Achieving Community Justice Outcomes

Targeted resource to support national outcome improvement planning in local authority areas

National Outcome: More people in police custody receive support to address their needs

Contents

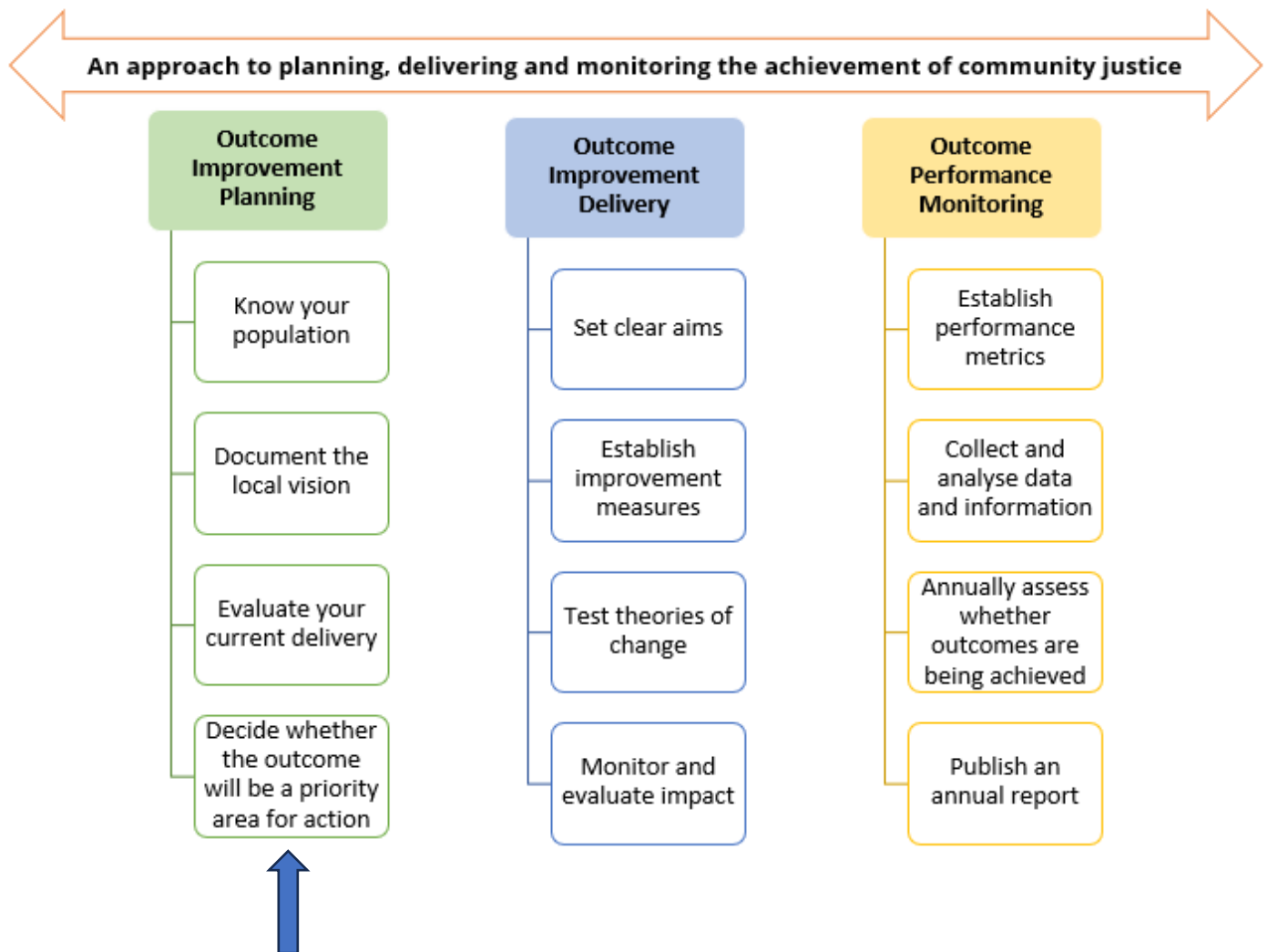## Outcome improvement planning

An approach to support partners in the planning, delivery and monitoring of community justice outcomes in local authority areas was published in June 2024. The approach is intended to provide community justice partners, acting jointly at a local level, with a practical framework to work within to plan, deliver and monitor outcome delivery.

The approach methodology defines three **processes** to meet this aim, each with a distinct number of steps:

An approach to planning, delivering and monitoring the achievement of community justice

Outcome Improvement Planning	Outcome Improvement Delivery	Outcome Performance Monitoring
Know your population	Set clear aims	Establish performance metrics
Document the local vision	Establish improvement measures	Collect and analyse data and information
Evaluate your current delivery	Test theories of change	Annually assess whether outcomes are being achieved
Decide whether the outcome will be a priority area for action	Monitor and evaluate impact	Publish an annual report

This targeted resource focuses on the first process within the approach: **outcome improvement planning** and relates to the following national outcome:

"More people in police custody receive support to address their needs."

National outcomes

Nationally determined outcomes are set out in the Community Justice Performance Framework (the framework) and describe the result of implementing the priority areas for action in the National Strategy (the strategy).

This targeted resource provides a detailed step by step process intended to support partners in the planning and assessment of progress towards meeting the national outcome "***More people in police custody receive support to address their needs***".

Local outcomes

Community justice partners may have identified other outcomes in their Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan (CJOIP). These outcomes will reflect local priorities and will be consistent with the national outcomes, or may relate to priority actions in the strategy where there is no associated national outcome. Partners can use the principles outlined in each step of this process to plan for the achievement of these local outcomes.

Outcome overview

The strategy states that: "The Scottish Government takes seriously the responsibility of ensuring those going through the justice system are appropriately supported, treated and cared for, while ensuring their rights are maintained, especially during challenging times that may have a significant impact on people's mental wellbeing. In line with Police Scotland's commitment to a public health approach to policing, we want to ensure that those who are entering police custody (who, partly due to structural and systemic barriers, are often less engaged with community health, social care and other services and who often experience poorer health outcomes than the general population) have their needs identified. We want to ensure these people can access trauma responsive healthcare and/or a pathway to appropriate support or interventions, reducing the likelihood of involvement in offending behaviour in the future.

Arrest referrals and referrals from health partners are key to this process, ensuring best use of the 'contactable moment' during a person's time in police custody. We want to ensure that individuals can immediately be referred to a full range of services, irrespective of their location. Services should be available at the point of need and individuals should have choice and control in relation to their own support and, where appropriate, be supported to attend services.

There requires to be a focus on the provision of support for mental health and substance use issues, including both drugs and alcohol. There is evidence of a high prevalence of substance use in individuals coming into contact with the justice system. Many people who have died a drug related death have been in recent contact with the justice system. Community justice partnerships should collaborate with Alcohol and Drugs Partnerships (ADPs) on the full implementation, embedding and mainstreaming of the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) standards across Scotland, especially in justice settings.
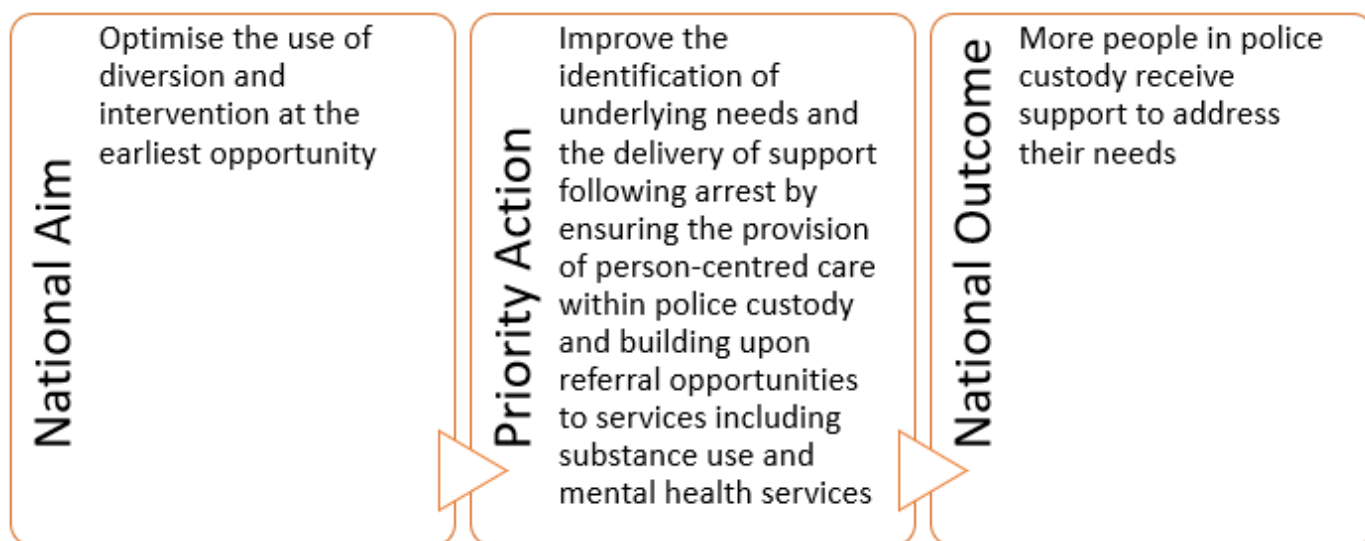
Substance use and mental health problems often go hand-in-hand – and many people need multi-faceted support simultaneously. Support may also be available from healthcare professionals, such as nurses, who are situated in police custody. Where appropriate, immediate crisis support should be provided, and we recognise the importance of the Distress Brief Intervention (DBI) Programme which is to be rolled out to all NHS Board areas by 2024.

Addressing homelessness is also key and proposals being taken forward in relation to new Prevention of Homelessness Duties envisage a duty on public bodies to 'ask and act' about an individual's housing situation. The proposals are based on the principles of shared public responsibility and earlier intervention to prevent homelessness and include proposals for the involvement of partners including Police Scotland, health and prisons.

Those with communication support needs, including autistic people and people with learning disabilities, should also be proactively identified and supported. This can include the use of reasonable adjustments and communication support from an appropriate adult during police investigations, where applicable."

The strategy sets out aims and priority actions for partners to focus on over the duration of the strategy. The framework describes what the desired change looks like in the form of national outcomes.

The aim, priority action and national outcome relevant to police custody support are:

National Aim	Priority Action	National Outcome
Optimise the use of diversion and intervention at the earliest opportunity	Improve the identification of underlying needs and the delivery of support following arrest by ensuring the provision of person-centred care within police custody and building upon referral opportunities to services including substance use and mental health services	More people in police custody receive support to address their needs

Step 1 - Know your population

Strategic planning information about the use and prevalence of support in police custody, and about the people in your local area who are experiencing it, will significantly help in planning the delivery and achievement of this outcome. It will also help you to assess the scale and depth of the challenge in meeting the outcome.

Knowing your population involves applying principles of strategic needs and strengths assessment (SNSA)[1] and appreciative inquiry[2]. This involves using quantitative and qualitative data and information to help partners collectively understand the people for whom you are striving to meet the outcome for, and supports partners to look at old problems and issues in new ways. A good quality evidence base will enable partners to gain knowledge and wisdom about the delivery of community justice locally, and to use these insights to plan improvement.

To understand the population from your local area who are experiencing police custody, you will need to find out as much as you can about who they are and which police custody centre they are held in, what their needs are, and whether the right services are available locally to address those needs. This will require close collaboration with Police Scotland custody centre staff to ensure that the intersect between the custody hub support and any locally commissioned services is as streamlined as possible.

 And pause for a minute….

What do we mean by quantitative and qualitative data and information?

It is worth taking a moment here to explain what we mean by quantitative and qualitative data and information and what we want to use it for in outcomes planning.

Quantitative data (or numerical data) is helpful for answering basic questions such as "who", "what", "where", and "when" and is helpful for measuring the extent, prevalence, size and strength of an outcome. Quantitative data on its own (as in raw, unprocessed facts and figures) are seldom meaningful or useful and numbers alone do not tell the whole story. However, when processed and analysed, quantitative data can produce a succinct picture which is easy to compare, such as when presented as a baseline and trend.

Qualitative data enables a richer understanding of how outcomes are being delivered and provides important context to the numbers. It is helpful for exploring more complex issues, generating hypotheses and gaining deeper insights into human behaviour and experiences. It can also highlight issues and priorities which are important to the workforce or people with living experience of community justice, which may not fall within a performance remit. Qualitative data helps to answer questions such as "why" and "how".

---

[1] Find out more: Strategic Needs And Strengths Assessment: Guidance - Community Justice Scotland :Community Justice Scotland
[2] Find out more: Forming new futures through appreciative inquiry | Iriss

Ultimately, we want you to use a range of data and information, both qualitative and quantitative, to establish a good quality evidence base on which to make decisions about outcome improvement.

What data and information should we source and what if it isn't available?

We know that the provision of data and information within community justice is an evolving process and some data points, and mechanisms to capture insights, are more readily available than others. There is work ongoing at a national level to discuss community justice data development and improve the publishable evidence base in community justice.

The example data collection plans in the following sections provide a wide range of questions to be answered, and include signposting to potential types of data and information in terms of whether it is quantitative or qualitative and where it might be sourced. These example data collection plans are provided to engender curiosity amongst partners and provide a 'pick and mix' of examples that local areas may wish to choose from. They are not mandatory or directive and local areas can decide what is most meaningful and proportionate when establishing their data collection plans.

The availability of some data and information identified in the example data collection plans may be unavailable currently. This relates to both quantitative and qualitative data. If partners collectively agree that the data and information is meaningful to collect, and it is currently unavailable, partners should consider whether this in itself should be considered as an improvement action. For example, you might identify an improvement activity to work with a local statutory partner to produce a data sharing agreement. Or you might have an improvement activity to develop a survey that collects insights from the workforce in the delivery of the outcome.

If partners have tried to source the data and information and it proves to be unavailable, and won't be available in the foreseeable future, it may be worth including this in the outcome progress report (described in [Step 3](#) this document) as an audit trail of local data and information development. This will help to inform both the local area and national picture of community justice data and information availability.

Once you have a data collection plan for each national and local outcome, it is worth reviewing them collectively to see what data and information you need to source directly from national partners, the workforce and people with living experience of community justice. For example, you may have a number of data items or insights that you want to request from SPS or COPFS and these might need to be coordinated or collated into a single request to make it easier for partners and organisations to respond to.

Understanding People

A demographic data profile collates information relating to people in a community or population. The demographic data profile should include data and information that enables you to describe people in the local area who are experiencing police custody, how they receive support, and where possible, give insights into their characteristics.

Sources of demographic data will vary. Some data will be national, some will be police custody hub specific, some may be published and broken down to local authority level, and other data may be held locally.

A simple data collection plan should set out the questions you want to ask and should identify possible sources of data and information to help answer the questions. An example of how a data collection plan for support in police custody might look like is provided:

Sample questions – answered with quantitative data (possible sources provided in brackets)
How many people from the local area were arrested and booked into police custody? (discuss data availability locally)
How many people from the local area within police custody were screened for vulnerabilities? (discuss data availability locally)
How many people received a service from the local arrest referral or community triage service? (discuss data availability locally)
Number of referrals from custody centres (national indicator – provided annually by JAS)

Sample questions – answered with qualitative data sourced from local workforce and people with living experience
In which police custody centres are local people booked in to?
How do local people experience accessing support?
How are local people screened for vulnerabilities in police custody?
Are (and if so, how are) arrest referral or community triage services delivered for the local population?
How are local service providers linked in to police custody for purposes of referral?

The data in your final data collection plan may be able to be broken down to give further information about people's characteristics (such as gender, age, employment status etc.).

Using the information gleaned from your data collection plan you should be able to describe the use and prevalence, over time, of support in police custody in the local area. Data that is able to be broken down into specific characteristics should enable some insight into the local population experiencing police custody and whether the population profile is changing over time.

Understanding Needs

A needs data profile builds on the demographic data profile. Now that you know who is receiving support in police custody, it will be important to try and understand what their needs are.

It can be difficult to obtain further needs based data that is specific to the cohort of people receiving support in police custody. Relevant data is often not recorded or datasets are recorded in such a way that extracting the information is not possible. Therefore, the workforce delivering support in police custody, and the people receiving support, are perhaps the best sources of information to inform the needs profile.

For example, Police Scotland may be able to provide an overview of the needs people are presenting with in police custody, and may be able to provide some data and information from vulnerability screening, if it is recorded. This could include data and information about people requiring support needs for substance use, mental health, housing etc. as well as data and information about people seeking interpreter services, legal aid or support from appropriate adults. Similarly, local providers of arrest referral and community triage services may be able to give valuable insights into the needs of people they support. Similarly, health partners may be able to provide data and information about people receiving Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) services or people receiving medical emergency support. All of this data and information should help inform partners of the needs of people receiving support in police custody.

Understanding Services

A services profile provides an overview of the services that are available in your local area in relation to supporting people in police custody. It will be particularly important to collect information about service availability in relation to the needs data profile and to establish how accessible the service pathways are for people. Police Scotland custody centre staff and community based partners should liaise with each other to ensure there is good mutual awareness of services for onward referral.

Once you have collated all of the information it will be important for partners to consider what it means in terms of the local vision for supporting people in police custody. For example, the demographic data profile may reveal trends in age or gender that require a specific focus in delivery. Similarly, the needs data profile may highlight specific needs that require particular focus in terms of local service provision. The services profile may reveal gaps and/or duplication in service provision or may highlight the need to improve the accessibility of service pathways for people in police custody.

Step 2 - Document the local vision

This step in the process requires partners to collectively define what good support in police custody looks like for the local area population. A good way to visually represent the process by which the outcome will be achieved is to document this as a 'theory of change' using a logic model.

Policy landscape

Creating the local vision involves taking cognisance of legislation and national standards and guidance, alongside reflecting what is known about the local population (established by applying Step 1). The following policy documents may assist partners when developing the local vision:

- Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016
- Mental Health Care and Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003
- Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody Standard Operating Procedure
- Guidelines of Mental Health and Place of Safety Standard Operating Procedure
- Baseline review of healthcare provision within police custody centres in Scotland
- Joint interim framework to inspect healthcare in police custody
- Alcohol and Drugs Partnerships: delivery framework
- What Works? Collaborative Police and Health Interventions for Mental Health Distress
- Appropriate adults: guidance for local authorities
- A quality improvement framework to support self-evaluation for appropriate adult services in Scotland
- The Scottish Translation, Interpreting and Communication Forum Good Practice Guidelines
- People with Communication Support Needs in the Scottish Criminal Justice System: Practice Guide for Support Staff
- Arrest referral – Targeted SNSA template
- Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) standards: access, choice, support
- Distress Brief Intervention pilot programme: evaluation
- Prevention of homelessness duties: consultation analysis
- National Trauma Training Programme
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Theory of change

A sample logic model setting out the theory of change for support in police custody has been produced by CJS (in consultation with national policy colleagues). Partners should adapt the logic model to reflect any additional partner activities and outcomes that require to be a focus to meet the needs of the local population and to realise the local vision.

National improvement actions

The strategy delivery plan, published by the Scottish Government, expands on the strategy by setting out a number of tangible, time-limited deliverables, detailing exactly what work will be undertaken to drive improvement nationally towards the national outcomes. These activities form an important part of the theory of change for meeting national outcomes and have therefore been included in the logic models (identifiable in brackets by the action number from the delivery plan). Progress towards the deliverables will be monitored by a Community Justice Programme Board which brings together community justice partners at a national level. Keeping up to date with the progress of these activities

will be important in the evaluation of your current delivery as some local improvements may be dependent on national improvement progress.

