



To: North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority

On: 11th December 2015

Report by: Chief Officer

Heading: Services to Women in the Justice System

1. Summary

- 1.1** For the past few months NSCJA has been working with senior officers from Sacro and 3 Local Authority partners (Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire & Inverclyde) as well as the Scottish Prison Service to develop a proposal (attached) for additional services for women.
- 1.2** If the proposal is successful the new services will enhance existing community services and cover gaps where no service currently exists. For example, we will be in a position to offer “bail supervision plus” to women appearing at Paisley and Greenock Sheriff Courts and also provide a Structured Deferred Sentence support to the same jurisdictions. The services will also provide evening and weekend support for women who require this enhanced input.
- 1.3** Staff for the new service will work and be based in various locations across the three local authority areas and will also be expected to attend Custody Courts/Sentencing Courts when women are appearing.
- 1.4** A steering group will be established involving all local community partners and justice organisation partners to ensure the service is well supported and co-ordinated to ensure all women have equal access.
- 1.5** NSCJA Officers believe the service will help to reduce the number of women going to custody and will also help with rehabilitating women in the community. Bail supervision plus and out-of-hours support were recommended by the Commission on Women Offenders so the proposal should also be seen as taking forward the recommendations made by the Commission.

- 1.6** On 26th August NSCJA was offered £107,563 as a “one off” grant to be used specifically to develop Bail Supervision and Diversion Services. The grant has to be spent during the 2015/16 financial year.

It is therefore proposed to allocate this sum to SACRO for the attached service proposal should this be agreed by the 3 authorities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** Members are asked to support the allocation of the £107,563 grant to SACRO to enable the attached service proposal to be put into effect.
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3. Background

- 3.1** On the 17th April 2012 The Commission on Women Offenders, Chaired by Dame Elish Angiolini, published its report on female offending in Scotland. The report made 37 recommendations of which 33 were immediately accepted by the Government when they have their formal response in Parliament on 26th June 2012.
- 3.2** A central recommendation of the Commission was the establishments of “Community Justice Centres” to provide one stop multi agency support for women offenders. This was one of the recommendations accepted by the Government.
- 3.3** On 12th July 2013, NSCJA were contacted by Justice Division in relation to formulating proposals for womens services to meet this recommendation. There was a 6 week period for local authorities and partners to submit bids for funding covering an 18 month period October 2013 – March 2015. Thereafter, the services would have to find their own sustainable funding. A second bid deadline of 30th November 2013 was also provided for funding covering a 12 month period April 2014 – March 2015.

Implications of the Report

Equality & Human Rights

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Authorities website.

Author Jim Hunter, Chief Officer, North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority
Email: jim.hunter@renfrewshire.gcsx.gov.uk Tel: (0141) 887 6133