



Communication and Engagement Strategy

2024 – 2029

Introduction

The Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership (CJAP) brings together statutory, public and third sector organisations working together to reduce reoffending and improve outcomes for people affected by the justice system.

Community justice is ultimately about protecting the community. It involves delivering justice for the victims of offending and making our communities feel safer, whilst also working with people with convictions to give them the support and help they need to reduce the risk of re-offending.

Communication and engagement with our local communities, partners and colleagues will help to build a better understanding of community justice and how it can benefit both individuals and the wider community. We want to ensure that stakeholders are aware of, understand and are engaged in all relevant aspects of our work.

Purpose of this Strategy

This communication and engagement strategy:

- Identifies the stakeholders for the CJAP and who we will communicate and engage with
- Identifies the ways in which we'll communicate and engage
- Outlines the roles and responsibilities of community justice partners
- Outlines the measurements we will use to evaluate our success
- Will help us to deliver actions within our Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan (CJOIP)

Strategic Context

The [National Strategy for Community Justice](#) sets the national direction for community justice. It is designed to provide a clear roadmap for future improvement work, by highlighting key areas for partners to focus on. The strategy sets out 4 national aims, and 13 priority actions aligned to those aims, which community justice partners should seek to deliver over the duration of the strategy.

The [Community Justice Performance Framework](#) sets out 9 nationally determined outcomes which are to be achieved in each local authority area, and national indicators which are to be used in measuring performance against these.

The [Community Justice Scotland Improvement Tool](#) sets out the local evidence that will supplement the national indicator data in the performance framework. Local evidence will provide further context to the national indicators and help to drive improvement and better understand performance locally in relation to the national outcomes.

The activities and commitments within this strategy will contribute towards the following strategic objectives:



The National Strategy for Community Justice 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.”

Target Audiences

The target audiences for the partnership are varied and range from local services and organisations to media outlets and the general public.

Community justice statutory partners are outlined in the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, with the following partners being represented within the CJAP:

- East, North and South Ayrshire Councils
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Skills Development Scotland
- East, North and South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnerships
- Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service
- Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
- Scottish Prison Service
- Ayrshire College (non-statutory partner)
- East, North and South Ayrshire Third Sector Interfaces (non-statutory partners)

In addition to engagement across and between community justice partners, the CJAP will seek to engage with a wide range of individuals and organisations who can help to drive awareness, improvements, and a better understanding of community justice.

Wider stakeholders:

- Communities
- People who have committed offences
- Staff delivering community justice services
- Third sector organisations
- Public sector organisations
- Victims of crime
- People who use justice services and their families
- Local policy makers
- Judiciary
- Defence agents
- Elected members
- Local businesses
- Media outlets

Baseline Data

Before we can start to measure our progress towards increasing understanding and confidence within the target audiences, we need to understand our baseline position. To help the CJAP to establish this, partners will complete 'Achieving Community Justice Outcomes – Targeted Resource to support national outcome improvement planning in local authority areas' produced by Community Justice Scotland. This covers the national outcome 'more people across the workforce and in the community understand and have confidence in community justice'.

Whilst completing this resource, questions to ask of stakeholders, and to source data for include:

- 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?
- 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?
- What is the comparative use of custodial and community disposals?
- 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, we will talk to communities and the community justice workforce about what they need to know to build their confidence and understanding.

Communication

Informing local communities and partners about community justice issues and enabling them to contribute to the decisions that affect them will support reintegration, reduce stigma and lead to the delivery of better, more person centred and responsive services and improved community justice outcomes.

The following channels are currently available to the CJAP for communications:

- Social media – Twitter
- Website
- CJAP newsletter / e-bulletin
- Blogs
- Branding
- Awareness raising sessions / stalls
- Presentations
- Attending meetings
- Partner newsletters
- E-mail distribution lists
- Events and conferences
- Local media
- Staff training
- E-learning

Engagement

The CJAP is committed to engaging with local communities, to empower them to contribute to the CJOIP and deliverables across all priority areas. We will continue to engage with people in communities including victims and witnesses of crime, people with convictions and their families, to gather views on how we can reduce re-offending across Ayrshire, so that these can be reflected in our CJOIP for forthcoming years. The following methods of engagement are currently available to the CJAP:

- Focus groups
- Surveys
- 'Have Your Say' sessions

- Service User Involvement groups
- Engagement with community groups
- Events and conferences
- Discussions at wider strategic partnerships

Evaluation and Measurement

There are a range of metrics available to monitor the reach and impact of our communication and engagement activities. These include:

- Social media reach and engagement
- Website visits
- CJAP newsletter / e-bulletin engagement
- Media coverage
- Numbers attending events and conferences
- Responses captured from surveys
- Opinions expressed via focus groups

Indicators

In addition to using the above metrics, the CJAP will utilise a range of indicators to measure the impact of our activities:

Source	Indicator
Community Justice Performance Framework (CJPF)	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
Community Justice Scotland 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 community
Care Inspectorate Self-Evaluation Guide	Impact on the community (quality indicator 4.1)
	Staff development and support (quality indicator 7.2)

Commitments

Over the duration of the CJOIP community justice partners will:

- Ensure that there is continued liaison and communication between statutory partners, non-statutory partners and third sector organisations
- Raise awareness of community justice within communities
- 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 facing 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
- Carry out engagement activity and prepare participation statements as part of future CJOIP development

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