



Corporate Plan

2023/2024 [draft for
consultation]

March 2023

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Chair and Chief Executive Foreword

To be included in final published version, once consultation feedback has been assessed.

Introduction

The Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 established Community Justice Scotland (CJS) and we started work on 1 April 2017. We are the national organisation for promoting, monitoring and supporting improvement in the delivery of community justice. This corporate plan will inform our business plans which will be published for each of the years from 2023 until 2026.

What is Community Justice?

Community justice is where people who have broken the law are held to account through community based sentences, supported to reconnect and contribute to those communities, and offered the opportunity to address the underlying social, economic and personal determinants of their behaviour. Central to this is a commitment and a presumption to deliver justice within a community setting whenever it is safe to do so and the nature of the crime allows.

This approach can include addressing contributing issues such as problematic use of drugs or alcohol, addressing behaviours and beliefs related to domestic abuse, partial restrictions of liberty through such things as electronic tagging and curfews, involvement in unpaid community work, and the imposition of fines and orders to make compensation.

Community justice aims to encourage rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and protect the public, leading to fewer victims and safer communities. This requires a strong partnership working approach across a wide range of organisations at each point of the justice system.

Community justice also involves working with people who have not been convicted, such as those held on remand and individuals who can be purposefully diverted out of the justice system and into programmes that will help them avoid offending in the future.

Together these elements can be summarised as providing a 'Community First' approach to justice;

- Community First in terms of where sentences are served.
- Community First in terms of where determinants of offending behaviour are addressed.
- Community First in terms of organisations involved in rehabilitation, repair and sentence delivery.
- Community First in terms of prevention and diversion.

The evidence shows that community justice interventions help people to stop breaking the law and lead to higher rehabilitation rates, fewer victims and safer communities. Where people are supported and helped to address the determinants of their offending behaviour, stay connected to, or build a connection with their communities, local support networks

and personal relationships, then the evidence shows we create a more effective and fair justice system, fewer victims, and lower rates of re-offending.

A Community First approach to justice leads to a safer Scotland for all.

Our Strategy for CJS

Our strategic aim is to support the successful delivery of the Vision for Justice and the National Strategy for Community Justice, both of which were published by Scottish Government in 2022.

Using our statutory functions, we will monitor the delivery of community justice across Scotland, identify where things are working well and also where more needs to be done to achieve a justice system that adopts a Community First approach.

We will work to bring about improvement by supporting, advising and assisting those at both local and national levels to remove any barriers to the delivery of a Community First justice system, and where it is outside of our scope to advise on change, we will highlight the barriers to appropriate bodies.

We will use available resources to promote the benefits of a Community First approach to the public, highlighting the evidence showing how it can lead to a reduction in reoffending and provide benefits to communities above and beyond increased safety.

Functions

CJS has four main functions (Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, Section 4) which are to;

- Promote the national strategy for community justice.
 - Monitor, promote and support improvement in, and keep the Scottish Ministers informed about performance in the provision of community justice.
 - Promote and support improvement in the quality and range of community justice provision, making the best use of the available facilities, people and other resources within any given community.
 - Promote public awareness of the benefits that arise when people who are convicted of offences are sentenced to community disposals rather than imprisonment, and when they are managed and supported to work on areas that are likely to prevent any future offending.
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CJS will exercise these through the activity described within the outcomes and priority actions section. (See below)

CJS will continue to monitor, promote and support all the organisations and individuals who play a part in the delivery of community justice at a national or local level in order to improve the effectiveness of community justice across Scotland.

We will act as expert advisors on community justice matters to these organisations and to Scottish Ministers.

Strategic Context

In June 2022, a new [National Strategy for Community Justice](#) was published, and it sets out the Scottish Government's aims and ambitions for community justice in Scotland.

This Corporate Plan has been prepared in the context of that strategy and it articulates how CJS intends to support its key aims of seeking to;

1. Optimise the use of diversion and intervention at the earliest opportunity.
2. Ensure that robust and high-quality community interventions and public protection arrangements are consistently available across Scotland.
3. Ensure that services are accessible and available to address the needs of individuals accused or convicted of an offence.
4. Strengthen the leadership, engagement, and partnership working of local and national community justice partners.

