



Business Plan

2025/26

Introduction

The Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 established Community Justice Scotland (CJS) as the national organisation for promoting, monitoring and supporting improvement in the delivery of community justice in Scotland.

This Business Plan describes how CJS intends to perform its statutory functions, operate efficiently and effectively and deliver actions designed to improve the justice system in Scotland.

CJS is here for everyone who has experience of the justice system in Scotland. Victims, people who have broken the law, practitioners and professionals working within the criminal justice system, members of the Scottish Government, policy makers and legislators but most importantly the population of Scotland who need to be assured that the system of justice is fair, safe and effective.



Created by CJS, short film '[Who are Community Justice Scotland?](#)' explains the mission and purpose of the organisation.

CJS' vision

We all want Scotland to be a place where we can all feel safe. That's why we need a justice system than we can rely on. We'll achieve that goal through constant

innovation and by working closely with our partners to develop new ways of supporting people who have committed a crime, their families and the various agencies that help to break the cycle of reoffending, allowing people to make a positive contribution to society.

[The Community Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2016, Section 4](#), sets out **four main functions** for Community Justice Scotland.

These are:

- a) Promote the National Strategy for Community Justice.
- b) Monitor, promote and support improvement in, and keep the Scottish Ministers informed about, performance in the provision of community justice (and in particular, performance in relation to the achievement of the nationally determined outcomes).
- c) Promote and support improvement in the quality and range of provision of community justice (and in particular, improvement in meeting the needs of persons with a history of offending behaviour) and, making the best use of the facilities, people and other resources available to provide community justice
- d) Promote public awareness of benefits arising from persons who are convicted of offences being sentenced to community disposals rather than imprisonment or detention in penal institutions, and, managing and supporting persons [with a history of offending behaviour with a view to them not offending in the future or, if that is not realistic, reducing future offending by them.

In delivering these functions we act as expert advisors on community justice matters to our statutory partners, including Scottish Ministers and a wide range of other partners and stakeholders.

Sections 4(b) and (c), CJS also impose statutory responsibilities which are further specified in sections 26, 27 and Schedule 2 of the Act.

Section 26 requires us to monitor performance in local areas on achievement of nationally and locally determined outcomes ; and section 27 requires us to report annually on our assessment of performance in Scotland as a whole, both of which we do through this Outcome Activity Annual Report, as well as providing individual s26 reports for local authority areas and our Community Payback Order annual report produced under Schedule 2 of the Act.

Section 32 requires us to review the strategy for innovation, learning and development for community justice practitioners.

CJS will continue to undertake other work stipulated as a statutory responsibility under the Act including preparatory work for reviewing our Corporate Plan (section 10) which will be based on the requirements of the next iteration of the National strategy for community justice which Scottish Government is due to review in 2026.



Created by CJS, short film '[What is community justice?](#)' explains the benefits of a community first approach to justice

All the work of CJS supports the **aims** set out in the [Vision for Justice in Scotland](#) particularly:

- We have a society in which people feel, and are, safer in their communities
- We work together to address the underlying causes of crime and support everyone to live full and healthy lives
- We have effective, modern person-centred and trauma-informed approaches to justice in which everyone can have trust, including as victims, those accused of crimes and as individuals in civil disputes
- We support rehabilitation, use custody only where there is no alternative and work to reduce reoffending and re-victimisation
- We address the on-going impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to renew and transform justice

How We Work

CJS is a value driven organisation. We use our values to inform everything we do, including our work as detailed in this plan, our recruitment and the policies and procedures we have developed. Our values are.

- Respect
- Effectiveness
- Compassion
- Fairness
- Understanding
- Integrity

Corporate priorities

The framework for the actions detailed in this business plan will be the four corporate priorities (CP 1-4) specified in the [CJS Corporate Plan 2023-26](#).

Outcomes

Outcome 1

The community justice model is more effective across Scotland, with improved approaches developed, supported and implemented.

