



# **AGENDA ITEM**

**6**

## **Community Justice Outcomes & Improvement Plan 2017-20**

**Falkirk Council**

**Title:** Community Justice Outcomes and Improvement Plan 2017-20

**Meeting:** Executive

**Date:** 21 February 2017

**Submitted By:** Director of Children's Services

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the transition to the new community justice arrangements.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Executive notes the progress in developing a draft community justice outcomes improvement plan which will be presented to the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Strategic Board for final signoff in March 2017.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Community Justice Partnership in Falkirk was established early in 2016 in response to the Community Justice (Scotland) Act; which places a duty on partners to share information, provide advice and assistance to each other, and co-ordinate and fund activities together. The Community Justice Partnership aims to secure better outcomes for people with convictions, victims and witnesses, families and communities.
- 3.2 The community justice strategy, developed by the Scottish Government, sets out the vision for community justice in Scotland as a safer, fairer and more inclusive nation where we prevent and reduce further offending by addressing its underlying causes; and safely and effectively manage and support those who have committed offences to help them reintegrate into the community and realise their potential for the benefit of all citizens.
- 3.3 This vision will be achieved by prioritising action in the following areas;
- improved community understanding and participation;
  - strategic planning and partnership working;
  - effective use of evidence-based interventions; and
  - equal access to services.

- 3.4 Each local authority area is required to publish a community justice outcomes improvement plan by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.
- 3.5 The Falkirk Community Justice Partnership has worked with its stakeholders to assess what we currently do to meet these priorities, what current practice we value and think we can do better in partnership, and new areas of activity that will help us to meet these priorities together. We have called this our baseline assessment.
- 3.6 The baseline assessment reflects the profile and context of the Falkirk area in relation to population, gender, age, ethnicity, deprivation factors, employment, housing, health and crime. The baseline assessment also looks at the evidence we have in terms of how far along we are in meeting the priorities set out in the national strategy.
- 3.7 The baseline assessment forms the evidence base for our draft community justice outcomes improvement plan, which will be presented to the Community Planning Partnership's Strategic Board for sign off in March 2017.
- 3.8 The draft outcomes improvement plan outlines six strategic pathways, or themes, emerging from our baseline assessment. Each pathway will be supported by its own project plan and logic model and each will be led by a designated statutory partner.
- 3.9 The main objectives within each strategic pathway are described in the following sections.

- **Information Sharing, Learning and Development**

We want to establish a consistent approach to measuring impact and change for an individual in their journey through and beyond the criminal justice system. We want to minimise the number of times someone has to "tell their story" when accessing services by sharing relevant information at the appropriate time in a safe way. Where relevant, we want to facilitate co-location with access to the right IT recording systems.

Following the publication of serious case reviews and community justice service evaluations, partners working within this pathway will be tasked with identifying implications and learning relevant to our service delivery. They will also be tasked with development and delivery of cross partner training.

- **Community Justice Policy Development**

Within this strategic pathway, partners will work on completing the community justice document set. For example, we will need to establish a participation strategy a communication strategy setting out how we intend to build awareness and knowledge of community justice and challenge stigma.

Partners working within this pathway will assess the impact of national and other policy developments on the work of the Community Justice Partnership.

- **Relationship and Making Connections**

Research and feedback from our service users tell us that isolation, boredom and a lack of constructive activities during leisure time increases their risk of re-offending and prevents them from moving on with their lives. Victims and families also tell us that they can feel isolated and disconnected from their communities at points during their journey through the criminal justice system.

Work within this strategic pathway will look to strengthen support for people affected by community justice and develop more opportunities for people to make connections within their communities through volunteering. We also want to learn more about the role of mentoring in reducing the risk of reoffending. Our third sector partners will be crucial to our success in this pathway.

- **Service Mapping and Evaluation**

Many public, private and voluntary bodies and individuals are involved in the delivery of community justice services. We want to better understand the overall picture in Falkirk and make sure people have access to the support they need when they need it. Equally important, we want to make sure that the services we deliver address the range and diversity of needs people present.

The work within this strategic pathway will look to establish a comprehensive service provision map and programme of evaluation. We will then compare what our baseline assessment tells us about what people's needs are with what is actually being delivered. This should identify any duplication or gaps in our service delivery.

- **Supporting Transitions**

We want to work together to effectively manage person-centred transitions where the needs of individuals are robustly assessed and addressed. The work within this strategic pathway will focus on the points in someone's journey where access to the right services and support is most critical; such as the transition from youth services to adult services, and for those moving from custody back into the community.

- **Unpaid Work**

The unpaid work element of community payback orders deliver tangible benefits to communities by making individuals pay back for the damage caused by their crimes. In Falkirk, we have worked closely with local Sheriffs to make sure that developing skills and addressing need is also integral in the delivery of unpaid work requirements.

We already work closely with our communities to identify projects and tasks that people on unpaid work orders can do to benefit the local area. Within this strategic pathway we want to develop that approach even further by assertively targeting geographical areas most affected by crime.

## **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 We have consulted with a wide range of partners and stakeholders including people with convictions, victims and witnesses, our communities, the third sector and our statutory partners. The draft community justice outcomes improvement plan includes a full participation statement.

## **5. Implications**

### **Financial**

- 5.1 The Scottish Government have recently confirmed a third year of transition funding for 2017/18. The funding is intended to provide partners with sufficient time to take on their community justice role as well as make arrangements amongst key partners to share capacity and resources for this work going forward. A number of Community Justice Partners are experiencing a reduction in funding, including Criminal Justice Service. There will be financial implications in the delivery of this plan, particularly if the work to map services highlights gaps in provision.

### **Resources**

- 5.2 The Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 places a duty on statutory partners to share information, provide advice and assistance to each other, and to co-ordinate and fund activities together. The practical application of this will be determined through the development of the six strategic pathways outlined in this report.

### **Legal**

- 5.3 The publication of the Falkirk community justice outcomes improvement plan is a requirement of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016.

### **Risk**

- 5.4 If we fail to publish an outcomes improvement plan then we will not fulfil the requirements of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 and will be accountable to Scottish Ministers.

### **Equalities**

- 5.5 The draft community justice outcomes improvement plan includes an equalities impact assessment. The plan has either a positive or neutral impact on groups with protected characteristics.

### **Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 5.6 Nil.

## **6. Conclusions**

- 6.1 The Falkirk Community Justice Partnership has completed its baseline assessment which provides the evidence base for the draft community justice outcomes improvement plan.

- 6.2 The community justice outcomes improvement plan is currently being drafted and includes six strategic pathways. Each pathway will be led by a statutory partner and each will be supported by its own project plan and logic model.
- 6.3 The baseline assessment has been presented to the Community Planning Partnership's Public Protection Chief Officers Group and the final draft of the outcomes improvement plan will be presented to the Community Planning Partnership's Strategic Board for sign off in March 2017.
- 6.4 The Falkirk community justice outcomes improvement plan will be published on the community justice page of the Falkirk Council website on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

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Director of Children's Services

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**Date** 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017

## **APPENDICES**

None

### **List of Background Papers:**

Falkirk Community Justice Partnership Baseline Assessment, August 2016