



The Newsletter of
West Lothian Council
Criminal Justice Social
Work Service

No. 8 – November 2011

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Community Justice

Community Payback

The Scottish Government’s new approach to community-based sentencing

On 1st February 2011, the Scottish Government introduced its biggest ever revision of community-based sentencing, in the form of the Community Payback Order.

It is important that communities have ownership and understanding of the punishments imposed by sentencers on behalf of our society.

The Scottish Government is developing ways to ensure that communities have a voice and that offenders are seen to make reparation both by working for their communities and by finding ways to stop committing offences.

The Scottish Government is working to reduce the use of short-term imprisonment, and in the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 there is a presumption against the use of sentences of three months or under, in

favour of the use of community-based sentences.

The introduction of the Community Payback Order (CPO), which became law on 1st February 2011, will lead to the eventual phasing out of the current sentences of Probation, Community Service and Supervised Attendance Orders.



Kenny MacAskill, the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Justice talks with Alan Nevin, Unpaid Work Supervisor, at the Almond Valley Heritage Centre, shortly before the rollout of Community Payback.

However, we will be running parallel court orders for a number of years as a CPO can only be used for offences that were committed after the date of introduction.

The CPO is intended to allow the courts flexibility in dealing with both less serious and more serious behaviour. With two levels of order, a Level One order of up to 100 hours replaces the Supervised Attendance Order and allows offenders to carry out Unpaid Work instead of paying a fine.

A Level Two order replaces Probation and Community Service, and gives a more coherent approach to attaching conditions to an order. The new court order allows the courts to impose one or more of a range of nine requirements.

These requirements address a wide variety of offending-related behaviour (for example, dealing with alcohol, drug or mental health problems). Every CPO must have a requirement of either Supervision or Unpaid Work. Where Unpaid Work is ordered, this must now be completed in shorter timescales than previously.

An interesting development is that a proportion of these hours of Unpaid Work can be used on 'Other Activities', which are intended to improve the individual's prospects and reduce the risk of re-offending. These can include literacy and numeracy assessments, developing skills in seeking and retaining employment, improving parenting skills, attending college, addressing health or addiction needs, or working on other issues relevant to the individual.

A new development in Scottish criminal justice is the requirement that each local authority must each year consult widely about the nature of unpaid work or other activities to be undertaken by offenders residing the local authority's area. Clearly communities, and in particular Community Councils, Community

Planning Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships and groups are key in this process.

We also need to consult police, sentencers, victim organisations, representatives of the business community, other voluntary organisations, including those representing the interests of young people, and groups representing ethnic minorities and religious and belief groups.

So what do all these changes mean for the staff who are carrying out this work? One of the most significant changes has been a major restructuring of the staff who manage these orders, with members of the former Probation Supervision and Community Work Orders teams joining in the new Community Payback team. This makes effective case planning and management much easier.

Community Payback provides Criminal Justice workers with many exciting opportunities to develop services. We will report further on these in our next newsletter.

However, it is worth noting that we have very current examples of good practice, such as our joint project with West Lothian's Housing, Construction and Building Services that involves people carrying out Unpaid Work recycling items removed from housing that is being cleared after tenants leave. This project is being put forward for recognition in the 2012 Scottish Community Payback Awards, and we will let you know how it gets on!

Social Work in Addiewell Prison

Mary Lewis, recently-appointed manager of the Addiewell Prison Social Work Team, on the challenges of work inside.

Staff changes in Prison-based Social Work Team at HMP Addiewell mean that the team is now at full strength, with five social workers and an Administrative Assistant.

In July over 100 prisoners transferred from Saughton Prison to Addiewell to allow female prisoners from Corntonvale to be moved to Edinburgh. This created considerable extra work and we appointed temporary criminal justice assistant Lorraine McKilligan to work with those cases.

The Prison Social Work Team feels it is important to offer training opportunities, and we welcomed a final year Edinburgh University student, Selina Smith, for her placement between November 2010 and March 2011.

Addiewell currently accommodates 790 prisoners, and is at capacity. Prisoners serving four years and over, which are statutory social work cases and therefore the main concern of the Social Work Team, number 397. There are also 26 men convicted of sex offences.

These high numbers generate a lot of work for prison Social Workers. We have to attend around fifty Integrated Case Management

meetings each month, and prepare a number of parole reports, fluctuating between 8 and 20 a month.

This is a good time to look at how we manage our workload. We are thinking about how we allocate cases, and want to free up enough time to allow Social Workers to take on client-focused work. To do this, we need to have a clear idea about future demands on us, and so we have been discussing with prison staff what are the maximum numbers we may expect to be involved with through monthly Integrated Case Management meetings.

Social Work is represented in a range of management meetings within the prison, which consider many areas where we have both responsibilities and expertise. These include cross-Departmental Discussions, Risk Management meetings, programme planning, Orders for Lifelong Restriction and MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements). All of this raises the profile of the Team and its services.

All prison staff must take part in induction sessions, and Social Work now has a part in this process. This input pays dividends as it clearly specifies the work undertaken by the service, and reduces inappropriate demands on us.

Improving links with Community-based Social Work Services across Scotland is high on the agenda particularly in relation to Home Leave and Parole reports.

As Team Manager, I attend the monthly Prison-based Social Work managers' meetings in Perth and a working group at Polmont YOI which is looking at what new Risk Assessment tools can offer to the Integrated Case Management process.

With the current focus on integrating prisoners into their communities, this is a really interesting time to be involved in developing Prison Social Work services.

CJ staff support 'Movember'!



A number of workers in Criminal Justice grew moustaches in November to support fundraising for men's health, and specifically cancers affecting men. The only person in the Court and Assessment Team (shown above) who actually grew one was Pat Kelly, centre. Unfortunately, he did not know about the planned photo opportunity, and shaved off his excellent "1970s New Zealand Test Cricketer" moustache the night before! Well done to all who took part, and it's good to be able to recognise you all again!

Back again...

Tom McGlone, Nurse with the Drug Treatment and Testing Order Team, on the changes he has seen in addictions work.

As a recent returner to the world of addictions work within Criminal Justice, I have witnessed many changes since I last worked with the NHS West Lothian Addictions Team. At that time, we were still considering the re-design of addiction services in West Lothian. These services are now a crucial part of the care partnership, and we are now clearly delivering a better service to clients with addictive problems within West Lothian. These changes will undoubtedly continue to improve the daily lives of people in West Lothian.

Our work has been made much easier through our work setting, alongside the Criminal Justice Social Work Service, the Courts and the Custody suite within the Civic Centre in Livingston. My previous criminal justice-related jobs were rather different. On my first day with the Drug Treatment and Testing Order Team in Edinburgh in 2002, I reported to a building in Leith that resembled an empty carpet warehouse, and when working with the DTTO in Scottish Borders, I was working out of my car for two months before I had a desk!

With these painful memories at hand, I have to smile when I walk into the Civic Centre for it is by far the best working environment of any job I've ever had and am likely to have. That's from a personal point of view, though, as every one knows, fancy beds alone don't make marriages!

That is why, in the short time my Health team has been in the Civic Centre, it has been very encouraging to see the amount of direct cross-team communication that goes on. On the basis of this, I personally look forward to further shared working, training and liaison between the teams.

From the manager's desk

Gillian Oghene, Group Manager considers the current challenges for Criminal Justice Social Work.

Two years after we moved to the Civic Centre, the Criminal Justice Social Work Service (CJSWS) feels very much part of a working partnership, which is helpful in both our day-to-day work and in planning our future activities. Close working relationships with the Police, Housing and other related services allow us to manage the potential risk posed by the critical (but few) high risk offenders in the community.

Co-location with a range of other services allows swift and accurate intelligence sharing, opportunities to share resources, and to make links with services such as the Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT) to ensure the victim impact of offending is considered at every opportunity.

We are looking forward to the new Domestic Court that will focus on crimes involving domestic abuse. Working in partnership with DASAT and the Public Protection Unit, we expect that services will be able to intervene at the earliest opportunity to reduce further offending and to protect where possible victims of these crimes. This specialist court is planned for the New Year, and the CJSWS is preparing to enhance our current services. This is likely to include more use of supervised bail, and introducing groupwork for perpetrators of domestic abuse that ensures they work to achieve behaviour change.

In an organisational change discussed elsewhere in this newsletter, Youth Justice services are now better assimilated into the operations of the CJSWS. Although part of the operational management structure of the CJSWS, Youth Justice remains within the Children and Families

Directorate. Its workers continue in their primary role of working at the earliest opportunity with young people involved in criminal activity. They support, intervene and manage some of West Lothian's most troubled young people.

Recognising that young people have specific needs, the aligning of both Youth Justice and CJSWS allows an opportunity to share and develop staff skills to meet the range of needs of young offenders, many of whose problems can be summarised by the phrase 'age and stage'. This fits in well with the council's Life Stages approach, which identifies that early intervention reduces problems later in life.

Staff in the CJSWS are now able to work in a more flexible way by using the council's new Worksmart technology. Given new alternatives about the office locations from which they can work, staff have an opportunity to develop better working relationships with our partners in local communities. There are also benefits for our service users – for example, someone with caring responsibilities can be seen locally, risk assessments permitting. This should improve use of staff time by reducing unnecessary travelling between areas in West Lothian.

Finally, we are pleased to welcome the newly-appointed Head of Social Policy – Jennifer Scott. Having worked in West Lothian for a number of years, Jennifer is fully aware of the challenges for us in reducing re-offending.

Bridging the Gap

Kevin Carter, manager of the Youth Justice Team, reports on developments in working with young people

The Youth Justice Team in West Lothian has gone through a period of substantial change

both in terms of the services we are delivering, and the way we have set ourselves up to do this. As a result, Youth Justice services now focus on young people aged 12 to 18 years who are either within the Children's Hearing system or in the adult court system.

Our main aim is to reduce Youth Offending through structured individual and group work programmes. This links in with national and local 'Reducing Re-offending' strategies, including 'Preventing Offending by Young People: A Framework for Action' (2008). The service is also centred on the nationally agreed principles of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC).

Youth Justice intends to address the needs and deeds of young people through a multi-agency approach, involving all our key partners in West Lothian. In order to do this, we have better integrated our work with that of the Criminal Justice Social Work Service, aiming to prevent young people from entering the adult Criminal Justice System.

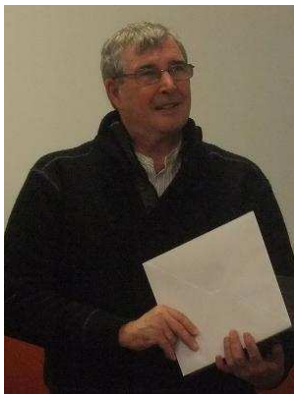
We are doing this in a variety of ways. These include using the principles of Early and Effective Intervention to meet the needs of young people and their families as early as possible, and offering Prosecution Diversion wherever possible for young people aged 16 to 18 years. We are adopting the principles of West Lothian Council's Life Stage Model for 'Young People in Transition'. This aims to ensure that the service meets the needs of young people while acknowledging the particular challenges resulting from their particular age and stage of development.

We continue to work with all key partner agencies in West Lothian to ensure that all is being done to address youth offending and to promote safer communities in West Lothian.

Staffing News

Once again, a lot of staff movement. To start with, the departures. During the time since our last newsletter, we have seen three retirements of long-serving staff.

Mary Simpson, the longest serving member of our Admin team, retired in late 2010. In November 2011,



we said goodbye to Jim Gilchrist, Senior Practitioner in the Court and Assessment team, pictured left and to Tom Findlay (shown below) (Community Work Order Supervisor). We will miss each of

them; between them, they had nearly sixty years of service working with Criminal Justice!

We have also said goodbye to a number of other colleagues. Simon Gittins, now working in Glasgow, won the Kay Carmichael Travel Award, and, as this is written, is travelling to Australia seeing how they are working to improve Criminal Justice practice. We also said good-bye to Lesley Millar, Russell Murray, Sharon Cassidy, Julia Peters, Jackie Law, Antasha Wolmarans and Karen Hannah. Each has gone to a new post.

We have also seen a few changes in the management team. John Creighton's acting-up as Team Manager for Court and Assessment

ended in the summer. John had brought a huge wealth of experience to this post. Management of that team was taken on by Linda Probka, recently released from her role of Team Manager at Addiewell Prison! As a consequence, we are pleased to welcome new colleague Mary Lewis as the manager of the Prison Social Work team.

Following the national implementation of Community Payback, we have a new Community Payback team, led by Viv Murphy, combining the responsibilities of the former Probation Supervision and Community Work Order Teams. Paul Streater has taken on meantime the responsibilities of Service Development as we move into the new world of Community Payback.

Finally, other new arrivals! We have been pleased to welcome:

- Criminal Justice Assistants Kate Fleming and Laura Mackie
- Admin colleagues Pamela Bestwick, Laura Reid and Sarah Smillie
- Social Workers: Richard Amos and Eilidh Cook (Community Payback Team) and Kevin McDaid and Claire Murray (Addiewell Prison Social Work Team)
- Unpaid Work Supervisor James Monaghan
- And a large crop of babies (children and grandchildren of a number of staff in the service) – we wish them all well!



Your views on how we're doing – feedback from surveys of service users.

Paul Streater

In previous newsletters and posters, we have explained how our service users feel we are performing. Some of our previous ways of doing this are now more of a challenge – we don't have waiting room walls for putting up posters in the Civic Centre!

We have reviewed our regular snapshot surveys to find out more about the views of our service users – designed to find out how people feel about how we work with them, how we explain things to them, and how we treat them.

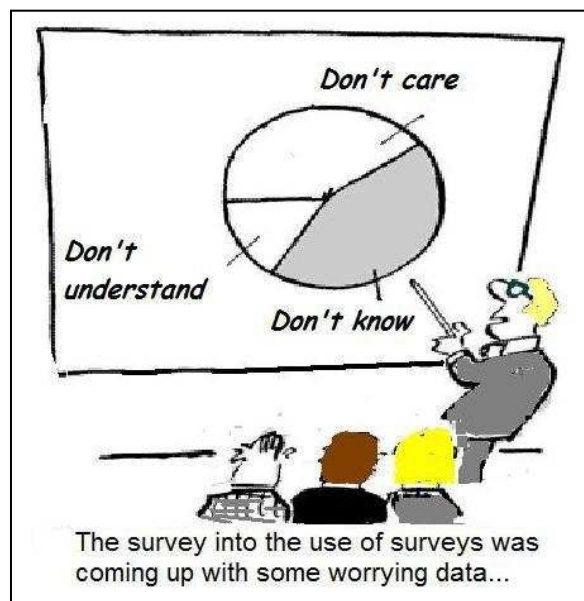
With four surveys under our belt, we decided in 2011 to reduce the frequency of these surveys to an annual event. Our 'Your Views' survey in May 2011 had over a hundred respondents to most questions, twice as many as the previous year's average, and enough for us to feel sure these were broadly representative results. However, as for previous surveys, we are aware that there are limitations on the conclusions we can reasonably draw from this information.

The headlines:

- We are getting even quicker at seeing people attending at the Civic Centre –78% of appointments were seen immediately, with another 10% seen within five minutes.
- 66% considered that our leaflets were good or very good; another 30% thought they were adequate. We have started a process of improving our leaflets, drawing on the expertise of Mo

Colquhoun, an Adult Education worker seconded to work with us. While we are obliged to include a fair amount of detail, we feel that our new leaflets, being issued as part of a rolling programme, are much more readable than the old leaflets.

- To the question 'How clear and accurate have we been at providing you with information?', we received 'Excellent' or 'Good' comments from 75% of respondents. This shows a slight drop in positive responses, with an equivalent rise in the 'Adequate' category.
- 69% stated that they felt we had been good or very good in keeping them informed about what was happening during our contact with them, with another 26% stating this communication had been adequate.
- You consider that in general we treat you fairly – 79.5% of the people who answered this question scored us as either excellent or good.
- 86% felt that the professionalism and knowledge of the worker who saw them was either good or excellent, a 2% drop from the last recorded figure.



Can we do better?

We certainly hope so, but there is almost certainly a natural ceiling to the level of positive responses we will get, given that many people with whom we are working are by no means voluntary customers of the service.

We would welcome any suggestions for improving

the views held the people who we are working with about our services. There are limits however – we cannot do anything about the concern of some respondents about the proximity of the Livingston Police Station!

2. You can e-mail us on:

CriminalJusticeTeam@westlothian.gov.uk.

We aim to reply to all comments within one week.

Your opinions do matter!

We would welcome your views on this newsletter. If you would like to comment on the information we have given, or if you would like to suggest items for future newsletters, you can contact us in any of the following ways:

1. By writing to the **Criminal Justice Social Work Service, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston EH54 6FF.**

You can either post it in the normal fashion, or hand it in (**unstamped**) to any West Lothian Council public office, when it will be sent to us by the internal mail service.

If you are interested in writing a piece for the newsletter, why not phone the editor, Paul Streater, on 01506 280999 to discuss this further?

Map showing location of the West Lothian Civic Centre. Please note that parking is available on the south (town-centre) side of the River Almond; most of this parking is either charged or time-restricted. Access to the Civic Centre is at the west end (at football stadium end).

More information on travel to the Civic Centre from the West Lothian Council website at <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk>