CJS will:

- 1.1 Inform, develop and implement a Nudge approach to improve attendance of those accused of crime at Sheriff courts on relevant dates, to reduce arrest for non-appearance warrants to avoid wasted court time, additional police time, and inconvenience and distress to victims and witnesses. Nudge involves developing approaches, including direct contact, which improve levels of attendance at court and participation in the justice system at vital points to reduce the likelihood of non-attendance and breach of court orders. This service will be delivered by the relevant justice partners.
- 1.2 Work with partners to develop data and information sharing agreements to allow Scottish Government and community justice partners to better understand the insights from management information that affect overall performance of the overall justice system, and impact progress towards community justice system outcomes, to improve joint working and drive service delivery improvements and innovation across the justice sector.
- 1.3 Progress relevant and necessary activities across the [Community Justice strategy delivery plan](#).
- 1.4 Ensure that Restorative Justice (RJ) test cases are completed and assessed with a view to developing proposals for RJ availability across Scotland

- 1.5 Engage with community justice partners and partnerships across Scotland to:
- Identify good practice, monitor performance on the achievement of community justice outcomes as outlined in the national strategy
 - Provide resources and tools to drive and support improvement
 - Report to Ministers and CJPs on performance including the range and performance of services and supports available across Scotland, including gaps and variability
- 1.6 Provide oversight and assurance of the new national voluntary throughcare service led by Sacro with, Access to Industry, Action for Children, Apex, Barnardo's Scotland, Circle, Turning Point Scotland and Families Outside.
- 1.7 Develop an options appraisal that considers potential bail support and compliance approaches to Scottish Government for consideration. This aims to reduce the evidenced impact of non-compliance to the justice system and increasing prison population.'



A mentor from Apex Scotland helps share carpentry skill. Photo from [Capturing Community Justice Flickr photo bank](#).

Outcome 2

Community justice is fully considered in emerging national policy and legislation to improve CJ practice and support efforts to shift the balance from custody to community.

CJS will:

- 2.1 Support work to develop, improve and implement Diversion from Prosecution National Guidance due to be published in 2025/26.
- 2.2 Support and inform the independent review of sentencing and penal policy.
- 2.3 Increase partnership working to inform legislation, policy and improve practice, specifically in relation to:
 - Strengthening community-based services to drive down the use of remand and reduce the prison population when it is safe to do so
 - Increasing community sentences including Unpaid Work
 - Using Electronic Monitoring for Bail
 - Increasing Diversion from prosecution
 - Strengthening alternatives to remand
 - Increasing effective use of requirements within CPOs
 - Supporting triage and bail assessment and reports
- 2.4 In addition, CJS will respond to relevant government consultations, requests for briefing and the provision of evidence to Parliament.

Outcome 3

The community and workforce have an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice.

CJS will:

- 3.1 Develop and deliver a new Communications Strategy for 2025 – 28.
- 3.2 Continue to improve and promote the [Community Interventions and Support Directory \(CISD\)](#) and support partners to provide up to date information to ensure accuracy of the directory.
- 3.3 Continue to improve the accessibility and functionality of the corporate website; increasing the visibility of information that is relevant to the sector.
- 3.4 Publish and implement a revised Engagement Strategy.

- 3.5 Increase the visibility of community justice and reinforce corporate messages across relevant media platforms, at a local and national level.
- 3.6 Work with local partners to create a language guide on stigma to support local public communications.

Outcome 4

The community justice workforce is fully supported through access to a range of quality training, resources and services.

CJS will:

- 4.1 Continue to develop and improve the involvement of key stakeholders in the design, development and updating of learning products.
- 4.2 Expand and improve access to the training and support that we offer and further develop and provide it in line with the assessed needs and priorities of community justice sector partners.
- 4.3 We will ensure training and support is provided to all Local Authorities that implement the Caledonian System.



[Caledonian System](#) uses an integrated whole family approach to address domestic abuse of women by men in Scotland.

Outcome 5

CJS will achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency by driving significant improvements in our organisation continuing to achieve robust stronger governance, within, efficient internal processes including CJS' project management approach, an ethical infrastructure, robust financial control and appropriate investment in our people.

