



Highland Community Justice Partnership

Minutes of Meeting held 16 June 2021, virtually on MS Teams

Present: Ross MacKillop (Chair), Niall MacLennan SFRS, James Maybee Highland Council, Brian McKirdy SPS, Roddy Bailey SDS, Lindsay Tulloch Police Scotland, Jonathan Golder DWP, Sally Amor NHS,

In Attendance: Margaret McShane HTSI, Mhairi Wylie HTSI, Alan Grant HTSI

Ross opened the meeting by thanking Niall for all his previous work as Chair.

1. Apologies:
Debbie Stewart HADP, Alan Prosser VSS, Ruth Thomson SCTS
2. Declaration of interest:
None.
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting:
Notes of the previous Community Justice Partnership Meeting in March were circulated for noting.

AGREED as correct.
4. Community Justice Update:
Margaret spoke to the update that had been circulated. In particular, James asked if there was more information around the work involving the OPIF. Margaret outlined the timescales for this piece of work and how it will fit with the revision of the National Strategy for Community Justice. It is envisaged that the framework will be more user friendly and relevant to the work around community justice.
5. Chair's Meeting with CJS:
Ross updated the meeting that CJS are involved in looking at communication in relation to community justice, particularly the general understanding, benefits, and public knowledge. From a consultation with the public carried

out across Scotland, some of the public knew it is working to reduce reoffending, looking at root causes and financial benefits of alternative punishment. The consultation also found that there is limited knowledge of community justice in the public domain and that there is confusion over the terminology.

Some information around CPOs and reoffending data had appeared in the press and social media. In particular, Karen McCluskey CE of CJS had mentioned a case in Inverness which had been thought of as a good example which had resulted in a good outcome.

Ross mentioned that perhaps the pressure from the courts could assist with early pleas. Sheriff Matheson updated that currently there is no incentive around this.

6. Review of CJ Plan:

Ross updated the meeting that the recently held Development Sessions for the CJ Plan from 2022 onwards have been useful. It is the intention to hold a 'wash up' session towards the end of summer for the wider partnership to participate in. It is hoped that this will be a face-to-face event as opposed to a virtual meeting.

7. Azets Report:

Margaret spoke to the progress of the Health Check Report which Azets are compiling, and it is anticipated this will be completed and circulated by the end of June. At present there is also work ongoing in relation to the KPI Dashboard which the partnership will be able to access and monitor for their use.

Mhairi outlined the reasoning behind the data analysis and that although the information was readily available, the resource to carry this out within the CJP was limited. The data sets used have been suggested by CJS in their guidance around compiling a strengths and needs assessment and will ultimately add value to the work of the CJP.

Ross acknowledged that there will be cross-over themes with other agencies but the goal of the CJP is to reduce reoffending.

Sally acknowledged that public health may have been in a better place to contribute if the pandemic had not happened, but the data would be key to aligning work within public protection committees.

8. Custody Link Project Update:

Alan spoke to the report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Some of the issues highlighted are -

- People Appearing in custody an indication of a red flag
- Poor coordination in services
- High levels of despair/mental health issues/drugs/alcohol
- Dealing with those with complex needs is time consuming
- The effects of abusive relationships on children – ACEs
- The effects of Bail on some victims and perpetrators

Mhairi updated the meeting that the referral rate for the project had been anticipated to be 5% but was nearer to 20%. She asked if there was specific information around -

- i) if there has been success in significantly reducing this group from re-presenting in custody and
- ii) of the 90+ individuals who have engaged with the Link Worker, how many would have fallen through the gap had the Link Worker not been there?

Alan updated that -

- i) some people have presented a second time but also have a long history of being taken into custody. The Link Workers are working towards stabilisation of the client. There is difficulty for them being able to navigate the system e.g mental health support or housing. There have been a large number of referrals to Addictions Counselling in Inverness
- ii) many people have been unable to access support and the Link Worker has been a lifeline for them. It helps that we are able to listen to them, are independent and not part of any organisation.

Ross stated that there is clearly an unmet need being met especially in terms of accessing services.

Lindsay updated the meeting he was heartened by the report and the uptake of the service but there was a lot of work to do in relation to coordination of the statutory and third sector services. He also thought this should be brought to the attention of the CPP Board as an example of what partnership working looks like for the most disadvantaged. He intimated that he is keen to support and develop the project. Through Community Safety & Resilience and Harm Reduction avenues we can look at how to engage with those in need at the right time.

James mentioned that in terms of accessing mental health services, they are hearing repeatedly about a particular person falling through the cracks and the only place they can access services is in prison.

Action – Ross to highlight through the HPPCOG

Sally mentioned that public health is looking at how to work across public protection for children and young people who are vulnerable in relation to mental health, drugs and alcohol and violence. The report has shown how fragmented services are and how can we work on that. She acknowledged there is an interest and passion for change. Sally suggested she meet with Lindsay to discuss this out with the meeting. Sally referenced a pilot in West Midlands looking at different approaches and responses to domestic abuse that had reduced the numbers of women being taken into custody. There is now a clinical psychologist in the Highland Drug and Alcohol Service who is supporting the development of trauma informed practices and providing some clinical work.

Ross mentioned that trauma informed practice needs to be built into this and social deprivation adds another layer of complication.

Alan mentioned that there is a 'critical friend' approach to the work they are doing in order that positive relationships are formed and maintained. The Link Workers will also work with those before and after they are convicted.

Mhairi updated the meeting that the Link Worker Project will run into 2023 due to delays with Covid-19. It will run as normal until September 2022 (which is just over 12 months away) and will run down from then on. A decision will need to be reached as to whether the project or aspects of it are sustained. If there is any understanding required in relation to the project, then partners are welcome to get in touch. At the moment there is a demand issue, and this may well grow.

Sally also mentioned the Pathfinder Project which has been funded for 1 year and hoped their work would complement what is already in place in Highland.

9. Finance:

James updated that he had submitted the annual return to the Scottish Government in relation to how the funding for community justice has been used. The money has covered the CJ Manager post, and other contributions to the Azets Report, Custody Link Worker Project, and Small Change for Justice.

For 20/21, £57,387 has gone through, £5,111 of an underspend and £113 against this.

Of the money for 2021/22, it is thought there will be £50k plus an additional £12.5k, James will confirm this.

10. Good News:

James spoke about a CPO project which had taken place in Central Park in Ross-shire which was used for a dog exercise area and which the team had contributed work to. This was featured in the local newspaper.

There was also a bench restored in Wick at a panoramic viewpoint by those on a CPO and this had also received positive media coverage.

These articles help to bring the good work to public attention and raise awareness of the benefits not only to the individuals but also the community.

Ross mentioned that he has shared information around involving Apex (who also work with those on CPOs) to the Community Planning Partnership to perhaps consider using this service for ground maintenance with the Council.

11. AOCB:

Sheriff Matheson mentioned that there have been more issues with the delays in the courts e.g. if someone is on a curfew for 12 months and they breach that, then they are brought back to the court again. The expectation is that the next 12 months will be busy, and the backlog could take as long as 5 years to clear.

Lindsay asked about the partnership accessing Proceeds of Crime funds through the Cashback for Communities, this can be used for young people and prevention of crime. Mhairi mentioned some youth organisations have accessed this but she's not aware of how it's been spent. Lindsay suggested it could be borne in mind for future plans.

James spoke about the courts being back up and running and that there will be additional business on top of normal business for JSW. It's estimated there will be a 30-40% increase in business to get through the backlog. Some estimated figures around this have been produced. Some of the Covid Consequential funding has been used to employ more staff to deal with the demand.

James also mentioned there has been a spotlight nationally around Bail/Bail Supervision and the roll out of Electronic Monitoring which will happen later in the year. Currently the numbers for Bail Supervision in Highland are low

although there have been positive discussions with the Sheriff in Wick around this.

Sheriff Matheson mentioned that there has been difficulty with early pleas being done and there is a struggle to get people to trial. She is keen to use Bail Supervision.

Action – James to send Sheriff Matheson information on Bail Supervision directly

Niall mentioned that he is still following up on the Action around the employment of those with an offending history and suggested a meeting with Ross and Margaret

Action – Margaret to arrange a meeting with Ross and Niall to discuss

Ross mentioned that he is considering the use of a partner update template for use at the CJP meetings which would enable partners to provide an update in relation to any outstanding actions they have and a brief update on items of note from their agency in advance of the meeting.

