

Falkirk Community Justice Partnership Annual Report of Activity



**2019 -
2020**

1. Introduction

The Falkirk Community Justice Partnership want to prevent and reduce further offending by addressing its underlying causes. We want to safely and effectively manage and support those who have committed offences to help them to (re)integrate into the community and realise their potential for the benefit of all citizens. We want to ensure outcomes/interventions for those who have committed an offence are proportionate and maximise opportunities for rehabilitation and desistance from crime.

The Partnership's pledge to secure better outcomes for people with convictions, victims and witnesses, families and communities in Falkirk is set out within a Community Justice Outcome's Improvement Plan. The current plan spans 2020-2023, and is available for view on the [Falkirk Council website](#).

The following report represents a summary of progress made towards achieving community justice outcomes in Falkirk, within the reporting year 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

An activity template is also submitted annually to the national body, Community Justice Scotland, in accordance with statutory requirements outlined within the Community Justice Act (2016). For an overview of community justice activity across Scotland, a national Annual Report is prepared and published by Community Justice Scotland on their [website](#).

2. Local governance arrangements

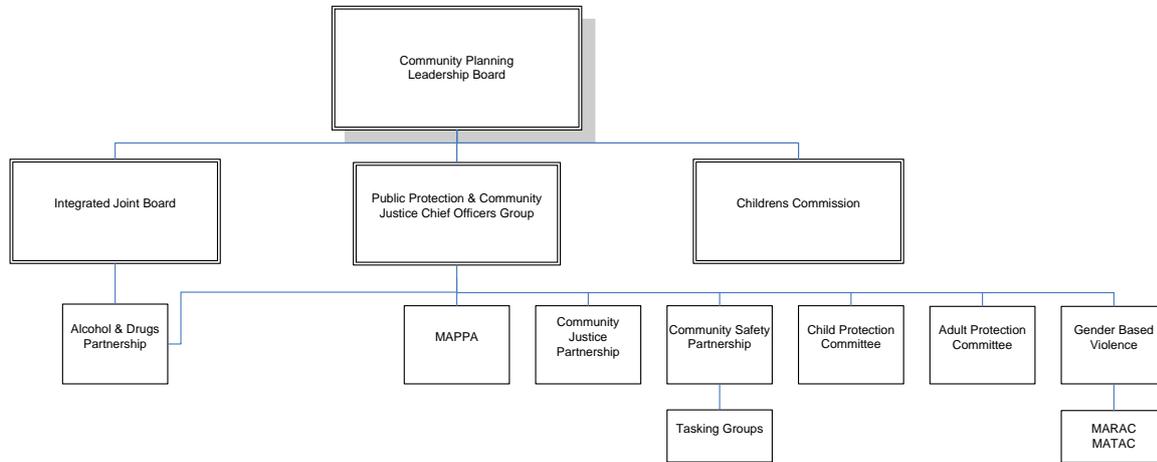
The Falkirk Community Justice Partnership consists of statutory partners – typically represented at senior officer level to ensure that they are able to provide strategic leadership, make decisions and commit resources necessary to the work of the Partnership. In the case of the local authority, a range of relevant services are represented such as Justice Services (formerly Criminal Justice Social Work), Housing, Adult Social Work, Children's services and the CPP. The third sector are represented at partnership meetings by CVS, Falkirk and District's Third Sector Interface.

Understanding of purpose and duties is maintained by the Community Justice Partnership Terms of Reference. Partnership meetings are typically held on a quarterly basis, however meetings were held more frequently in 2019/20, following recommendation during self-evaluation that this would be helpful in delivering agreed improvement actions and preparation of a revised CJOIP 2020-23. The partnership has been chaired by the Justice Service Manager since September 2018. Chairing arrangements are formally reviewed on a biennial basis.

A Safer Communities Forum is led by the Senior Manager of Cyrenians and supported by CVS Falkirk with a view to bringing together third sector organisations and community groups who have role in promoting safety and justice. An invitation to these meetings is extended to the Community Justice Coordinator, along with other statutory community justice partners, to facilitate direct engagement with relevant non-statutory agencies. The forum meetings allow for an opportunity to raise attention to, and seek involvement in, core partnership activity as well as respond to the needs of third sector agencies with a stake in community justice.

Where appropriate, the Community Justice Partnership establishes sub-groups to carry out specific pieces of work. The focus and membership of each sub group are agreed by the Partnership and the Chair of the sub group is responsible for feeding back progress to the Community Justice Partnership.

Partnership progress and issues are reported in to the Public Protection Chief Officers Group, who in turn have a direct reporting line into the Community Planning Leadership Board. This structure is shown below:



3. Activity highlights

Community payback contributions to the ongoing development in Dollar Park

Justice Services have worked with Cyrenians in the regeneration and ongoing maintenance of the walled garden set in the grounds of Dollar Park. The Walled Garden offers a range of features including a sensory garden, picnic area, bandstand and a pond. It was brought to life by individuals undertaking unpaid work as part of their Community Payback Order, alongside the third, public and private sectors and community groups.

The project provides those on an unpaid work order with an opportunity to build skills that will improve their future employability as well as a chance to repair harm and take pride in building something positive within the community. It also aims to strengthen community ties and raise awareness and understanding of the socioeconomic benefits of Community Payback Orders, thus helping to improve public trust in community based sentences.

Unpaid work teams have assisted in the growing plan, gardening maintenance and weddings and events held within the Walled Garden and it is naturally something that

both they and the community can be proud of. There are several instances of individuals coming back to the garden with their families to show what they have achieved and there has been an increase in people wanting to come back to volunteer.

The Floral Clock in Dollar Park was reinstated in 2019, developed in partnership with Falkirk Rotary, Friends of Dollar Park, Cyrenians and Falkirk Justice Services. The concept came from an event held by Cyrenians in the Walled Garden, where the public fed back that this was something they would like to see in the community. The partnership aim was to raise profile and pull resources and skills for the project. Individuals carrying out unpaid work were upskilled by involving them in the planning, growing and planting of the clock. The project received positive media attention from the local paper and those involved delivered a number of talks to small community groups, raising awareness of the work that was being carried out.

Initiatives to increase engagement with the local third sector and communities

In 2019, consultation was carried out with a range of community justice stakeholders to better our understanding of service needs and strengths within the Falkirk area, as well as awareness of local community justice improvement activity. Consultees included residents of the Falkirk local authority area, the wider workforce of statutory partner agencies, third sector agencies, Victims (advocated by proxy by Victim Support Scotland Central Branch) and families affected by imprisonment. Consultation themes were centred on awareness of community justice, priority support needs, addressing stigma, availability of support and community payback.

Further, Falkirk Community Justice Partnership has worked closely with third sector partners since its inception in 2017. CVS Falkirk, the local third sector interface, are listed as partners in the Falkirk Community Justice Plan, additionally the third sector representative and Chair of Safer Communities Forum attends Falkirk Community Justice Partnership meetings and events.

The Safer Communities Forum provides an arena for discussion and debate for representatives from a range of third sector organisations including community groups, local organisations and national charities who operate in the Falkirk area, along with our statutory partners; Fire and Rescue Service, Police and Falkirk Community Justice

Partnership Co-ordinator. The forum is used as a two way vehicle for engagement between Falkirk's third sector, Community Justice Partnership and wider Community Planning Partnership.

We have seen real progress this year with Falkirk Community Justice Partnership actively engaging with Safer Communities forum to consult on new Community Justice Outcomes Plan for 2020 – 2023. This has been done through attendance at Safer Communities forum, sharing consultation via CVS Falkirk's e-bulletin and meeting with local third sector groups to hold focus sessions. Following the initial consultation exercise in Oct/Nov 2019, Falkirk's Community Justice Co-ordinator attended the first Safer Communities forum of 2020 to present proposed activities and seek feedback to inform discussion with Falkirk Community Justice Partnership. We see this this approach as a great opportunity for statutory partners to encourage the third sector to actively contribute to partnership working by helping to shape and influence plans.

Quote from the Forum Chair: "there is real value in this forum and effective partnership working, with regular attendance and membership we are in a good position to take things forward in the third sector"

Self-evaluation to improve partnership working

The partnership have adopted a programme of self evaluation, starting with quality indicators felt to be of highest priority at this stage. In This included "QIM 6.2 planning and delivering services in a collaborative way" from the Care Inspectorate's Guide to Self Evaluation.