CJS will deliver:

- 5.1 An ethical and robust governance programme along with continued development of the diversity and skillset of our Board members.
- 5.2 Our People Strategy and Fair Work Framework with a continued focus on our equity diversity and inclusion plan.
- 5.3 All financial governance requirements and assess potential financial services products that may better meet the needs of the organisation with a view to development of a business case for the consideration of the Board.
- 5.4 A robust and ethical sustainability strategy across all delivery areas.
- 5.5 Effective improvements to CJS infrastructure including using appropriate business and project management approaches, our engagement ethos, and consideration of appropriate emerging technology and automation approaches.
- 5.6 Develop and implement an improved system for planning and performance reporting before the publication of our next Corporate Plan.

Our Budget

CJS is a non -departmental public body (NDPB) funded by the Scottish Government through grant-in-aid.

Currently, funding settlements for central government public bodies are on an annual basis. For 2025/26, CJS will receive Core funding of £3.860 million as well as additional funding support for Restorative Justice (anticipated at £0.343 million).

A more detailed breakdown of expenditure for 2025/26 is shown here:

Area	Salaries (£)	Operational (£)	Total (£)
Insights & Intelligence	378,391	27,311	405,702
Learning & Engagement	1,469,229	205,820	1,675,049
National Engagement (Policy Partnerships & Projects) *	727,466	125,760	853,226
Communications	248,563	64,220	312,783
Corporate Services	397,717	237,293	635,010
Governance & Leadership	314,912	6,070	320,982
TOTAL	3,536,280	666,473	4,202,752

** The National Engagement figures detailed above include anticipated total funding of £342,752 for Restorative Justice. This is a provisional figure and the funding allocation for this is to be confirmed at the start of the 2025/26 financial year.*

CJS has been carrying out a review of current resource allocation through a Workforce Planning Project in 2024/2025, to ensure that our resources are allocated effectively and continue to support delivery of our Business Plan 2025/26 and within our budget and to provide further security of funding to deliver our operational priorities. The budget table outlines our budget under each area for 2025/26. This shows that the organisation has prioritised resourcing the activities detailed in this plan.

CJS acknowledges that there is considerable strain on the public finances and that situation is likely to apply for at least the duration of this plan. In recognition of this, we are committed to demonstrating value for money and maximising effectiveness.

How we will report effectiveness

Our effectiveness will ultimately be measured by the impact we have on our mission to improve the justice system by enabling and supporting use of community justice options in all appropriate cases to bring increased benefit to all those involved in or affected by it.

We will report to the CJS Board on the impact CJS is having within the justice sector and society more generally. This will include assurance that our work is delivering in line with this plan and highlight areas in which we need to improve.

Our progress against all the measures laid out in this plan will also be reported through our Annual Report and Accounts which are published each year.

Outcomes vs. Deliverables

APPENDIX 1










What we intend to achieve this year:

Outcome	Activity	Deliverables/Outputs	Anticipated Completion date
1. The community justice model is more effective across Scotland, with improved approaches developed, supported and implemented.	1.1	A Nudge project is established by partner agencies and the number of non-attendance warrants issued declines from 2024/25 levels.	March 26
	1.2	New data and information sharing agreements that meet the needs of CJS and partners across the justice system are established.	March 26
	1.3	Updates on achievement of community justice strategy action plan deliverables are provided to SG.	March 26
	1.4	RJ test cases are completed.	March 26
	1.5	Updates on improvement activities, guidance and support materials developed and engagements undertaken with CJP's and other partners are shared and reported. The statutory reports required under Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 (Outcome Activity Annual Report and Community Payback Order report) is consulted upon and published.	March 26
	1.6	Arrangements are in place for monitoring the new national voluntary throughcare service.	March 26

Outcome	Activity	Deliverables/Outputs	Anticipated Completion date
	1.7	An options appraisal is developed for Scottish Government on bail support services.	March 26
2. Community justice is fully considered in emerging national policy and legislation to improve CJ practice and support efforts to shift the balance from custody to community.	2.1	Diversion from prosecution guidance is agreed, issued and implemented.	September 25
	2.2	Engagement with the Sentencing and Penal Policy Review is maintained, and CJS' contribution is significant and evidenced.	December 25
	2.3	We track and assess the effectiveness of the work we do to improve policy and practice.	March 26
	2.4	We respond to all relevant government consultations, requests for briefing and evidence to Parliament.	March 26
3. The community and workforce have an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice.	3.1	Our new Communications Strategy is developed and published.	March 26
	3.2	Content of the CISD directory is improved and its use increases.	March 26
	3.3	Content on our website, and access to the content, increases.	March 26
	3.4	Our revised Engagement Strategy is developed and published.	March 26
	3.5	Our use of social media increases and engagement across all communications channels rises.	March 26

Outcome	Activity	Deliverables/Outputs	Anticipated Completion date
	3.6	Creation of stigma language guide.	September 25
4. The community justice workforce is fully supported through access to a range of quality training, resources and services.	4.1	New / updated learning products continue to be developed with stakeholder involvement.	March 26
	4.2	Strategic Training Group reaches agreement on sector training need and priorities and members' responsibilities.	June 25
	4.3	Availability of Caledonian system across Scotland increases.	March 26
5. CJS will achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency by driving significant improvements in our organisation continuing to achieve robust stronger governance, within, efficient internal processes including CJS' project management approach, an ethical infrastructure, robust financial control and appropriate investment in our people.	5.1	New Board members are on-boarded, and all members access relevant training and support.	June 25
	5.2	We will design and deliver an effective People Strategy with a continued focus on inclusion and equity.	March 26
	5.3	Our finance function continues to operate effectively, reports regularly to the Board and Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), meets the	March 26

Outcome	Activity	Deliverables/Outputs	Anticipated Completion date
		requirements of external audit and considers use of suitable financial services products to further improve efficiency and compliance	
	5.4	Our sustainability duties are achieved and reported.	March 26
	5.5	Our digital strategy is refreshed, and appropriate applications are identified, acquired and brought into operational use, as appropriate, including exploration of the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Project Management Approaches continues to be used across CJS.	March 26
	5.6	Improved systems for our planning and our performance reporting are implemented.	February 26

Deliverables	Outcome No.	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Government on bail support services.													
Diversion from prosecution guidance is agreed, issued and implemented.	2												
Engagement with the Sentencing and Penal Policy Review is maintained, and CJS' contribution is significant and evidenced.	2												
We track and assess the effectiveness of the work we do to improve policy and practice.	2												
We respond to all relevant government consultations, requests for briefing and evidence to Parliament.	2												
Our new Communications Strategy is developed and published.	3												
Content of the CISC directory is improved and its use increases.	3												
Content on our website, and access to the content, increases.	3												
Our revised Engagement Strategy is developed and published.	3												
Our use of social media increases and engagement	3												

Deliverables	Outcome No.	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
across all communications channels rises.													
Creation of stigma language guide.	3												
New / updated learning products continue to be developed with stakeholder involvement.	4												
Strategic Training Group reaches agreement on sector training need and priorities and members' responsibilities.	4												
Availability of Caledonian system across Scotland increases.	4												
New Board members are on-boarded, and all members access relevant training and support	5												
We will design and deliver an effective People Strategy with a continued focus on inclusion and equity.	5												
Our finance function continues to operate effectively, reports regularly to the Board and Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), meets the requirements of external audit and considers use of suitable financial services products to further improve efficiency and compliance	5												
Our sustainability duties are achieved and reported.	5												

Deliverables	Outcome No.	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Our digital strategy is refreshed, and appropriate applications are identified, acquired and brought into operational use, as appropriate, including exploration of the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Project Management Approaches continues to be used across CJS.	5												
Improved systems for our planning and our performance reporting are implemented.	5												

APPENDIX 2

In addition to the activities outlined in this Plan, CJS undertakes several statutory and regulatory functions, which are business as usual for the organisation. These include:

Annual Report & Accounts	Improvement
Business Management	Information
Business Planning	National Training
Commissioning	Project Management
Communications	People
Digital	Policy
Finance	Risk
Governance	Statutory Reports
Health and Safety	Training & Learning