In addition, this plan will complement and support delivery of the [Vision for Justice in Scotland](#), also published in 2022. The aims in the Vision for Justice are;

- We have a society in which people feel, and are, safer in their communities.
 - We work together to address the underlying causes of crime and support everyone to live full and healthy lives .
 - We have effective, modern person-centred and trauma-informed approaches to justice in which everyone can have trust, including as victims, those accused of crimes and as individuals in civil disputes .
 - We support rehabilitation, use custody only where there is no alternative and work to reduce reoffending and re-victimisation.
 - We address the on-going impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to renew and transform justice
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While CJS is supportive of every element of that strategy, it has a particular interest in the commitment to increase community-based sentences and services.

CJS also contributes positively to achieving the objectives of the National Performance Framework(NPF) ([National Performance Framework](#)). Of particular relevance is the national outcome that ‘we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe’. The actions that we will undertake over the lifetime of this plan will contribute directly to this outcome.

Other NPF objectives to which the CJS Corporate Plan plans aligns include:

- We will respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination.
- We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society.

We also intend to contribute to developing legislation and policy as it emerges or develops across the period covered by this plan.

Outcomes and Priority Actions

The overarching theme for this Corporate plan will be ‘Community First.’ (See above) To achieve this, we have set out clear outcomes and actions that we intend to deliver by 2026.

Outcome 1. The community justice model is more effective across Scotland, with improved approaches developed, supported and implemented.

Community Justice Scotland will play a key role in driving measurable improvement in the delivery of community justice services nationally. That will include prioritising more of its own resources to direct support for local partnerships. We will also continue to identify and promote best practice, working with other national agencies and local partners to identify, develop, and deliver opportunities for improvement.

Priority Actions

1.1. Develop and deliver a Community Justice Performance Framework (formerly the Outcomes Performance Improvement Framework (OPIF) implementation plan by March 2024

1.2 Expand capacity within the Improvement Team and integrate the Link Improvement Lead (LIL) approach into the support we provide to Community Justice Partnerships (CJPs) by December 2023

1.3 Promote effective practice to support partners in the development of Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plans (CJOIPs) by December 2023

1.4 Promote consistency in relation to planning and service provision across all local community justice areas by March 2025

1.5 Provide targeted support to partnerships where improvement requirements are identified throughout 2023-2026

1.6 Work with others to develop and improve approaches to Restorative Justice (RJ) throughout Scotland by April 2024

(These support statutory functions 2 and 3)

Outcome 2. Community justice is fully considered in emerging national policy and legislation.

Community Justice Scotland has an expanding network of stakeholders and partners within and associated with justice. Since its inception it has worked within its network to influence policy, practice and legislation and it will aim to increase this influence as justice and the wider public sector undergo immense strategic change and fundamental reform. It is vital that CJS remains a strong persuasive voice, advocating the benefits of community justice to its stakeholders, partners and the public.

Priority Action

2.1. Work with stakeholders, partners, national decision makers and legislators to support the development of national legislation and policy which is informed by best community justice practice and improved services throughout 2023-2026.

(These support statutory function 1)

Outcome 3. People better understand and have confidence in community justice.

Community Justice Scotland will continue to promote community justice and achieve better understanding of it across Scotland. This will facilitate acceptance of and participation in community justice which will support realisation of the outcomes detailed in the national strategy. The key will be effective communication and engagement pushing our reach beyond our existing constituencies and into all influential groups.

Priority Actions

3.1 Develop and implement over the next three years the CJS Communications Strategy with a specific focus on promoting the national strategy for community justice by March 2026.

3.2 Increase the availability, accessibility and quality of information about local community justices' services by March 2026.

3.3 Continue to provide training and knowledge products relating to community justice services to police, prosecutors, sheriffs, criminal justice social workers, Community Justice partnerships and others in the community justice workforce and extend this to defence agents by April 2024.

3.4 Provide support for local partnership communications throughout 2023-2026.

3.5 Complete a review of the CJS website and enhance its compatibility with current accessibility standards by March 2024.

(These support statutory function 4)

Outcome 4. The community justice workforce is fully supported through access to a range of quality training, resources and services

Community Justice Scotland will work with government, partners and key stakeholders to enhance its support offering, focussing on the community justice workforce. We will work closely with key stakeholders and incorporate lived experience into the development and delivery of the training we provide.

Priority Actions

4.1 Acquire a Learning Management System (LMS) and migrate learning products onto the system by March 2024.

4.2 Continue delivery of high-quality training for the community justice workforce and seek to expand it to meet partners' needs throughout 2023 -2026.

4.3 Complete the review of third sector voluntary throughcare and mentoring services in Scotland, and undertake the commissioning of such services to be grant funded by the Scottish Government by March 2024

4.4 Establish a system to engage with the third sector throughcare and mentoring services which are selected for SG grant funding through the commissioning process, to monitor the delivery of services against predetermined service model agreements and grant conditions by March 2024.

(These support statutory function 3)

Budget 2023/24

CJS is funded by the Scottish Government through grant-in-aid. Currently, funding settlements for central government public bodies are on an annual basis.

CJS receives additional funding support from government for Restorative Justice, the Commissioning voluntary throughcare services project and Caledonian system Training.

The budget for 2023/24 is £3.771 million. This is made up of £3.064 million for salaries and £0.707 million for operational expenditure.

Within the salaries budget, there is also an element for Board members fees and expenses; currently £0.045 million.*

This shows that the organisation has prioritised the activities detailed in this plan and including those most closely associated with improvement work, training and communications.

CJS also acknowledges that there is considerable strain on the public finances and that situation is likely to apply for at least the duration of this plan. In recognition of this, we are committed to demonstrating value for money and maximising effectiveness within the sector. In support of this we will undertake organisational and structural reform, the aim of which will be to deliver substantial efficiencies within our budget and provide further security of funding to deliver our operational priorities.

*A more detailed breakdown of expenditure for 2023/24 will be shown in the published version of the Corporate Plan.

Governance and Accountability

Community Justice Scotland (CJS) is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), established by legislation as part of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, and must comply with the duties and obligations contained therein.

The CJS board, including the chair, consists of non-executives appointed by the Scottish Ministers in line with the [Code of Practice](#) for Ministerial Public Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland.

The Board is committed to working with the Scottish Government to demonstrate equality amongst our board members. We are also committed to best practice and complying with our duties as an equal opportunities' employer. This is demonstrated by our accreditations as a Living Wage Employer, CJS is recognised as Carer Positive, and we are a Disability Confident Employer.

The Board has established committees to consider issues relating to audit and risk and human resources and remuneration and an advisory committee that considers emerging topics on behalf of the Board. All minutes of the Board are published on the CJS website

CJS currently has 46 staff and 38 FTE's. It is led by the Chief Executive who reports to the Board. The Chief Executive is also the organisation's Accountable Officer.

CJS publishes an annual report of its activities together with its audited accounts after the end of each financial year. We comply with the Government [Financial Reporting Manual](#) (FReM) and outline CJS's main activities and performance against agreed objectives and targets for each previous financial year. The audit of the organisation's annual accounts is carried out by external auditors appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland. The final version is made available for laying before the Scottish Parliament by the Scottish Ministers by 30th September each year.

CJS also ensures that a corporate plan, covering a three-year period, is agreed with the Scottish Ministers and published on the CJS website. The Corporate Plan, the preparation of which must include a period of consultation with statutory partners and stakeholders, reflects CJS's strategic aims and objectives, indicative budgets and any priorities set by the Scottish Ministers. It also demonstrates how CJS contributes to the achievement of the purpose and outcomes set out in the SG's NPF.

Values

We are a values driven organisation. We use our values in everything we do, values based recruitment, values based policies, values based working. Our values are;

- Respect
- Effectiveness
- Compassion
- Fairness
- Understanding
- Integrity

Measuring and Reporting Impact

Our success will ultimately be measured by the impact we have on our mission to improve the justice system and bring increased benefit to all those involved in or affected by it. We have identified some specific measures and indicators for CJS' work in the period 2023/26 and will use these to internally monitor performance and report on the impact CJS is having within the justice sector and society more generally.

Our annual business plan performance reporting process will provide assurance that our work is delivering in line with this plan and highlight areas we need to improve.

Our progress against all the measures laid out in this plan will also be reported through our Annual Report and Accounts which are published each year.



First published X

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