

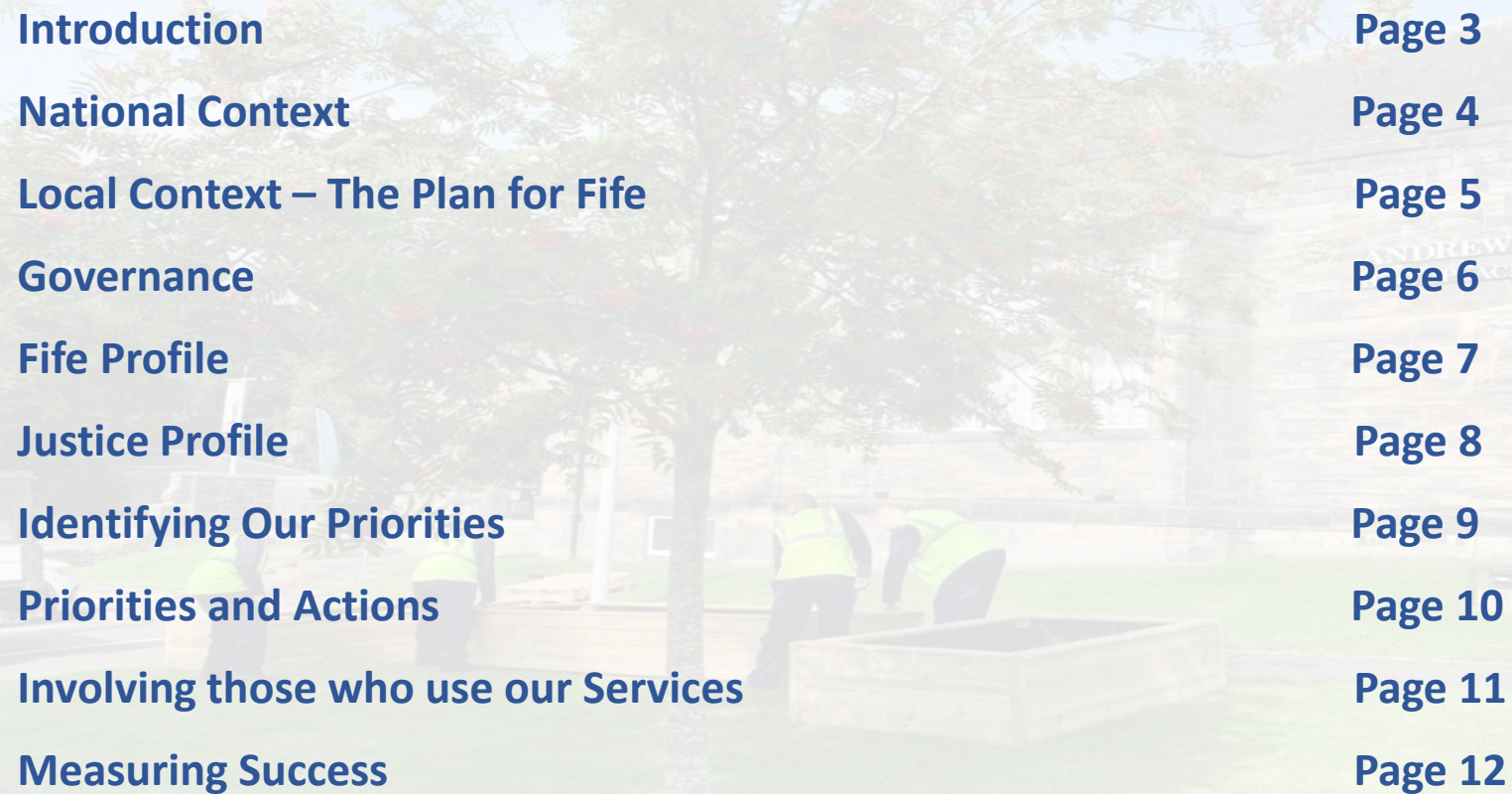


Fife Justice Social Work Outcome Improvement Plan 2024 – 2027

May 2024



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Introduction

The [Community Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2016 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk) provides the legislative basis for the operation of the community justice model. Community justice is primarily about organisations working together to ensure that people who have offended address the underlying causes of their behaviour and pay back to the community where appropriate. It aims to encourage rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and protect the public, leading to fewer victims and safer communities. The Act also places duties on a range of statutory partners to engage in community justice planning and to report against a set of nationally determined outcomes.

Public protection remains our priority in Fife, and we will continue to work closely with partners to ensure that when appropriate, those who have committed offences can be managed safely and effectively in the community. We will make sure that our services are person-centred, and trauma informed, and we are making a commitment to the participation of people with lived experience in the planning, design and development of our services.

We are delighted to approve this plan which sets out the direction for Fife Justice Social Work over the next three years.



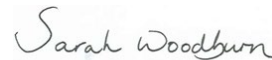
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Executive Director



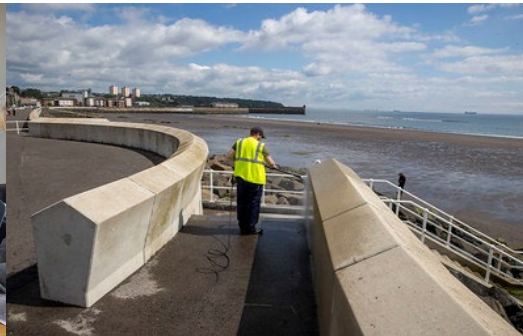
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National Context

It is important that the vision we have for Justice Social Work in Fife is aligned to the national strategy for community justice.

[The Vision for Justice in Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot) sets out the Scottish Government's transformative vision of the future justice system for Scotland, spanning the full journey of criminal, civil and administrative justice, and focuses on creating safer communities and shifting societal attitudes and circumstances which perpetuate crime and harm.

The revised [National Strategy for Community Justice \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot) sets out the national direction for community justice by building on the 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. Within the national strategy, there are 4 national aims:

Optimise the use of
Diversion and
intervention at the
earliest opportunity

Ensure that robust and
high-quality
interventions and public
protection arrangements
are **consistently**
available across Scotland

Ensure that services are
accessible and **available**
to address the needs of
individuals accused or
convicted of an offence

Strengthen the
leadership, **engagement**
and partnership working
of local and national
community justice
partners

Within the 4 national aims, there are 13 priority actions which community justice partners should seek to deliver over the duration of the strategy: [National Strategy for Community Justice - National Aims and Priority Actions \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot).

We have considered the national strategy when devising our priorities for Justice Social Work in Fife, adapting national aims and priorities to meet our local needs and circumstances.

Local Context - The Plan for Fife

The Fife Partnership is Fife’s community planning partnership. Their job is to bring together local public service providers and communities to improve the quality of life for people who live in, work in or visit Fife. In 2017, the Partnership set out ‘The Plan for Fife’ which is Fife’s community plan. The plan set out the vision for Fife over a ten-year period and aims to deliver real improvements. It puts fairness at the heart of everything, and sets out developments and improvements across four key improvement themes:

Improvement Themes

- Opportunities for all
- Thriving places
- Inclusive growth and jobs
- Community led services



Key Priorities

- Supporting Fife’s economy
- Tackling poverty and preventing crisis,
- Tackling the climate emergency

The Plan for Fife 2021-24 update reviewed the plan as we came out of the COVID-19 pandemic and set out the key recovery and renewal priorities to be reflected throughout the Council’s plans and strategies. It recognised that while our ambitions remain, we needed to change the way we work and identified three key priorities that should underpin these ambitions.

The pandemic also highlighted the need for a greater focus on place and the role communities can play in developing joint responses and solutions. Community wealth building provides a useful approach that brings these ideas together. It is an emerging way of working that focuses on the things that are important to us – community wealth, wellbeing, environmental sustainability and fairness.

Governance

The Chief Executive leads the non-political side of Fife council. Our teams and services are divided into four main directorates, each led by an Executive Director, plus our Fife Health and Social Care Partnership:

- Communities
- Education
- Place
- Finance and Corporate Services
- Health and Social Care Partnership

Until recently, Justice Services, alongside Children and Families Social Work were situated within the Education Directorate. Last November, councillors agreed with the Chief Executive's proposals to align Justice Services and Children and Families social work with other teams working to support households in the Communities Directorate. This change reflects the importance of creating stronger connections between colleagues in housing, welfare support, community learning, family services and justice. This is part of our 'No Wrong Door' programme – service change to tackle poverty and improve community wellbeing.

The Communities Directorate is led by an Executive Director and a Head of Service for Children, Families and Justice, who is also Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO). The CSWO is responsible for monitoring social work activity across the Council and within the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) to ensure that agreed targets are being met and that professional standards are maintained. The CSWO also has a role to play in specific advisory bodies and has access as required to the Council's Chief Executive and elected members.

More information on strategic governance and accountability can be found in the most recent CSWO Report: [CSWO Report 2022 to 2023 \(fife.gov.uk\)](https://www.fife.gov.uk/CSWO-Report-2022-to-2023)

Fife Profile

The Fife Strategic Assessment provides an overview of Fife for organisations that are planning and providing services. It uses local and national research to help us understand different aspects of life in Fife. The assessment tells us that:

- Fife is the 3rd largest of 32 Local Authorities in Scotland based upon population, which is now estimated at 370,400 (according to data released September 2023 by National Records of Scotland).
- In respect of land mass, Fife is the 13th largest at 1,325 square kilometres. While Fife has a mixture of urban and rural settlements, two-thirds of people tend to live in an urban setting, mainly in or near to Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes, while the remaining people live in smaller towns or villages.
- With regards to deprivation, there is a notable inequality gap between our most and least deprived communities. With a relatively better off rural Northeast and wealthier areas around the M90 corridor benefiting from the good commuter links, Fife's most deprived areas continue to be concentrated in Mid-Fife. A key issue in Fife is that severe deprivation is often located in small pockets and can be masked by the relative affluence of neighbouring areas.
- Overall, Fife shows a small rise in its share of Scotland's most deprived datazones and the main areas for concern remain within mid-Fife. Buckhaven South datazone stands out as being the 7th most deprived in Scotland (of 6,976).
- Fife continues to track national trends in income and employment deprivation but is showing a rise in health deprivation in some areas (linked to the most deprived datazones).

[\(Fife Strategic Assessment 2020 v9 WP\)](#).

Justice Profile

We know that in order to prevent people coming into contact with the justice system, we have to tackle long standing societal issues. The causes of crime are many, varied and complex. Some of the factors that influence whether a person will come into contact with the justice system include poverty and inequality, we also know that for some of those who have offended they have also been victims themselves:

- Crime and victimisation are linked to deep-seated issues such as poverty and wealth inequality. We know that a significant number of people in the justice system are unemployed, and arrivals to prison are disproportionately from the most deprived areas.
- There is clear evidence of a link between area-level deprivation and crime, with those living in the most deprived areas being more likely to experience crime with fewer resources to cover the cost.
- The population in contact with the justice system is a vulnerable one in health and wellbeing terms, with people experiencing high levels of mental health problems, trauma, learning difficulties (sometimes undiagnosed) and speech, language and communication needs.
- We know that those who experience multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences are more likely than those who do not, to come into contact with the justice system as victims, witnesses or perpetrators of crime.
- Alcohol and drugs remain a factor in many violent crimes. The last Scottish Crime and Justice Survey results found that those who have offended were believed to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs in over half of violent incidents.
- We know that those with care experience are over-represented in the justice system in Scotland. Although those who have been in care only make up an estimated 0.5% of the general population, almost half of young people in prison reported that they had experienced care. This pattern continues into adult life with the latest prisoner survey showing that a quarter of prisoners had been in care at some point.

Identifying Our Priorities

In order to identify our priorities for the next 3 years, we considered a range of national and local information including (but not limited to):

- The National Strategy and Vision for Community Justice
- Bail and Release from Custody (Scotland) Act 2023
- Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024
- Equally Safe – Scotland’s Strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against woman and girls (updated in 2023)
- Consideration of the proposed Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity Bill
- Analysis of Justice Social Work statistics / trends (both nationally and locally) to understand the needs of people in the justice system
- Plan for Fife (2017-2027)
- Updated Recovery and Renewal Plan for Fife (2021-2024)
- Fife Strategic Assessment 2020
- Ongoing review of performance related to the availability and effectiveness of service provision
- Various focus groups and development sessions across the Service



Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5
<p>Maximise the use of diversion as an early intervention strategy while promoting its use as an appropriate response to offending behaviour</p>	<p>Increase the availability of robust, community-based interventions to ensure people are supported in the most appropriate and effective setting</p>	<p>Ensure that those given community sentences are supervised and supported through the provision of robust, high quality, trauma informed services and programmes</p>	<p>Strengthen the leadership, engagement and partnership working of local and national community justice partners to raise awareness of community justice and improve outcomes</p>	<p>Increase opportunities for service user involvement in the design, delivery, and development of our services</p>
Actions	Actions	Actions	Actions	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ready to respond to an anticipated increase in diversion referrals and associated work • Ensure that proactive and person-centred diversion services are consistently available • Review diversion services to implement and embed the impending revised national strategy and guidance for diversion • Utilise resources and best practice to develop confidence and expertise in managing complex diversion cases • Develop a consistent framework to demonstrate the impact of diversion • Work with partners to ensure our diversion reporting mechanisms are accurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure we offer a direct alternative to remand through the provision of robust, high-quality supervised bail services which are promoted and delivered effectively • Promote the use of electronic monitoring technologies to strengthen options for robust and effective community management • Ongoing development of public protection partnerships to ensure community interventions are robust, and operating as effectively as possible • Ensure appropriate resources are in place to support groupwork programmes such as MF2C and the Caledonian Programme • Commitment to workforce training, planning and development • Improve understanding of restorative justice and consideration of how we can promote and support this in a safe and appropriate way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop a Trauma Informed workforce across the service • Utilise Fife’s Trauma Quality Standards to evaluate progress around our Trauma Informed Journey • Undertake a review of unpaid work delivery to ensure that services are consistently person centred and trauma informed • Improve pathways around education, employability, and career services to improve life skills and readiness for employment • Contribute to, and develop processes around the development of the national voluntary throughcare support service • Develop the use of digital technology to enhance access to effective programmes and interventions • Work with partners to ensure our services are responsive and accessible for individuals who have a learning disability or who are neurodiverse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and develop partnership working arrangements with local community justice partners to ensure best practice and improved outcomes • Reduce stigma and support inclusion by improving knowledge, understanding and confidence in community justice • Work with partners to develop and improve health and wellbeing pathways to enhance access to services for justice service users • Enhance strategic links with Fife ADP to ensure best outcomes for JSW service users • Develop the use of digital platforms to increase awareness of community justice and interventions • Undertake a self-evaluation exercise to establish a baseline from which to measure the impact of any improvements made in service delivery • Develop a framework to monitor progress around performance, quality assurance and outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise evidence and research around service user involvement to develop a coordinated strategy for involving those who use our services • Work with partners who are experts in lived experience to draw on their knowledge and expertise to help us achieve best practice • Develop mechanisms to involve those who use our services in the planning and development of services • Improve opportunities for those who use our services to feedback on the quality of services provided • Regularly review our strategy to review progress in this area

Involving those who use our services

We are committed to the participation of people with lived experience in the planning, design and development of services, having made this a priority for 2024 – 2027.

We will utilise evidence and research around service user involvement to develop a coordinated strategy for involving those who use our services.

We will also work with partners who are experts in lived experience to draw on their insight and knowledge to enhance our approach and help us achieve best practice.

We will regularly review our progress in this area.



Measuring Success

In 2023, the Scottish Government published The Community Justice Performance Framework (www.gov.scot), which details outcomes and indicators which can be used to measure progress around the national strategy.

In 2023, Community Justice Scotland published the Community-Justice-Improvement-Tool.pdf (communityjustice.scot), which sets out local evidence which can be used to supplement the national indicator data.

Both resources set out the requirements of community justice partners to provide national indicator data and local evidence in annual assessment and reporting.

The Care Inspectorate Self Evaluation Framework for Community Justice in Scotland promotes collaborative self-evaluation and provides a range of quality indicators to support community justice partners in considering how they contribute to improving the life chances and outcomes of people with living experience of community justice in Scotland: [A self-evaluation guide to support quality improvement for community justice in Scotland NOVEMBER 23.pdf](#) (careinspectorate.com).

Using the above resources, we will seek to undertake a self-evaluation exercise to measure the effectiveness of our services. We will also develop a local performance framework to measure performance, quality assurance and outcomes.