Community justice partners participated in an initial consultation (phase 1) to inform self-evaluation. This involved providing supporting evidence of good practice from the point of view of their agency and areas of development.

The consultation was followed by a Self-Evaluation Development Session, which was well attended by a range of statutory community justice partners as well as representatives from the third sector. Colleagues from Community Justice Scotland Improvement Team were in attendance to provide updates from a national perspective. As they had also been present at supported and validated self-evaluation sessions in other areas,

Community Justice Scotland played a facilitative role in group discussions to assist partners in a thorough assessment of our strengths and weaknesses.

This activity helped to bring a focus to how we can better leverage our resources and was instrumental in a bid to secure funding for the Tackling Inequalities & Improving Outcomes (TIIO) project – a Community Justice Partnership project which aims to reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of people in the criminal justice system. It also helped to identify and resolve barriers for partner engagement, resulting in an increased meeting schedule in 2019 and a new model for engagement with the third sector.

Enhancing our knowledge base

A Strategic Needs and Strengths Assessment was carried out in 2019 with a view to informing the planning process. It draws upon local and national data and information, using the “Complex Needs to Address” diagram within the National Strategy for Community Justice as a basis of factors that affect the likelihood of offending and reoffending.

An initial service mapping exercise was carried out to identify the range of services available to those in the Falkirk area, referral pathways and potential barriers.

Findings from service user outcomes tools, including client exit questionnaires and available feedback from service evaluations, were drawn and analysed to reflect the voice of lived experience. Evidence was also drawn from the Hard Edges Scotland Report published in 2019.

The core purpose of the Strategic Strengths and Needs Assessment was to draw together evidence to give an overview of current practice and experience across the Falkirk area within community justice; relevant to each nationally determined outcome.

The processes of preparing a Strategic Strengths and Needs Assessment resulted in a comprehensive document, helping to increase partnership understanding of assets in Falkirk and areas for improvement, This exercise underpinned the revised Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan 2020-2023.

Re-establishment of TIIO

Following a hiatus, the Tackling Inequalities, Improving Outcomes (TIIO) Project was re-established following a successful bid to the Integrated Care Fund. The project is a partnership initiative to reduce the health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of the people in the criminal justice system by addressing the issues impacting on the individual's health and wellbeing to support their engagement with Community Payback Orders (CPOs) / licence interventions that address their offending behaviour.

An important element of the TIIO project is the support that staff provide for clients to access and engage with universal services. As well as assertive linkage with services (including making appointments, sending reminders, and accompanying clients to appointments), staff have provided a degree of advocacy and support during appointments with universal services.

Overcoming barriers to universal support (Social Inclusion Project)

Social Inclusion Project (SIP) aims to bring multi-disciplinary agencies/services together to coordinate and commit to the intensive case management of identified individuals across the Falkirk local authority area. SIP supports individuals whose issues and behaviours have caused them difficulties with and exclusion from universal services. The multi-disciplinary approach of the project is essential to the delivery of effective and responsive recovery planning that ensures the appropriate support and intervention opportunities are available and accessible for the individual. SIP supports individuals who are not currently subject to community orders with Justice Services

Improving access to mental health support

Towards the end of 2019 Justice Services were successful in securing Action 15 funding to help meet the needs of those with poor mental health. The funding is recurrent and has been used to employ a Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) post co-located with justice services for ease of access. The CPN took up post in March 2020.

Since January 31st 2019 the Mental Health Acute Assessment and Treatment Service (MHAATS) at NHS FVRH have been providing pre-hospital triage for people who come to the attention of Police Scotland or the British Transport Police (within the Forth Valley area) where there is a suspicion that the person is suffering from a mental disorder, or where the individual discloses symptoms which warrant an emergency mental health assessment, for example reporting suicidal intent. This is accessed in the first instance by officers telephoning MHAATS where the nursing staff will assess the need for the patient to be seen. If an assessment is necessary the officers escorted the patient to the mental health unit and would be provided with a private room to wait in until assessed. Aims of the service include:

- 1) Quicker identification of the appropriate support route via pre-hospital triage.
- 2) Reduce unnecessary ED attendances
- 3) Reduce police time spent at ED

The Mental Health Acute Assessment and Treatment Service (MHAATS) continues to provide pre-hospital triage to Police. Previously all of these cases would have been taken to the Emergency Department, however MHAATS have been able to manage 91.3% of these referrals with only 40 of these cases having to be seen in Emergency Departments.

Support for housing issues

The Community Justice Partnership have worked closely with SPS to communicate the new Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) standards. There was strengthening of communication between Falkirk Housing and Throughcare Support Officers regarding the on-line Housing Options self-assessment tool which enables people to look at the housing options available in the Falkirk area personalised to their own circumstances.

In 2019, Falkirk's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) was approved, providing foundations to ensure that we can build strong partnerships to meet the needs of homeless individuals with complex and multiple needs. A Housing First approach was introduced to help give people who have experienced homelessness and chronic health and social care needs a stable home from which to rebuild their lives

The Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 places planning at the local level where decisions can be made by people who know their area best. Our Community Justice Partnership is made up of partners who are committed to sharing information, providing advice and assistance, co-ordinating activities and funding activities together.

Developing the use of “other activity” components of Community Payback Orders

Falkirk Justice Services worked with a range of internal networks and external agencies to support “other activity” components of Community Payback Orders (CPOs). Clients are assessed and consulted to identify suitable types of support for their needs.

Falkirk Justice Services credited “other activity” hours for a range of activities including:- attending Cyrenians educational programme for core skills training or one to one inputs; attending further education opportunities accessed via Falkirk Council Employment and Training Unit eg. opportunities to gain CSCS qualifications; attending addiction counselling services which did not form part of a Supervision Order; attending modules run by Women’s Development / Support Service (women only); and attending Men’s Group modules (men only).

Providing support from the point of arrest

A pan-Forth Valley Arrest Referral Service has been established within Falkirk Police Station aimed at reducing harm in our communities. The service is funded by the Alcohol and Drug Partnership and managed by Change Grow Live.

The service aims to provide an early intervention response to those in custody by offering a person centred approach, supporting people from the point of arrest. In practice this looks like:

- Provision of Recovery Workers
- Co-located services
- Provision of injecting equipment
- Naloxone provision
- Alcohol Brief Interventions
- Resources made available to help and support
- MH support available during periods of high stress and anxiety
- Veteran service assistance available for ex service personnel

A steering group has been established with representation from all the partners to oversee practice, resolve issues and influence a move towards diversion from prosecutorial action. This has aided in an increase in referrals to the arrest referral service, with 73 referrals being made in 2019/20, up from 26 the year previous.

Overcoming employability barriers

A justice employability pipeline is in operation for people on a Community Payback Order (CPO) and individuals can have hours allocated as part of “other activity”. The service is delivered by Cyrenians and jointly funded by Justice Services and Employability and Training Unit (ETU).

The service has a person centred approach and can deliver on a 1:1 basis or as part of a groupwork programme. SVQs can be delivered as part of a Falkirk Employability Award. Individuals are supported on a 1:1 basis on breaking down barriers to employment. This includes supporting people to write CVS and letters of disclosure.

Cyrenians also run a peer mentoring service which is designed to train people coming to the end of their community payback order to be mentors and then they mentor people who are currently on an order.

Quotes from service users:

“I can’t believe I am now working on my second SVQ, I am very proud of what I have done – never thought I could learn”

“I have actually learnt a lot more than I imagined, first time I can say I have enjoyed being an academic”

“I have been full circle with the Employability programme and now have the opportunity to pass on my experience and knowledge to others “

“Was here a few years ago, was great coming back knowing I could get support again to get me ITA funding for CSCS ticket”

“Great support for me at a pace I can cope with”

National recognition for community justice activities

In March 2020, Community Justice Scotland held an annual conference to shine the spotlight on local community justice projects that are transforming lives and communities across the country. Four Falkirk based community justice activities were showcased at this event as examples of good progress:

- Development of Dollar Park
- Safer Communities Forum
- Forth Valley Mental Health Triage
- Arrest Referral Service