posed a lower risk to their families while women felt safer.

## **6. Implications**

- 6.1 There are no resource, risk, legal, equality, Gaelic, rural or climate change/carbon clever implications.

Designation: Interim Director of Care and Learning

Date: 3 January 2019

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Background Papers: