

Redesigning the community justice system

A policy briefing for CJVSF members

Background

In December 2012, the Scottish Government launched a [consultation](#) on proposals to redesign the community justice system in Scotland. The consultation document set out three options:

- Option A: Enhanced Community Justice Authority (CJA) model
- Option B: Local authority model
- Option C: Single service model

Engaging the third sector in the consultation

CJVSF played an active part in gathering the views of third sector providers in relation to the options set out in the consultation document and in presenting these views to the Scottish Government.

As well as our written [response](#) to the consultation, we were invited by the Scottish Government, in collaboration with SCVO (the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations) and third sector providers, to develop proposals for improving the engagement of voluntary sector providers within justice. These proposals highlighted the important role of the third sector in contributing to community justice and reducing reoffending.

CJVSF believes there is real merit in the third sector being given a valued and respected voice in the new community

justice structure, with recognition of the broader assets that the third sector can bring to the table. We identified three areas where improving engagement with the third sector could contribute to improved outcomes:

- policy and strategy development
- designing and delivering services with strong service user, family and community engagement
- sharing broader learning and good practice on a regular basis.

Scottish Government response to the consultation feedback

In December 2013, the Scottish Government published its [response](#) to the key points made by respondents to the consultation. This response set out the Scottish Government's plans for a new community justice model.

Key characteristics of a successful Community Justice system in Scotland

As part of its response, the [Scottish Government \(2013, p5-6\)](#) identified fifteen characteristics of a community justice system that would make it more likely to deliver better outcomes for victims of crime, for people who offend and their families, and for local communities:

1. strategic direction and leadership
2. a focus on prevention and early intervention
3. better and more coherent person-centred opportunities for supporting desistance
4. clearer lines of strategic, political and operational accountability to support continuous improvement
5. effective local partnership and collaboration to deliver shared outcomes
6. strategic commissioning of services that are based on a robust analysis of needs, evidence of what supports desistance and value for money
7. a strong and united voice that represents community justice interests with the judiciary, public and media
8. better data management and evaluation
9. involvement of service users, their families and the wider community in the planning, delivery and reviewing of services
10. provision of an overview of the system as a whole, including consistency and breadth of service provision
11. better integration between partnership structures, services and organisations working with offenders and their families
12. a more coordinated and strategic approach to working with the Third Sector
13. a strategic approach to workforce development and leadership for criminal justice social work staff
14. greater professional identity for community justice staff which builds on their existing values and provides well defined opportunities for career progression
15. ability to follow innovation nationally and internationally, as well as develop and share evidence-based good practice.

Main features of the new model

The consultation feedback suggested that none of the three options outlined in the consultation paper would meet all of the characteristics set out above. Different elements of each of the three options were favoured by consultees, leading to the development of a fourth model, 'option D'.

The main features of this new model will be:

- at a local level, strategic planning and delivery of community justice services will be through [Community Planning Partnerships \(CPPs\)](#). Local partnerships for community justice will sit under CPP arrangements and should include appropriate representation from the third sector
- at a national level, a new statutory body will be created. The governance structure will include board members with knowledge or experience of the Third Sector and the new statutory body will have responsibility for:
 - providing national, professional and strategic leadership for community justice in Scotland
 - offering expert advice to Scottish Ministers and COSLA leaders
 - providing oversight of the delivery of a national performance, improvement and outcomes framework for community justice in Scotland
 - identifying and advising on how justice and non-justice resources can be aligned to improve outcomes
 - management of any services being delivered on a national basis
- a focus on collaboration (including commissioning, managing or delivering services nationally where appropriate)
- a mechanism, reflecting the national and local democratic responsibilities, for enabling discussions and

agreements on areas of mutual concern.

The Scottish Government's [response](#) (2013, p12) states that further work is still to be undertaken to establish which bodies will assume responsibility for functions such as programme accreditation, development of good practice, performance management and workforce development. A national strategy for workforce learning, development and innovation has also been proposed.

The functions of the [Risk Management Authority \(RMA\)](#) will not be incorporated in to the new body. The RMA will sit alongside, but separate from, the new national body.

It has not yet been determined whether funding for criminal justice social work services will remain ring-fenced. This issue will be considered further under the Funding work stream of the Reducing Reoffending Programme 2.

Next steps

The Scottish Government's [response](#) (2013 p11) states that "*Primary legislation will be required to implement the new structure for Community Justice.*" Details of the timing of this legislation will be announced in due course.

The Scottish Government is expected to consult on the detail of the new model in

early 2014. We will keep CJVSF members updated as more information becomes available.

For further information please contact:

Laura Mulcahy
Development Coordinator
Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum
Laura.Mulcahy@ccpscotland.org
0131 475 2676

About CJVSF

The Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum (CJVSF):

- Supports voluntary sector providers to continuously improve their own criminal justice services through collaboration and sharing of good practice
- Assists voluntary sector providers to understand, navigate and influence the complex and changing environment in which they operate
- Promotes broader awareness of the activities, value and impact of voluntary sector services within criminal justice.

The CJVSF is hosted by CCPS (the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland) and receives financial support from The Robertson Trust and The Monument Trust. Further details about the Forum can be found at:

<http://ccpscotland.org/policy/hot-topic-criminal-justice>

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