Step 3 - Evaluate your current delivery

Once the local logic model is complete you will need to identify how you are going to tell whether the model works as predicted. To do this, partners should consider **each activity** identified in the logic model and discuss whether, and how, it happens in practice. Formulating some questions to ask relevant partners as part of this process is a powerful way of teasing out the facilitators and barriers to local delivery. These are known as evaluation questions.

Ask evaluation questions

A simple data collection plan should be prepared and completed as part of this step. Consider each activity from the logic model and think about what you might want to know, from whom, about how the activity is working in practice. For example:

Activity from Logic Model	Question For	Question(s)
Provide substance use, and other support needs, screening services (e.g. 'arrest referral') (third sector)	Third sector	Who commissions your service and what are you commissioned to target in terms of support needs (i.e. just substance use or a range of support needs)? Do you receive regular referrals from Police and are referrals appropriate? How easy is it to share information with treatment providers?
	Police Scotland	Is there good information sharing between yourselves and the third sector service? Are there established procedures in place to gain informed consent for referral to the third sector service? How are arrangements made for the third sector service to speak to the individual and are there any practical difficulties facilitating this?
	Individuals	Were you clear that referral to the third sector service was voluntary and not part of the justice process? Were you offered referral to the third sector service at an appropriate time and place?

Individual sessions with partners and stakeholders to ask questions and collect information about how the activities are carried out can be a good way of establishing the realities of local delivery. It is also important to talk to partners collectively to ensure the delivery of support in police custody is considered as a whole system and to test whether the predicted outcomes are being achieved. A facilitated workshop can be an effective way of doing this.

Set specific indicators

In addition to formulating evaluation questions, partners should identify specific indicators that will measure or signal whether the logic model is or isn't working as expected. Often, the demographic and needs data that you collected in the 'know your population' step of the process will be helpful. As a minimum, partners should consider using the indicators specific to providing support in police custody outlined in the framework, the improvement tool and the self-evaluation guide:

Source	Indicator
Performance framework	Number of referrals from custody centres
Improvement tool	There is an effective relationship between community justice partners, Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs) and police custody centre for the local population
	Referral pathways are in place from police custody centre for the local population
Self-evaluation guide[3]	Improving the life chances and outcomes of people with living experience of community justice (quality indicator 1.1)
	Impact on people accused or convicted of offences (quality indicator 2.1)

Summarise the evidence

You should now have a range of quantitative and qualitative data and information available about how support is delivered to people within police custody locally. What can be said (either conclusively or hypothetically) about support in police custody for people of the local area? What inferences or conclusions can be made from the data and information?

To help structure this step it might be helpful to prepare an outcome progress report that can be shared and reviewed by partners collectively. The report should summarise what has been established in the steps of this process, particularly:

- Information about the **use and prevalence** of police custody over time.
  - ✓ Is the use of police custody increasing or decreasing over time?
  - ✓ Through which custody centres are people from the local area being processed?
  - ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

- Information about the local **population** receiving support in police custody.
  - ✓ What is known about their demographics and does this necessitate targeted interventions?
  - ✓ Are there any trends apparent?
  - ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

---

[3] These quality indicators have been identified by the Care Inspectorate as particularly relevant in the assessment of support in police custody delivery. However, this is not definitive and the Care Inspectorate would urge partners to promote flexibility in the use of other quality indicators to evaluate impact.

- The **needs** of the population.
  - ✓ What is known about the needs of people in police custody?
  - ✓ Are there any trends apparent?
  - ✓ Does this necessitate accelerated pathways into certain services?
  - ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

- Support **services**.
  - ✓ What is known about the accessibility of support services for people in police custody?
  - ✓ Based on the needs profile, which services are particularly relevant in onward referral (for example substance use, mental and physical health, housing, financial inclusion)?
  - ✓ Are custody centres aware of the local service provision?
  - ✓ Are there locally commissioned support services such as arrest referral, and what is the scope of their support offer?
  - ✓ Are there any established fast-track pathways into treatment or support services?
  - ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

- The **local vision** for supporting people in police custody.
  - ✓ What does good support in police custody for the local population look like?
  - ✓ Has a logic model been developed that clearly sets out the process by which the outcome will be achieved for the local population?
  - ✓ Does the logic model set out who the crucial partners are and the crucial activities they will carry out to meet the outcome?
  - ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

- An **evaluation** of current support in police custody.
  - ✓ How did partners, stakeholders and individuals answer the evaluation questions?
  - ✓ What have you learned about how the activities outlined in the logic model are, or are not, working in practice?
  - ✓ Where are the strengths in delivery and where are the main areas that need improvement?
  - ✓ What did the specific indicators tell you about local delivery?
  - ✓ Are you confident from the information and data collected that there is an effective interface between custody centres and local service provision?
  - ✓ Is information shared safely and in a timely manner between partners?
  - ✓ Is there good awareness across partners of the local availability and capacity to deliver support in police custody?
  - ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

Assess progress towards the outcome

The conclusion of the outcome progress report should be a collective agreement by partners as to whether the local area is meeting, or how close the local area is to meeting, the national outcome of

"more people in police custody receive support to address their needs". If the outcome is not being met, the conclusion should clearly state why and list the required improvements. If your theory of change is correct, most of the improvement activity should link directly to the activities outlined in the local logic model. It is important to note that identified gaps in data and information may also form an improvement action.

Step 4 - Decide whether the outcome will be a priority for action

The assessment of whether this outcome will be a priority for action in the CJOIP will include consideration of the other outcome progress reports for both national and local outcomes.

This step involves putting the outcome progress reports in a hierarchical order according to how close or far away from being met the local and national outcomes are assessed to be. Prioritisation of the outcome improvement reports is best done as a collective activity by partners. A facilitated workshop can be an effective way of doing this.

There are a number of techniques that partners can use to aid this step.

Impact vs effort matrix

An impact versus effort matrix is a simple tool that can help generate conversation and aid partners in their decision making regarding prioritisation.

The axes for the matrix can be set according to what will be the most helpful to make an informed choice regarding prioritisation. As well as impact and effort, as shown in the example, you might consider changing the axes to importance versus urgency, cost versus benefit or risk versus reward.
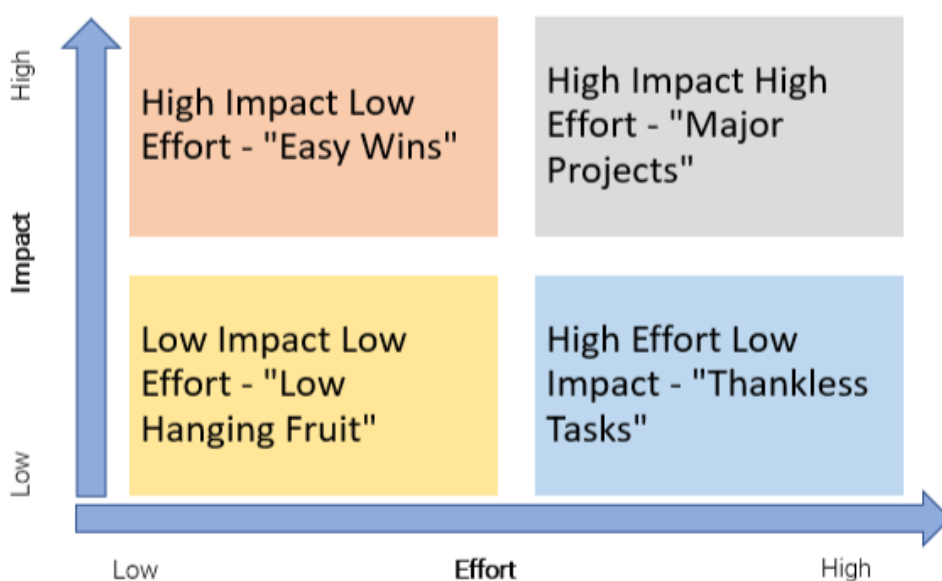
Scoring criteria

Developing a scoring criteria is another method that can be helpful in prioritising the outcomes. This involves partners assigning a score for each identified improvement activity across a range of criteria. For example:

Outcome	Imp activity	Critical to meeting standards	Strategic value	Ease	Benefit to the individual	Cost	Resource impact	Overall priority
More people in police custody receive support to address their needs	Imp activity 1	4	1	3	3	5	2	3
	Imp activity 2	5	2	4	4	4	5	4
	Imp activity 3	1	1	5	1	3	4	2.5
								3.2

For this table, you could set the following priority ratings:

Critical to meeting standards?	Is the improvement activity crucial to ensure effective support in police custody?	1 = Critical	5 = Not critical
Strategic Value?	Is the improvement activity important to your overall strategy?	1 = Highly important	5 = Not important
Ease?	Will the improvement activity be fairly easy to complete?	1 = Very easy	5 = Very difficult
Benefit to the individual?	Will the improvement activity likely yield significant benefit to the individual?	1 = Highly likely	5 = Not likely
Cost?	Will the improvement activity likely cost a lot?	1 = Low cost	5 = High cost
Resource impact?	Will the improvement activity have a great impact on CJP resource?	1 = Low impact	5 = High impact
Overall priority:	Priority for each individual improvement activity is the average score of all five criteria. Total priority for the outcome is the sum of all overall priority scores, divided by the number of improvement activities.		

Note: The lower the score the higher the improvement activity and overall outcome priority.

There are many other techniques that can be used to aid prioritisation.

Narrative assessment for the CJOIP

At the end of the process, partners should use the outcome progress report to clearly articulate:

- whether the support in police custody outcome is being achieved in the area
- if not, how near the outcome is to being achieved
- whether the outcome requires to be a priority for action
- the action partners intend to take to achieve, or maintain achievement, of the outcome.

This narrative assessment should be included in the CJOIP.

Support in police custody - sample logic model

National Goal / Priority	Inputs	Activities – What we do					National Outcome

National Goal / Priority

What we want to achieve

Over the duration of the National Strategy community justice partners will:

Improve the identification of underlying needs and the delivery of support following arrest by ensuring the provision of person-centred care within police custody and building upon referral opportunities to services including substance use and mental health services.

Inputs

What we invest

Workforce

Staff training

Data

Information sharing processes

National standards and guidance

Legislation

Activities – What we do

Police Scotland

Screen for vulnerabilities within custody centres.

Work with local authority area partners to establish what community services are available for those in police custody.

Make referrals to community based support services.

Establish effective information sharing arrangements with community partners, including the provision of needs and referrals data and information.

Establish effective information sharing arrangements with Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service regarding individual's needs and referrals.

Make arrangements for people to access medical care and assistance by an NHS health care provider (doctor, nurse, paramedic).

Arrange access to legal representatives.

Arrange access to appropriate adult services.

Facilitate access to people in police custody by local community partners (for purpose of screening for supports needs such as substance use, mental health and housing).

Police Scotland (cont...)

Promote best practice and work to drive an increase in referrals from police custody into support for mental health and wellbeing, addiction and other relevant services (action 4).

Ensure that the number of custody support intervention champions is maintained or increases, and they all have access to training on Trauma Informed Practice and Motivational Interviewing. This training should subsequently be rolled out to all custody staff (action 6).

Local Authority

Provide specialist support when requested (social work may require to attend police custody).

Train appropriate adults.

Provide appropriate adult services.

Commission services for substance use screening (sometimes known as 'arrest referral').

Commission services for mental health screening (sometimes known as 'community triage').

Commission services for housing screening ('ask and act' duty).

Make referrals to support services.

Work with Police Scotland to establish availability of community services.

Establish effective information sharing arrangements with Police Scotland custody centres.

Health

Work with Police Scotland to respond to mental health and other medical emergencies.

Improve consistency across the country in the access to 24/7 specialist mental health assessments including in in custody centres (action 5).

Implement Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards 1-5 in justice settings (action 7).

Third Sector

Provide substance use, and other support needs, screening services (e.g. 'arrest referral').

Provide specialist support as requested.

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

Liaise with justice social work and Police Scotland and provide needs information to judiciary.

Scottish Legal Aid Board

Manage and monitor the Solicitor Contact Line.

Assess applications for legal aid in criminal cases.

National Outcome

What we ultimately want to achieve

More people in police custody receive support to address their needs