Achieving Community Justice Outcomes

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

National Outcome: More people across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice

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:

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

> ***"More people across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice."***

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 the national outcome "***more people across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice***."
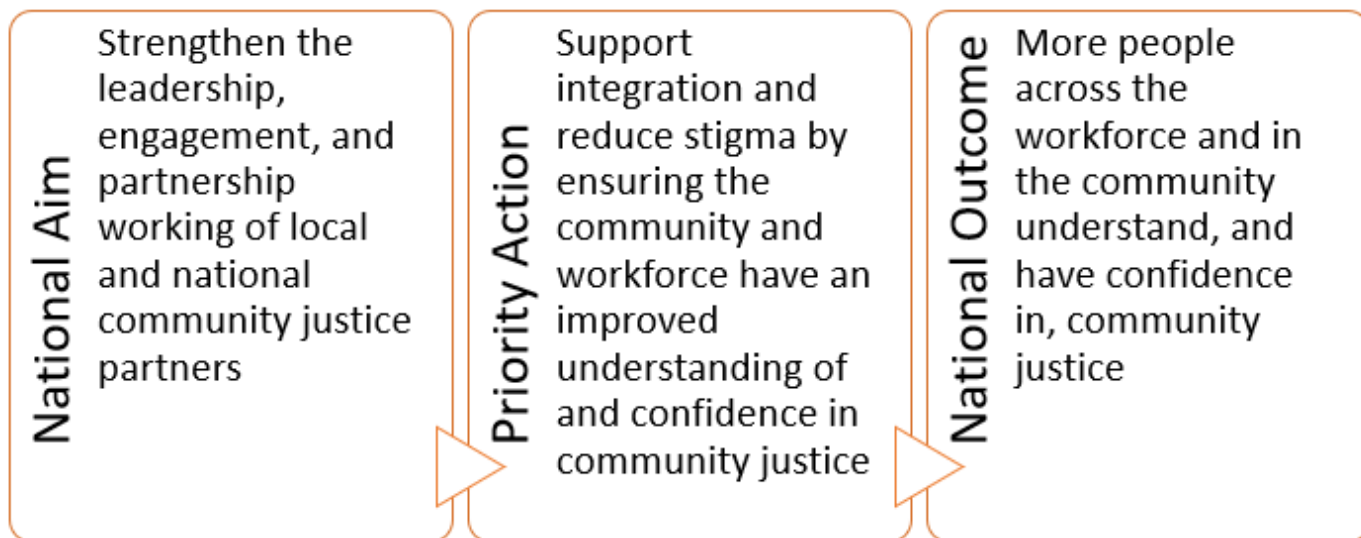
Local Outcomes

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: "Partners should work to improve the visibility of community justice and ensure it is positioned as an important part of the local and national justice landscape. Specifically, partners should work collaboratively to improve understanding and confidence in community justice amongst the Scottish public and the local justice workforce. Senior leaders of community justice partners, in particular, should seek to champion community justice within their organisations and across community planning. In particular, they should clearly communicate what their organisation is seeking to deliver towards the achievement of the community justice priority actions. Partners should ensure their communications are trauma-informed, utilise the National Standards for Community Engagement and the resources provided by Community Justice Scotland. Community Justice Scotland have a statutory duty to promote public understanding of community justice and the benefits associated with it. Partners can then build on this foundation to shift attitudes and increase support for community justice as an approach, for example through communicating the benefits of unpaid work to local communities. This can in turn support integration and reduce stigma, leading to improved community justice outcomes."

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 the understanding of community justice are:

National Aim	Priority Action	National Outcome
Strengthen the leadership, engagement, and partnership working of local and national community justice partners	Support integration and reduce stigma by ensuring the community and workforce have an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice	More people across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice

Step 1 - Know your population

Strategic planning information about the understanding and confidence in community justice in the local area 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.

Data and intelligence + Knowledge and wisdom from practitioners + Academic and practitioner-led research + Experience and wisdom from people experiencing community justice = Evidence enriched outcome improvement planning

To understand more about the population that need to be targeted to ensure understanding and confidence in community justice in your local area, you will need to find out as much as you can about who the people are and what the current level of understanding and confidence about community justice is.

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[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

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".

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 the people who require to have an understanding of, and confidence in, community justice and where possible give insights into their characteristics.

Sources of data for the demographic data profile will vary. Some data will be national, 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, possible sources of data and information received. An example of how a data collection plan for improving understanding and confidence in community justice might look is provided:

Sample questions – answered with quantitative data (possible sources provided in brackets)
How many people live in the local area? (National Records for Scotland)
How many people are experiencing disadvantage across different aspects of their lives in the local area (and what are those disadvantages)? (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation)

Sample questions – answered with qualitative data sourced from local workforce and people with living experience
What can the local area locality plans tell us about the people living in our area?
Which organisations host the local community justice workforce?

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.).

Any strategic planning data and place-based data and information available from local community planning partners would be particularly useful.

Using the information gleaned from your data collection plan you should be able to describe at a high level who is in the local community and who is in the community justice workforce in the local area. Data that is able to be broken down into specific characteristics should enable some insight into 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 you need to target to raise understanding of and confidence in community justice, it will be important to try and understand what their needs are.

Some questions that you may wish to ask stakeholders, and source data for, are provided:

Sample questions – answered with quantitative data (possible sources provided in brackets)
What percentage of people agree that people should help their community as part of a community sentence rather than spend a few months in prison for a minor offence? (National indicator – provided annually by JAS)
What percentage of people agree that people serving community sentences should be given support such as help with addiction or mental health problems, or numeracy or literacy difficulties, to reduce the likelihood of them committing more crime in the future? (Scottish Crime and Justice Survey)
What is the comparative use of custodial and community disposals? (National indicator – provided annually by JAS)

Sample questions – answered with qualitative data sourced from local workforce and people with living experience
What do we know about the local community's understanding of community justice?
Are local people aware of community justice services and projects in their local community?

Alongside requesting this data and information, it is important to talk to communities and the community justice workforce about what they need to know to build their confidence and understanding.

Understanding Services

A services profile provides an overview of the services and activities that take place in your local area to improve the understanding and confidence in community justice.

Having a shared understanding of the local services and activities that deliver and raise awareness of community justice will be important when establishing understanding and confidence.

Making the judiciary aware of local service provision for people completing community sentences is particularly important to instil confidence in their use. Local information will already be available for this purpose via the [Community Support Services Across Scotland](#) tool published on the CJS website.

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 increasing understanding and confidence in community justice. For example, the demographic data profile may reveal trends in age or gender that require a specific focus in communication activity. Similarly, the needs data profile may highlight specific gaps in knowledge and understanding that require particular focus. The services profile may reveal gaps and/or duplication in services and partner activities designed to increase understanding and confidence in community justice.

Step 2 - Document the local vision

This step in the process requires partners to collectively define what good communication activity looks like for the public and community justice workforce in the local area. 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:

- [Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016](#)
- [Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015](#)
- [Talking About Community Justice - Framing Toolkit](#)
- [National Standards for Community Engagement](#)
- [How to Write a Communications Strategy](#)
- [Communications Insight: Attitudes and Perceptions to Community Justice in 2021](#)
- [A Strategy to Address the Stigmatisation of People and Communities Affected by Drug Use](#)
- [See Me: End mental health discrimination](#)
- [Second Chancers](#)

Theory of change

A [sample logic model](#) setting out the theory of change for improving understanding and confidence in community justice across the public and workforce 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
Develop community justice communication, engagement and participation plans.	Community Justice Partnership	Is there a communications plan for the Community Justice Partnership? Who is the lead partner in the implementation of the communications plan? Are there clear responsibilities within the plan for community justice partners? Are the target populations (public, workforce etc.) clearly understood and articulated within the plan? Is there a clear baseline for measuring the progress of understanding and confidence within the target populations?
	Community Planning Partnership	Is raising awareness and understanding of community justice a shared outcome in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan?

		How is community justice promoted within Community Planning Partnership communication and engagement activity?

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 communication, engagement and participation activity 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 building understanding and confidence in the framework, the improvement tool and the self-evaluation guide:

Source	Indicator
Performance framework	Percentage of people who agree that people should help their community as part of a community sentence rather than spend a few months in prison for a minor offence
Improvement tool	Community justice partner contribution to joint activity across policy areas to tackle stigma
	Impact of activities undertaken to improve understanding and confidence across the workforce and the community
Self-evaluation guide[3]	Impact on the community (quality indicator 4.1)
	Staff development and support (quality indicator 7.2)

Summarise the evidence

You should now have a range of quantitative and qualitative data and information available about how understanding and confidence in community justice is delivered locally. What can be said (either conclusively or hypothetically) about the delivery of activity to support this outcome in 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 target **populations**.

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[3] These quality indicators have been identified by the Care Inspectorate as particularly relevant in the assessment of the Understanding and confidence in community justice 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.

- ✓ What is known about their demographics and does this necessitate targeted communication activities?
- ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

- The **needs** of those populations.
  - ✓ What is known about where the knowledge and confidence gaps lie?
  - ✓ What does local profile data and information tell you about sentencing practice and the shift in balance between custody and community?
  - ✓ What does community and workforce survey data and information reveal about what people do or do not understand about community justice locally?
  - ✓ Are there any trends apparent?
  - ✓ Does this necessitate targeted communications activity?
  - ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

- Communication **services** and activity.
  - ✓ What is known about the awareness of and confidence in local community justice services?
  - ✓ Based on the needs profile, are there any communication activities that require to be prioritised for target populations?
  - ✓ Is communications activity across strategic partnerships shared and joined up to maximise its impact?
  - ✓ Are there any gaps in the information and how can this be rectified for the future?

- The **local vision** for increasing understanding and confidence in community justice.
  - ✓ What does good communication, participation and engagement look like locally?
  - ✓ Has a logic model been developed that clearly sets out the process by which the outcome will be achieved for the local populations?
  - ✓ 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 activity to meet the outcome.
  - ✓ 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?
  - ✓ Do partners have clear (and shared) roles and responsibilities for communication, engagement and participation?
  - ✓ Are community justice communication plans strategic?
  - ✓ Are you able to systematically measure the impact of the communication plan activities?
  - ✓ Are partners making good use of national resources such as the Community Justice Scotland communications toolkit?
  - ✓ 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 across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice". 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.
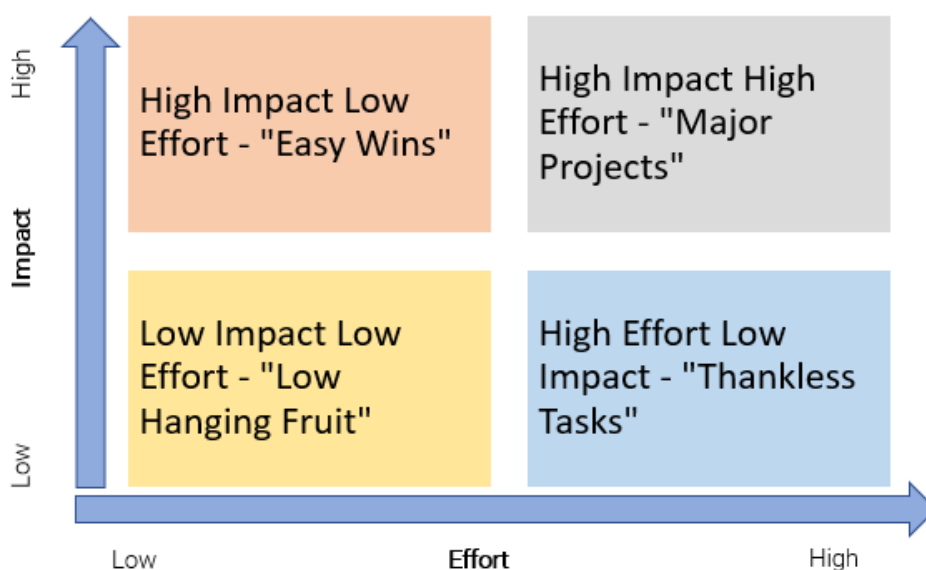
Scoring criteria

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 (average)
More people across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice	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 local communication activity is effective?	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 increasing understanding and confidence in community justice 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 they intend to take to achieve, or maintain achievement, of the outcome.

This narrative assessment should be included in the CJOIP.

Understanding and confidence in community justice - sample logic model

National Goal / Priority	Inputs	Activities – What we do				National Outcome
		Local Authority Strategic Partnerships (including CJPs, CPPs, ADPs, MAPPA, GBV, CSPs, ASPs, LEPs)	**Local Authority Strategic Partnerships (Cont.)**	**Community Justice Scotland**	**Third Sector**	
What we want to achieve Over the duration of the National Strategy community justice partners will: Support integration and reduce stigma by ensuring the community and workforce have an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice	**What we invest** Workforce Staff training Data Information sharing processes National standards and guidance Legislation	Raise awareness of community justice within communities. Develop community justice communication, engagement and participation plans. Ensure the embedding of community engagement standards in communication activity. Ensure statutory partners reflect the engagement standards within their own organisations. Collectively decide roles and responsibilities for engaging the public and the workforce. Ensure data collection mechanisms are in place to evaluate public and workforce understanding and confidence. Ensure data collection mechanisms are in place to gather the views of people with lived experience experiencing stigma. Ensure information about how to contact local community justice partners is promoted and accessible.	Adopt an 'ambassadorial' position for community justice inside and outside of their own department or organisation. Use effective communication methods and tools which are backed up by robust evidence. Coordinate updates to the Community Support Services Tool resource for the judiciary. Carry out engagement activity and prepare participation statements as part of CJOIP development.	Provide tools to support communication activity locally. Implement national campaigns to raise awareness and understanding of community justice. Work to increase public understanding about community justice and build confidence in it as an effective sentencing option. Keep Scottish Ministers up-to-date with the performance of community justice provision across Scotland. Review progress towards community justice outcomes across Scotland annually. Provide a summary of local authority Community Payback Order reports annually. Work to ensure that partners and the judiciary can more effectively access information on all relevant available services in each Local Authority area (action 40). Ensure the continued awareness raising and promotion of the National Strategy for Community Justice (action 41).	Raise awareness of community justice within communities. Ensure the embedding of community engagement standards in communication activity. Ensure data collection mechanisms are in place to gather the views of people with lived experience experiencing stigma. Ensure information about how to contact local community justice partners is promoted and accessible.	**What we ultimately want to achieve** More people across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice