



Community Justice Update – Aberdeen

Please find below some updates relating to Community Justice issues, both local and national. If you have any Community Justice 'news', issues, or practice you would like to share, or comments/queries about any of the below, please don't hesitate to contact Policy Coordinator, Community Justice Redesign by emailing: CommunityPlanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

1. Community Justice Redesign

- **New Community Justice Group:** At a meeting in December 2016, the Board of Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) approved the establishment of a governance group for Community Justice and the first meeting of the new group was held on 10th March 2017. The Group comprises representatives of the statutory Community Justice partners, ACVO (the third sector interface in Aberdeen) and representation from the Civic Forum.
- **Improvement of Community Justice Outcomes in Aberdeen:** Priorities for the improvement of Community Justice outcomes are being embedded into CPA's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2016-26 (LOIP). These priorities, and the improvement activities contained in an underlying Delivery Plan, have been informed by extensive consideration of evidence as well as stakeholder engagement over the past 18 months. The Community Justice Group endorsed the direction of travel of proposed high level Community Justice outcomes for Aberdeen which fall under the following headings:
 - Supporting people harmed by crime;
 - Keeping people out of the Criminal Justice System;
 - Effectively managing and supporting people in the Criminal Justice System to reduce the likelihood of their reoffending and improve outcomes for these individuals, their families and communities; and
 - Increasing community understanding of, and participation in, Community Justice.

The Community Justice Group will progress the delivery of the improvement activities and projects going forwards.

- **Final Days of the Northern Community Justice Authority:** The last meeting of the Northern CJA prior to its 'disestablishment' on 31st March was held on 24th February 2017 at Woodhill House. The meeting, and the lunch that followed, was well attended by Elected Members and staff (past and present), as well as a wide range of partner organisations. Much of what has been developed over the years under the auspices of the Northern CJA, in terms of collaborative working, performance reporting and sharing of good practice, will be taken forward and developed further under the new local model in Aberdeen going forwards.



2. CashBack for Communities



CashBack for Communities is a programme that makes crime pay by using criminals' cash and assets to invest in young people in Scotland through sport for change, diversionary youth work, journey to employability and cultural diversionary activities. Since 2008, £92 million seized from criminals has been committed to a wide range of sporting, cultural, youth work and community

opportunities, delivering nearly 2 million activities and opportunities to some of Scotland's most disadvantaged young people.

The below link is to a pack containing details of CashBack projects and activities in Aberdeen (as well as other areas). The packs also contain case studies highlighting the experiences of young people that have taken part in CashBack activities:

<http://www.cashbackforcommunities.org/activity-by-local-authority>

3. Strengthening Engagement Project – Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum

The Strengthening Engagement Project hosted a half day collaborative workshop event on 17th February 2017 at the Beach Ballroom, Aberdeen. The event was well attended by participants from a range of statutory and third sector organisations and feedback for the day was highly positive, with a majority of participants saying they knew more about local community justice arrangements in Aberdeen and successful relationship building between the statutory and third sector.

The day began with an exploration of the national and legislative context of community justice in Scotland, as well as the previous work and findings of the Strengthening Engagement Project. Representatives from Criminal Justice Social Work, Aberdeen City's Communities and Housing Service, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, NHS Grampian and the Scottish Prison Service then discussed their role in the new community justice arrangements and the links that they have already established with third sector organisations.

A series of collaborative workshops and activities took place to establish current levels of engagement with the third sector in Aberdeen, the quality of that engagement, and what steps could be taken to ensure that any potential barriers to successful collaborative working do not arise in future. Two key themes captured during the course of the day were:



- The importance of awareness of service provision; and
- The opportunities provided by the Third Sector Community Justice Forum in Aberdeen and the work done by ACVO, the Third Sector Interface (TSI), to support that network across a range of different areas. Whilst this work was viable for the current transition period, financing and resources would have to be found in future to ensure that both the network and the TSI's work can be sustainable.

A full report on all activities of the Strengthening Engagement Project for the year, including the event conducted in Aberdeen, will be published in the coming months.

4. Update from the Unpaid Work Team

Improving paths

We have been busy here at the Criminal Justice Social Work UPW team and for the past eight months or so teams of individuals on Community Payback Order Unpaid Work Requirements have been clearing an overgrown unusable path at Altens tree belt. The path was a popular route with the local community as a link from the Burnbanks end of Cove back to the centre of Cove and the shops near the Community Centre, as well as for dog walkers.



The path also links from the top end of Kincorth, through the woodland opposite the Altens fire station, to the Community Centre down to the coast road and on to the Coastal Path that links Cove to Nigg Bay and on around to Aberdeen Harbour. The Cove and Altens Community Council were keen to see some improvements to the route, as well, as they looked to promote walks around their area.

Employability update

Currently the UPW Team work in partnership with Aberdeen City's Adult Learning & Development (AL&D) service, and third sector organisation, APEX Scotland, to encourage our unpaid workers to gain more employability skills

AL&D provides our unpaid workers with the opportunity to secure formal certifications (SCQF) in relation to the skills they develop whilst attending their unpaid work placements. This is a Level 3 SCQ equivalent to a general standard grade which is recognised by employers. Currently the qualification is offered in two core skills: Working with People; and Problem Solving. The unpaid worker has to work a minimum of 40 hours of work before being eligible and thereafter a Joint Assessment is carried out. The Task Supervisor does the initial assessment and AL&D then attends and verifies this. This offers to people attending work parties and/or on individual placements encouragement and support to move on to paid employment with some evidence of their ability.

AL&D also provide on-site sessions to any unpaid workers who may have some difficulties with literacy and / or numeracy, English as a second language, or if

anyone has difficulties with application forms or use of digital equipment in their pursuit of employment.

APEX provides support to our unpaid workers who are actively trying to secure employment. They offer various skills and training opportunities such as CSCS Cards (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) and PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) Certification, which if attended will be considered as hours of 'Other Activity' (A proportion of the Community Payback Order Unpaid Work and Other Activity Requirement can be used to undertake 'other activity'. This aspect of the Requirement tasks the individual with developing their educational, vocational or interpersonal skills in order to support them to stop further offending.)

Currently the Unpaid Work service is working to develop work experience opportunities with a local Construction Company which has agreed to offer eight-week placements to some of our unpaid workers who undertake to complete their CSCS Training as part of their 'other activity' and who have completed their orders. It is possible that thereafter placements may extend to job offers.

5. Consultations

Electronic Monitoring ('tagging')

On 2nd March 2017 Scottish Government launched a consultation on Electronic Monitoring. This consultation seeks views on the next steps in taking forward primary legislation to extend the use of electronic monitoring in Scotland in support of broader community justice policy.

The proposed changes reflect the findings and recommendations of the Electronic Monitoring Expert Working Group. The [Working Group report](#) was published on 4th October 2016.

View the consultation paper at: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/03/6021>. The consultation closes on 19th May 2017.

Violence Against Women

In 2016 Scottish Government published a revised version of [Equally Safe](#), Scotland's strategy to eradicate violence against women and girls. The strategy envisions a Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse - and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.

On 23rd March 2017 a consultation was launched on the proposed delivery plan which sets out the actions undertaken by Scottish Government and key partners to make Equally Safe a reality. The consultation, which closes on 30th June 2017, can be found at: <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/violence-against-women-team/equally-safe/>

On a related note, the [Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Bill](#) was introduced to Parliament on 17th March 2017.