

## **National strategy for community justice: revision consultation**

The Scottish Social Services Council is the regulator for the social work, social care and early years workforce in Scotland. Our work means the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

We protect the public by registering social service workers, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting their professional development. Where people fall below the standards of practice and conduct we can investigate and take action.

We:

- publish the national codes of practice for people working in social services and their employers
- register people working in social services and make sure they adhere to the SSSC Codes of Practice
- promote and regulate the learning and development of the social service workforce
- are the national lead for workforce development and planning for social services in Scotland.
- are an ONS statistics provider

## **Questions**

**Q1. Is the wording of the four national aims understandable?**

**Yes**

**No**

**If you answered no, please provide further explanation:**

Yes

**Q2. Do you think the four national aims capture the most important aspects of community justice?**

**Yes**

**No**

**If you answered no, please provide further explanation:**

Yes

**Q3. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the national aims for the revised National Strategy for Community Justice?**

National Aims	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Aim 1: Optimise the use of diversion and intervention at the earliest opportunity			X		
Aim 2: Ensure that robust and consistent community interventions and public protection arrangements are in place across Scotland			X		
Aim 3: Ensure that services are available to address the needs of individuals accused or convicted of an offence					X
Aim 4: Strengthen leadership, engagement, and partnership working					X

**Q4. To what extent do you agree/disagree that these community justice priority actions will contribute to the achievement of national Aim 1 (Optimise the use of diversion and intervention at the earliest opportunity)?**

Priority actions for Aim 1	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Enhance early intervention by ensuring greater consistency, confidence in and awareness of			X		

services which support the use of direct measures and diversion from prosecution					
2. Improve support for vulnerable individuals by ensuring the provision of consistent, equitable and accessible immediate support in a crisis and screening within Police Custody Centres					X
3. Improve support following arrest by ensuring substance use and mental health services are available and appropriate referrals take place at the earliest opportunity					X

**Q5. Do you have any further comments or suggested changes on how these priority actions will contribute to achieving Aim 1 (Optimise the use of diversion and intervention at the earliest opportunity)?**

The SSSC are concerned that the increased use of alternatives to prosecution will negatively impact our ability to carry out our public protection function.

During the pandemic, there has been evidence that alternatives to prosecution have been used for behaviour that we would consider serious. Such behaviour would prohibit an individual from gaining inclusion on our register or would prompt an investigation by our fitness to practise department which could result in the removal of the individual from our register. Our ability to thoroughly investigate allegations against social work, social care and early years practitioners is central to our role in protecting the public and promoting confidence in the workforce.

Presently we are prohibited from asking applicants and registrants about spent alternatives to prosecution in terms of schedule 3, paragraph 2(b) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Therefore, we are deeply concerned that a continued increase in the use of alternatives to prosecution for matters considered to be minor offences by COPFS could severely limit our ability to respond to concerns by vulnerable people and their families.

It is also critical that the public protection functions of regulators and other bodies are not diminished by preventing them from access information about alternatives to prosecution that may have been applied in cases about which they have an interest.

The SSSC would welcome the opportunity to work with partners in the justice system on how we can improve information sharing. Better information sharing could ensure that an increased use of community justice measures does not create barriers for social work, social care and early years regulation in Scotland.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree/disagree that these community justice priority actions will contribute to the achievement of national Aim 2 (Ensure that robust and consistent community interventions and public protection arrangements are in place across Scotland)?**

Priority actions for Aim 2	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
4. Support the use of credible and robust alternatives to remand by ensuring high quality services are consistently available and delivered effectively			X		
5. Strengthen supported management in the community by increasing and widening the use of electronic monitoring and technologies					X
6. Ensure that those given community					X

sentences are managed appropriately and safely by delivering high quality, consistently available, trauma-informed services and programmes that support public protection					
7. Ensure restorative justice is available across Scotland to all those who wish to access it by ensuring consistent provision and effective promotion of available services					X

**Q7. Do you have any further comments or suggested changes on how these priority actions will contribute to achieving Aim 2 (Ensure that robust and 23 consistent community interventions and public protection arrangements are in place across Scotland)?**

Please refer to our answer to Q5.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree/disagree that these community justice priority actions will contribute to the achievement of national Aim 3 (Ensure that services are available to address the needs of individuals accused or convicted of an offence)?**

Priority actions for Aim 3	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
8. Enhance individuals' access to health and social care and continuity of care following release from prison by improving the sharing of information between relevant partners					X

9. Ensure that the housing needs of individuals in prison are addressed consistently and at an early stage by fully implementing and embedding the SHORE standards across all local authority areas					X
10. Enhance individual's readiness for employment by ensuring increased access to employability support through effective education, learning, training, careers services and relevant benefit services					X
11. Enhance community integration and support by increasing and promoting greater consistency in the use of voluntary throughcare and third sector services					X

**Q9. Do you have any further comments or suggested changes on how these priority actions will contribute to achieving Aim 3 (Ensure that services are available to address the needs of individuals accused or convicted of an offence)?**

N/A

**Q10. To what extent do you agree/disagree that these community justice priority actions will contribute to the achievement of national Aim 4 (Strengthen leadership, engagement, and partnership working)?**

Priority actions for Aim 4	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
12. Deliver improved community justice outcomes by ensuring that effective leadership arrangements are in place and working well, collaborating with partners and planning strategically					X
13. Enhance partnership planning and implementation by ensuring the voices of victims, survivors, those with lived experience and their families are effectively incorporated					X
14. Support integration and reduce stigma by ensuring the local community and workforce have an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice					X

**Q11. Do you have any further comments or suggested changes on how these priority actions will contribute to achieving Aim 4 (Strengthen leadership, engagement, and partnership working)?**

N/A

**Q12. Do you have any other comments on the National Strategy for Community Justice: Revision Consultation document that were not captured in the national aims and priority actions questions?**

N/A

**Scottish Social Services Council**

**May 2022**