



SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITIES – REDUCING OFFENDING

Strategic Plan 2008–2011

Contents

Introduction

- > A Time For Refreshment. Paul H Morron, MBE. Chair, Sacro. 1

Sacro Services and the Community Justice Continuum

- > Sacro Services in Scotland 2
- > How Sacro services work together to promote safe and cohesive communities by reducing conflict and offending 3

Sacro's Achievements in 2005–2008

- > Headlines 4
- > Direct Service Provision 4
- > Consultancy and Training 5
- > Engaging in, Promoting and Disseminating Research 5
- > Influencing Policy and Legislation 5

Sacro's External Environment

- > Sacro's External Environment 6
- > Political 6
- > Economic 6
- > Best Value 6
- > Service Development 6
- > Ways of Working 6

Sacro's Strategic Plan 2008–2011

- > Our Vision 7
- > Our Mission 7
- > Our Values and Principles 7
- > Our Priority Client Groups 7
- > The Areas of Work on Which We Will Concentrate 8
 - 1 Direct Provision of Services 8
 - 2 Influencing Policy, Legislation and Practice 9
 - 3 Outcome Evaluation, Monitoring and Research 9
- > Supporting Priority Areas 9
- > Key Strategic Tasks 10
- > Supporting Activities 12

A Time For Refreshment



This Strategic Plan initiates a process of refreshment for Sacro. Building on its successful record of over 30 years public service and achievement, this Plan looks to the future shape and focus of the organisation so we can successfully rise to the challenges of a rapidly changing environment.

Sacro exists to reduce conflict and offending. We do this by providing services in the areas of criminal justice, restorative justice, community mediation and restorative practices in schools. We provide a consultancy and training service and seek to influence policy and the wider agenda.

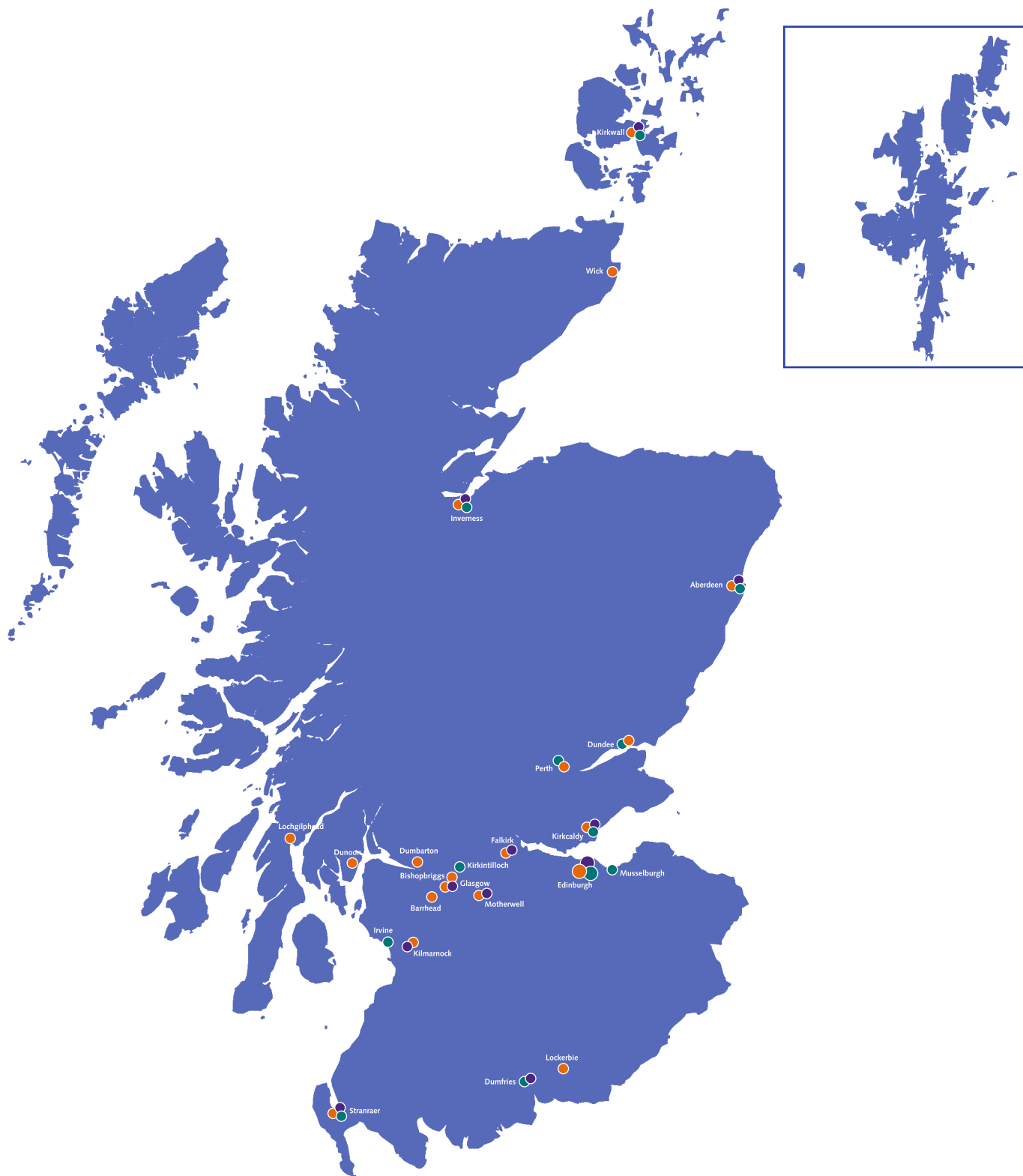
Over the last eight years, the organisation has seen unprecedented growth in its work. The external environment, a difficult public expenditure settlement for the ensuing three years, and the removal of ring fenced monies in relation to some of our services, indicates that this period of growth is likely to be checked, particularly during the early period of this Strategic Plan.

Sacro however, will adapt to this new situation, be flexible and dynamic in response, but hold true to our mission and values.

This Plan sets out our strategic thinking for the future.

- > For the first time, we have identified our priority service users in relation to service development.
- > For the first time, this Plan identifies the adoption of a smaller number of services which will become our core for development.
- > Priority will continue to be given to the quality agenda but with a greater emphasis from year one on quality assurance, with outcome measurement, which will be shared and published.
- > Based on our outcome measurement programme, we will formulate and implement an updated and contemporary research programme.
- > A sharpened, customer-orientated approach which gives demonstrable value for money will underpin our need to find new and expanded service opportunities – especially with regard to our core activities.
- > Greater emphasis will be given to opportunities for partnership working in the development of services and new services, not least with third sector colleagues.
- > The Board will consider the modernisation of its governance, including issues of greater openness, how current or former service users can be involved and membership revitalised.
- > Sacro has re-assessed the external environment, what the organisation stands for, and where and how we want to progress and develop. The Plan, therefore, also describes our perception of the environment in which we will be working over the next three years and updates our vision, mission, values and principles.

Paul H Morron MBE
Chair, Sacro.



Sacro Service Locations

Aberdeen	●	●	●	Kilmarnock	●		●
Barrhead			●	Kirkcaldy	●	●	●
Bishopbriggs			●	Kirkintilloch		●	
Dumbarton			●	Kirkwall	●	●	●
Dumfries	●	●		Lochgilphead			●
Dundee		●	●	Lockerbie			●
Dunoon			●	Motherwell	●		●
Edinburgh	●	●	●	Musselburgh		●	
Falkirk	●		●	Perth		●	●
Glasgow	●			Stranraer	●	●	●
Inverness	●	●	●	Wick			●
Irvine		●					

Criminal Justice Services ●
 Restorative Justice and Reparation Services ●
 Community Mediation Services ●

Schools Work Services are offered throughout Scotland. Community Mediation Services are also available in the Western Isles on a spot-purchase basis.

The Community Justice Continuum

How Sacro services work together to promote safe and cohesive communities by reducing conflict and offending

We provide a wide range of services spanning all aspects of the community justice continuum. These range from conflict resolution to prevent disputes escalating, to supported accommodation for prisoners on release including high-risk offenders. All of our services are designed to promote safe and cohesive communities by reducing conflict and offending.

Our services adhere to recognised best practice and we continually monitor and evaluate them to ensure their effectiveness and continued improvement.

We co-ordinate the Aberdeen Youth Justice Strategy and provide consultancy and training in community mediation to other organisations and agencies.

CRIME PREVENTION/CONFLICT REDUCTION

- Community Mediation/Neighbour and Intergenerational Dispute Resolution
- Positive Relationship Building and Conflict Resolution in Schools
- Homeless Mediation ■ Street Mediation



YOUTH JUSTICE

- Restorative Justice ■ Family Group Conferencing ■ Community Based Reparation
- Victim Awareness Programme ■ Personal Change Programmes
- Restorative Acceptable Behaviour Contracts



DIVERSION FROM PROSECUTION/POLICE REFERRAL

- Restorative Justice ■ Arrest Referral ■ Street Sex Workers Service



PRE-TRIAL/PRE-SENTENCE

- Bail Supervision ■ Restorative Justice ■ Community Based Reparation



COMMUNITY SENTENCES

- Alcohol Education Programme ■ Personal Change Programme
- Domestic Abuse Programme ■ Sex Offenders Programme



REINTEGRATION

- Throughcare/Community Links Centre ■ Intensive Support & Monitoring ■ Supported Accommodation and Housing Support
- Prison Visitors' Transport ■ Restorative Justice

Sacro's Achievements in 2005–2008

> Headlines

- > Service user numbers increased from under 13,000 to over 15,250.
- > Turnover increased in direct service provision: Youth Justice Restorative Justice Services by 13%; Criminal Justice Services by 25%; and Community Mediation Services by 33%
- > Investors in People awarded in 2006. This was in recognition of our commitment to providing learning and development opportunities for our staff and volunteers, and for recognising their contributions.
- > UK Howard League for Penal Reform Awards were presented to our Alcohol Education Probation Programme which received one of three Awards of Special Merit to community programmes in 2006 as did the "Another Way" Service for women street sex workers in 2007, when the Domestic Abuse Groupwork Service was recognised as an Outstanding Scheme.

> Direct Service Provision

- > 17 new services were set up for 13 local authorities and eight existing service types were expanded for 20 local authorities.
- > Sacro services worked with 22 local authorities to develop and provide Mediation and Restorative services to schools.
- > Mediation & Restorative Practices in Children's Residential Settings were developed and provided to five local authorities involving 10 establishments. By resolving conflicts within the homes, we aimed to impact positively on the numbers of looked-after children who were being charged as a result of behaviour in care homes.
- > Services met the requirements of the compliance agenda e.g. positive Care Commission inspections.
- > Sacro were awarded, in September 2005, the three-year Pathfinder contract for Scotland's first Community Links Centre (CLC) and by 2008, 15 agencies engaging positively in the Centre. This included the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) who seconded a member of their staff to work with us in the CLC.
- > The Edinburgh Cyrenians, worked with our Edinburgh Community Mediation Service to establish, in 2006, an innovative partnership model which successfully mediates between young people and their parents to facilitate communication to prevent homelessness.

Sacro's Achievements in 2005–2008

> Consultancy and Training

- > The Community Mediation Consultancy & Training Service has, since 1999, facilitated the setting up of new mediation services across Scotland. As of 2007, there were 30 community mediation services in Scotland, with almost all mediators trained by Sacro. In early 2008, the service was renamed "The Scottish Community Mediation Centre", working primarily in support of the Scottish Community Mediation Network, administering a Scottish scheme of accreditation for services, training and mediators, and fostering good practice in all aspects of community mediation.
- > The Scottish Restorative Justice Consultancy & Training Service:
 - > drafted the national *Principles, Criteria and Protocols for RJ Services for Children and Young People and Those Harmed by Their Behaviour (vs. 1 & 2)*, officially endorsed and published by the Scottish Executive in 2005 and 2007 and *Best Practice Guidance for Restorative Justice*, officially endorsed and published by the Scottish Government in 2008.
 - > was commissioned by the then Scottish Executive, to carry out an evaluation of Sacro's and all other restorative youth justice services in Scotland (to be completed in March 2009).
 - > introduced restorative practices within three Scottish Prison Service establishments; Polmont, Cornton Vale and Greenock.
- > Consultancy and training in mediation & restorative practices were provided to 22 local authorities involving 84 schools and 19 children's residential settings.

> Engaging in, Promoting and Disseminating Research

- > Eight service evaluation and seven research reports were produced to demonstrate effectiveness and to feed into continuous improvement of practice.
- > *The Evaluation Report on Sacro's Youth Justice Services 2004/2005*, published 2006, evidenced the impact of these services was positive on both those responsible for, and those harmed by, offending.
- > Articles were published in the *Scottish Criminal Law Journal*, *The British Journal for Community Justice* and the *CjScotland* website.
- > Research seminars were given internally and to the Ministerial National Advisory Body on Offender Management and the Scottish Association for the Study of Offending, which assisted understanding of the limitations of reconviction rates as a measure of re-offending.

> Influencing Policy and Legislation

We sought to influence and increase public and stakeholder knowledge and understanding of restorative justice, constructive conflict resolution and that the use of imprisonment should be restricted to those who have committed serious offences or are a danger to the public.

To this end:

- > evidence was given to the Justice 1 and Justice 2 Committees of the Scottish Parliament
- > our Chief Executive represented the Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum on the Ministerial National Advisory Body for the Management of Offenders and the Strategic Policy and Finance Group of the Scottish Government
- > our *Manifesto* was presented to political parties in the run up to the 2007 parliamentary elections
- > we regularly worked with the media to convey our messages to the public.

Sacro's External Environment

> Political

The Scottish Government elected in 2007 has stated that it is "determined to develop a coherent penal policy"¹ and "is convinced that a greater use should be made of community penalties"². This is a focus Sacro has advocated for some years and, therefore, anticipates an external environment which is in tune with its priorities.

> Economic

The Government has also recognised, however, that the *2008/2011 Strategic Spending Review* has revealed a tougher fiscal environment than recent years. It has also signed a Concordat with CoSLA which removes much of the former ring fencing of local authorities' monies. This is of particular relevance to our Youth Justice and Community Mediation services.

In surveying the external environment in which our services will be delivered over the next three years, we anticipate funding cut-backs, an extension of tendering processes, and the redistribution of money and priorities, as possible threats to our services. More services may be taken in-house by local authorities. There will also be increased competition with other agencies. On the other hand, we anticipate greater opportunities over this period for the further development of particular services and for working in partnership with other agencies, including greater collaboration across the voluntary sector.

> Best Value

The increasing cost of requirements to comply with regulation will lead to increased pressures on unit costs of our services and an even greater need to evidence the added value of them. Internally, we will address this by increasing the rigour with which we cost and price services; and also by seeking to increase the number of funding streams from which we are supported.

> Service Developments

We may be able to build on the political and public support for reparative tasks. Also there may be opportunities for bail supervision, intensive support & monitoring, together with other measures in relation to high risk sex offenders, and supported accommodation including helping to meet the requirements of the Parole Board (particularly to address the current insufficiency of supported accommodation to ease the transition from prison to the community), as well as working with those whose offending is alcohol related.

The creation of Community Justice Authorities (CJAs) may bring opportunities and, the three-year plans of the eight CJAs will help inform our way forward.

Of relevance to our work with young people is the Government's endorsement of *Getting it Right for Every Child* and their *Youth Offending Strategy*, due to be published in 2008. In relation to our work in schools and communities, the re-thinking on anti-social behaviour will be relevant.

Given that one of the Scottish Government's priorities is to create a safer Scotland, there may be opportunities to enhance constructive conflict resolution skills, resulting in more schools work and community mediation.

> Ways of Working

Given this external environment, to achieve our aims and contribute successfully to creating a safer Scotland, we will continue to be flexible and innovative, consolidate and enhance our relationships with stakeholders, and further enhance demonstration of our efficiency and effectiveness. There are opportunities to collaborate with others to engage in positive dialogue with the media, and use new technology to expand the methods for dialogue with the public to increase understanding of community sentences.

^{1,2} *Reforming and Revitalising, Report of the Review of Community Penalties*. Scottish Government. 2007.

> Our Vision

Our vision is for a safer Scotland, able to resolve conflict constructively and to deal effectively with offending and its consequences.

> Our Mission

Our mission is to promote safe and cohesive communities by reducing conflict and offending.

> Our Values and Principles

We are committed to working to the highest ethical standards. These include: integrity; recognising and valuing diversity; promoting equality of opportunity and probity in the use of public funds.

Our practice is guided by the belief that all should be shown respect and be empowered to take personal responsibility, acknowledging their capacity for change.

Our key principles are that we acknowledge:

- > conflict is most effectively resolved through informal, facilitated resolution which assists those involved to identify their own lasting solutions
- > offending and its consequences are most effectively dealt with through an emphasis on community disposals and sentencing, other than where there is an overriding need to protect society.

> Our Priority Client Groups

In pursuit of our mission, we will prioritise the following client groups:

- > **in criminal justice:** women offenders; young offenders (over 16 but under 25); offenders on release from prison, including sexual and violent offenders; those on bail, and those whose offence is alcohol related
- > **in restorative justice:** young people diverted from the Children's Hearing System and those they have harmed; adult offenders referred to the Procurator Fiscal and those affected by offending
- > **in community mediation:** neighbours and others in the community in dispute
- > **in schools:** pupils, teachers and all other school staff to be involved in restorative practices.

Sacro's Strategic Plan 2008–2011

> The Areas of Work On Which We Will Concentrate

- 1 Direct Provision of Services
- 2 Influencing Policy, Legislation and Practice
- 3 Outcome Evaluation, Monitoring and Research of all our Services.

1 Direct Provision of Services

We will focus on core services which meet the needs of and support our priority client groups. These services will enable service users to access and be in a position to benefit from the services of others e.g. to gain employment. We will continue to monitor change in the external environment and will respond timeously to relevant opportunities. The priorities are:

- > **criminal justice:** throughcare; supported accommodation; Community Links Centre; intensive support and monitoring; bail supervision & accommodation; alcohol-related programmes
- > **restorative justice and reparation:** in both youth justice and adult criminal justice services
- > **community mediation:** including intergenerational work in street mediation and a Pilton Action Research project
- > **schools work:** the development of restorative practices and peer mediation.

All our services will seek to be available to women and young people, and we shall increase awareness of clients having alcohol issues with which we may deal or refer on.

Throughcare, supported accommodation, Community Links Centre and intensive support and monitoring services are all priorities to enhance avoidance of major harm and/or to address repeat offending.

Restorative justice, reparation diversion and bail supervision & accommodation services are priorities as early interventions, pre-court or pre-sentence respectively.

Our alcohol-related programme is offered currently as a condition of probation and is prioritised to become a more widely available option for the court or at other stages.

Community mediation, as a priority preventative service, is key to community safety and anti-social behaviour strategies.

Similarly, work offering restorative practices and peer mediation in schools, both directly and through consultancy and training, is a priority as a preventative service. This contributes to our vision for a safer Scotland which is able to resolve conflict constructively.

2 Influencing Policy, Legislation and Practice

The focus will be on:

- > **in criminal justice:** intervention at the earliest opportunity and at the lowest appropriate level, with a presumption in favour of community disposals and sentencing, other than where there is an overriding need to protect society
- > **in restorative justice:** facilitating and encouraging the addressing of both the deeds and needs of all participants, as well as engaging with, providing support to and giving a role to those harmed by offenders
- > **in community mediation:** facilitating constructive and inclusive conflict resolution by empowering individuals and groups
- > **in schools:** facilitating positive relationship building and increasing constructive conflict resolution skills.

Our priorities are activities which chime with our principles, so will focus on policy and legislation that:

- > enhances and facilitates constructive conflict resolution in the community in general and in local intergenerational conflicts and in schools in particular
- > appropriately enhances community disposals and sentencing.

To enhance the effectiveness of our influencing work, we will seek to play a part in promoting public understanding of the above to make Scotland safer.

3 Outcome Evaluation, Monitoring and Research of All our Services

- > To inform, and provide evidence for all we do, our research programme will major on our core services but will, in parallel, continue to monitor and evaluate our other services.
- > The research programme will keep abreast of other research in relevant fields.
- > We will build partnerships with academics and others into our research programme.

To support our priority areas, we will:

- > review and modernise governance
- > ensure sound financial management
- > develop and use the skills, experience and commitment of staff and volunteers
- > effectively communicate internally and externally
- > provide consultancy and training in those areas of work in which we have expertise.

KEY STRATEGIC TASKS	Year 1 2008/2009	Year 2 2009/2010	Year 3 2010/2011
DIRECT SERVICE PROVISION			
SERVICE DELIVERY	Manage existing services.		
	Complete Cost and Pricing Review of core services.	Market costed services.	Continue to market costed services.
	Review, develop and implement quality assurance strategy for criminal justice services	Complete Cost and Pricing Review of all other services. Review, develop and implement quality assurance strategies for restorative justice, community mediation and schools services	Market costed services.
CRIMINAL JUSTICE	Support Community Justice Authorities to deliver their three year plans.		
	Complete review of supported accommodation and promote to commissioners in line with outcomes of Community Justice Authorities/National Advisory Board audit.		
COMMUNITY MEDIATION	Complete review of Intensive Support and Monitoring Service.	Seek implementation of Intensive Support and Monitoring Service Review recommendations.	
	Support Community Safety Partnership/Anti-social Behaviour Strategies in meeting their objectives.		
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE	Ensure youth justice services are delivered in line with "Getting it Right For Every Child" requirements.		
SCHOOLS WORK	Contribute to the Scottish Government's commitment to community safety through the delivery of services in schools.		
SERVICE DEVELOPMENT	Promote and expand existing; design and develop new and innovative, focussing on core services, which contribute to meeting the needs of and supporting priority client groups.		
	Monitor external environment and respond timeously to opportunities.		
CRIMINAL JUSTICE	Discussions with alcohol support agencies on development of alcohol programmes.	Alcohol services develop and become available to wider client group.	All services identify relevant clients to refer to alcohol support agencies.
	Promote bail supervision and accommodation in line with Scottish Government review.		

CRIMINAL JUSTICE <i>continued</i>	Promote Community Links Centre, focusing on demonstrable outcomes.	Seek national expansion of Community Links Centre model.
	Identify key partnerships to develop core criminal justice services.	Negotiate with key partners to deliver development of core services. Services to assess barriers to access for women and young people, and devise Action Plan. Implement Action Plan.
	Respond to Scottish Government report on Circles of Support and Accountability.	Develop Circles of Support and Accountability services.
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE	Market to commissioners priority services identified in Community Justice Authorities' plans.	
	Submit joint proposal (with Victim Support Scotland) to Scottish Government for restorative justice project(s).	Develop joint restorative justice project(s) with Victim Support Scotland.
	Develop monitoring and evaluation strategy to demonstrate effective outcomes.	Implement monitoring and evaluation strategy. Publish results of monitoring and evaluation strategy with focus on demonstrable and effective outcomes.
COMMUNITY MEDIATION	Promote the use of services for higher tariff behaviour, Children's Hearings and higher tariff offences in courts.	Review use of services and prepare strategy for future development. Implement development strategy.
	Undertake action research on Pilton Community Mediation.	Evaluate action research on Pilton Community Mediation and promote service type.
SCHOOLS WORK	Identify key partnerships to promote and expand community mediation services.	Negotiate with key partners to deliver expansion of services.
	Develop and promote strategy to expand peer mediation and restorative practices in schools through provision of direct services, consultancy and training.	Implement strategy. Review of schools work.
INFLUENCING POLICY, LEGISLATION AND PRACTICE		
COMMUNICATE KEY MESSAGES AS SET OUT IN STRATEGIC PLAN	Seek to influence opinion of key stakeholders, in partnership where relevant.	
	Seek to influence public opinion, in partnership where relevant.	
	Work in partnership with key regulatory bodies.	
OUTCOME EVALUATION, MONITORING AND RESEARCH		
RESEARCH PROGRAMME	Develop Research Strategy, focusing on outcome monitoring and evaluation.	Implement Research Strategy. Implement and review Research Strategy.
	Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) for criminal justice services.	Monitor KPIs for criminal justice services. Review KPIs for criminal justice services.
	Undertake outcome evaluation of core criminal justice services – phase one.	Develop KPIs for restorative justice and community mediation services. Monitor KPIs for restorative justice and community mediation services.
	Maintain and develop databases and other monitoring and evaluation tools to demonstrate effectiveness of services. Seek to commission research and work in partnership with academic institutions.	Undertake outcome evaluation of other core services – phase two. Undertake outcome evaluation of other core services – phase three.
	Review Monitoring And Evaluation Strategy.	

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES	Year 1 2008/2009	Year 2 2009/2010	Year 3 2010/2011
PLANNING			
STRATEGIC PLAN	Implement Strategic Plan 2008–2011.	Implement and review Strategic Plan 2008–2011.	Implement and review Strategic Plan 2008–2011. Prepare Strategic Plan for 2011–2014.
REVIEW AND MODERNISE GOVERNANCE	Establish Governance sub-group.	Implement Governance sub-group's recommendations.	
		Review and refresh role of membership.	
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	Develop financial strategy 2008–2011.	Review.	Review.
	Prepare Business Plan 2009–2010.	Implement and review Business Plan for 2010–2011.	Implement and review Business Plan for 2011–2012.
	Complete Cost and Pricing Review, as above.		
DEVELOP AND USE THE SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND COMMITMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS			
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT	Maintain and further develop Learning and Development for staff and volunteers.		
HUMAN RESOURCES	Review Human Resources Policies and Guidance to ensure they empower staff and volunteers.	Develop and implement new and revised policies and guidance as required.	Develop and implement new and revised policies and guidance as required.
EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY			
INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS	Consolidate implementation of "Working Together" Strategy.	Develop and implement Internal Communications Strategy.	Review Internal Communications Strategy.
	Review effectiveness of Intranet.	Undertake staff survey, developing action plan from results.	Implement Action Plan arising from staff survey.
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS	Revise and implement External Comms. Strategy.	Implement Intranet review recommendations.	
	Disseminate and publish Sacro's research.	Further develop External Comms. Strategy.	
	Disseminate and publish Sacro's other publications.		
PROVIDE CONSULTANCY AND TRAINING IN THOSE AREAS OF WORK IN WHICH WE HAVE EXPERIENCE			
GENERAL	Define areas of expertise and develop strategies to utilise internally and externally, e.g. schools work.	Implement strategies.	
COMMUNITY MEDIATION	Establish Scottish Community Mediation Centre.	Evaluation report on Scottish Community Mediation Centre.	Implementation of recommendations of evaluation report.
	Promote accreditation schemes.		

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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