AGREED

Action – Margaret to circulate a possible template for use to the CJP

Margaret mentioned that there had been a brief discussion between James, Mhairi and herself around using some of the Covid Consequential funding within the third sector in a 'Dragon's Den' type of event which would enable third sector organisations to assist with issues in particular areas. James had suggested this be raised at the CJP for wider views.

James updated the meeting that a sum of money has been set aside for the third sector and must be spent against Covid – Recover, Renew & Transform. He is open to suggestions from the CJP as to how we can use the resource for recovery from Covid.

Action – James, Mhairi & Margaret to look at a 'Dragon's Den' type of event

12. Date of next CJP Meetings:

Wed 8 September 1030 – 1230

Wed 8 December 1100 – 1300

Action Table

| No | Action | Who | Due Date | Update |
|-------|--|----------------------------|----------|---|
| 1/20 | Training for employers | Margaret | | Jun '21, Paul McCann at Disclosure Scotland contacted again and to get back re a digital programme - ongoing |
| 3/20 | Delivery of employment training programme | Roddy & Jonathan | | Jun '21, Roddy to review and discuss with Jonathan at DWP - ongoing |
| 4/20 | Discussion around procurement framework | All | | Jun '21, Carried forward to – Washup Session Sep 21 |
| 5/20 | Executive summary of findings following Small Change for Justice | All | | Jun '21, Carried forward to – Washup Session Sep 21 |
| 6/20 | Discussion re. Bail Supervision following national event | Niall & James | | Jun '21, Event on hold due to Covid-19 |
| 7/20 | Second Chancers Exhibition II, contact Eden Court | Margaret | | Jun '21, On hold due to Covid-19 |
| | Venues to be considered | James, Roddy, Libby, Sally | | Jun '21, On hold due to Covid-19 |
| 8/20 | Update to CPP re. VRU project in Caithness & Sutherland | Niall | | Jun '21, Sally provided brief update, work is still ongoing. Agenda item & update to be provided at the September CJP |
| 9/20 | Follow up with employers who attended Courage of our Convictions event | Margaret | | Jun '21, Linked to Action 1, will be followed up, ongoing |
| 14/20 | Custody Link information to be circulated to CJP | Mhairi, Alan | | Jun '21, Yearly update - Complete |
| 18/20 | Look at different format for CJ Newsletter | Margaret | | Jun '21, ongoing |
| 19/20 | Review communication of CJP information | All | | Jun '21, ongoing – Comms Strategy for new CJ Plan |

| | | | | |
|-------|---|-------------------------|--|--|
| 21/20 | Information around young people transitioning to adult services (trauma informed approach) to be sent to Niall & Margaret | Sally | | Jun '21, Information from Sentencing Council – look at this as part of new plan – A22/20 - ongoing |
| 22/20 | Request to CJP for ideas for the interim plan | Margaret | | Jun '21, Complete |
| 1/21 | Niall to circulate key points of the Chairs Meeting with CJS to the CJP | Niall | | Jun '21, Complete |
| 2/21 | Achievement report to be circulated to CJS etc. | Margaret | | Jun '21, Complete |
| 3/21 | Achievement report to be circulated to CPP Board | Niall | | Jun '21, Complete (not sure I've captured this correctly) |
| 4/21 | Include Trauma Informed Practice in cross-cutting themes of CJ Plan extension | Margaret | | Jun '21, Complete |
| 5/21 | Margaret to request finance update from James & circulate to CJP | Margaret | | Jun '21, Complete |
| 6/21 | Margaret to circulate information in relation to RRT to CJP | Margaret | | Jun '21, Complete |
| 7/21 | Highlight issues around access to MH Services for those in the justice system to HPPCOG | Ross | | |
| 8/21 | Information around Bail Supervision to be sent to Sheriff Matheson | James | | |
| 9/21 | Discussion involving Niall & Ross around employment of those with an offending history. Margaret to arrange | Margaret | | |
| 10/21 | Template for updates to CJP Meetings to be circulated | Margaret | | |
| 11/21 | Discussion regarding 'Dragon's Den' event | James, Mhairi, Margaret | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |