



Communication and Engagement Strategy

2023 – 2024

Introduction

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

When we talk about community justice, we mean all the people and organisations that work together to support victims and families affected by crime and who support, manage, and supervise people who have committed offences from arrests through to the sentences they receive in court and on to their rehabilitation and reintegration back into the community.

Community justice is about protecting the community. As well as delivering justice for the victims of offending and making our communities feel safer, it's about 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 engaged in all relevant aspects of our work.

Purpose of this Strategy

This communication and engagement strategy:

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

This strategy is intended to act as a bridging plan to allow the CJAP to focus on a range of communication and engagement activities during 2023-24 whilst the new CJOIP is being developed.

A refreshed strategy will be published alongside the new CJOIP in 2024 and will provide the direction for activities in 2024-2029.

Strategic Context

This revised National Strategy for Community Justice (2022) sets the national direction for community justice by building on progress made to date. 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 four national aims for community justice, and 13 priority actions which the Scottish Government and community justice partners should seek to deliver over the duration of the strategy. To achieve these, partners must work closely together.

Four National Aims for Community Justice:



The actions within this strategy will contribute towards the following priority action as outlined under national aim four in the National Strategy for Community Justice:

Priority Action 13 - “Support integration and reduce stigma by ensuring the community and workforce have an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice”

Progress towards achieving the National Strategy is measured through the Community Justice Performance Framework (CJPF). The actions within this strategy will contribute towards the delivery of the following national outcome as outlined in the CJPF:

National Outcome: More people across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice	
National Indicator:	Local Indicators:
Percentage of people who agree that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 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.

(Reference: National Strategy for Community Justice, Scottish Government, 2022 and Community Justice Performance Framework, Community Justice Scotland, 2023)

Role of Community Justice Scotland

Community Justice Scotland have a role to promote Community Justice on a national basis. As defined within the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, they perform a function to ‘promote public awareness of the benefits of using community disposals

rather than imprisonment as well as managing and supporting people with a view to preventing and reducing reoffending’.

Community Justice Scotland have their own communications strategy and a public campaign planned for 2023. We will support the delivery of this at a local level and link with our own messaging to increase impact.

Research published by Community Justice Scotland in March 2020 found the following:

- 60% of the Scottish public do not know what community justice is
- Younger people aged 18 to 24 were the least likely of all age groups to know what community justice is
- 50% of those who claimed to know what community justice is said it is community service or unpaid work. Just 5% said that it prevents crime and / or prevents repeat offenders
- 68% of all respondents claimed not to be aware of community justice (services and projects) in their local community

(Reference: Community Justice Scotland, 2020)

Target Audiences

Our target audiences are varied and range from our statutory and non-statutory partners to media outlets and the general public.

Community Justice statutory partners are outlined in the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016. The following partners are represented within the Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership:

- 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
- Serco
- Ayrshire College
- East, North and South Ayrshire Third Sector Interfaces

In addition to our statutory partners, we will seek to engage with a wide range of individuals and organisations who can help us to drive awareness, improvements, and a better understanding.

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

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 Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership for communications:

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

Engagement

The Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership is committed to engaging with our local communities, to empower them to contribute to our CJOIP and actions across all priority areas. We will ensure that there is continued liaison and communication between statutory partners, non-statutory partners and third sector organisations. 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 Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan for forthcoming years.

The following methods of engagement are currently available to the Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership:

- Focus groups

- Surveys
- 'Have Your Say' sessions
- Service User Involvement groups
- Engagement with community groups
- Events and conferences

Evaluation and Measurement

An action plan has been developed to support the implementation of the Communication and Engagement Strategy and will be reviewed regularly throughout the year. We will review our strategy and provide an update within our annual report each year, which will provide an overview of outputs and progress. This will enable us to measure success and ensure the priorities are still the right ones.

There are a range of methods available to measure the outputs of our communications and establish if our engagement has been successful. These include:

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

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