

**Sheriff Principal and Sheriffs of North Strathclyde Sheriffdom and
Chief Social Work Officers**

8 November 2019

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Criminal Justice Inspection

1. Background

1.1 In November 2018, the Care Inspectorate advised that it would lead an inspection of criminal justice social work services in West Dunbartonshire in line with the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 section 115, focussed on the implementation and management of community payback orders (CPOs) in West Dunbartonshire.

1.2 Within the scope of inspection, the service was evaluated against the following quality indicators:

- improving the life chances and outcomes for people subject to a
- community payback order;
- Impact on people who have committed offences;
- Assessing and responding to risk and need;
- Planning and providing effective intervention;
- Leadership of improvement and change.

2. Main Issues

2.1 The Care Inspectorate undertook inspection activity from January to April 2019 which focussed on delivery of community payback orders from October 2016 to October 2018. Inspection activity included preparation of a self evaluation with supporting evidence, file reading of a sample of 99 cases for individuals subject to Community Payback Orders (CPOs) and a series of interviews with 28 individuals, focus groups with staff, partner agencies, stakeholders (including sentencers) and senior managers.

2.2 The Care Inspectorate published their report on 6 August 2019¹ and the findings against each of the quality indicators assessed are summarised below:

Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Improving the life chances and outcomes for people subject to CPO	Weak
Impact on people who have committed offences	Adequate
Assessing and responding to risk and need	Weak
Planning and providing effective intervention	Weak
Leadership of improvement and change	Weak

¹ <https://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/care-news-online/118-publications/inspection-reports-local-authority/justice/justice-social-work-reports/5230-inspection-of-justice-social-work-services-in-west-dunbartonshire-council>

2.3 The report identified the following key messages as priority areas for improvement:

- The service needs to develop ways of being able to demonstrate the different support is making in improving outcomes for individuals and its contribution to community safety;
- Achieve a culture within the service which supports the prioritisation of, and adherence with, National Outcomes and Standards and FRAME guidance for all elements of a Community Payback Order;
- Achieve sustained improvements in the delivery of unpaid work service;
- Leaders to have greater oversight of performance across all justice social work services, supported by the development of systems and frameworks which identify priorities and inform decisions regarding service delivery and design.

2.4 A comprehensive action plan has been developed and is being implemented to address each of the findings (Appendix 1) which, as a live document, is continually updated. A number of actions which have taken place or are being progressed are included under the column 'Update on activity: October 2019', however a summary of key actions is also included below.

New service manager post

2.5 Since coming into post in November 2018, the Head of Service identified necessary changes to management and leadership to ensure the service could better deliver against needs and priorities. A new post of criminal justice service manager was created and the successful candidate took up post on 14 October 2019 who will focus fully on criminal justice and lead on the improvement plan.

Professional external support

2.6 Reflecting the significance of the inspection report and recognition of the scale of improvement activity, the Chief Social Work Officer and HSCP Chief Officer have engaged with a range of professional colleagues to support the development and delivery of the improvement plan.

2.7 This includes meetings with the Council Chief Executive, Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government and Chief Inspector, Strategic Scrutiny (Care Inspectorate) where the improvement plan was discussed - a further meeting later this year will review progress to deliver on the improvement plan.

2.8 This also forms a standing item on regular meetings between the HSCP Chief Officer and Council Chief Executive and at the weekly operational criminal justice management meetings.

2.9 The Chief Social Work Officer and Care Inspectorate colleagues have updated the action plan, where Inspectors recommended some fairer and more realistic timescales for actions could support achievable and sustained outcomes.

2.10 The Chief Executive and Leads for Analysis & Improvement and Learning, Development & Innovation from Community Justice Scotland are also meeting

with senior officers to develop a development plan to support staff training and practice improvement within the short term (first four months), medium term (three to six months) and longer term (six to twelve months), centred around:

- Risk assessment tools
- Accredited interventions
- Unpaid work
- Case management planning.

2.11 The Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Justice has also written to the Council Chief Executive, referencing the local improvement action plan and our engagement with the Chief Social Work Advisor and Care Inspectorate. He advised that the National Community Justice Leadership Group will take a close interest in the national implications of issues arising from scrutiny and assurance of community justice. The Scottish Government Community Justice Division is being kept informed of progress in delivering the plan.

Performance Improvement

- 2.12 As referred to earlier, the service previously struggled to sustain improved performance against national key performance indicators, particularly following a 70% increase in CPOs in 2016-17. More recent performance has, however, improved in conjunction with colleagues at Dumbarton Sheriff Court. Social Work staff are now notified of outcomes from court within 24 hours and initial induction appointments are held twice per week, targeting the days of busiest court activity. Recent key performance indicators are included at Appendix 2.
- 2.13 These improvements will be kept under regular review, as part of a monthly criminal justice performance report which is being developed for senior managers to track performance against national standards.
- 2.14 Access to various staff training opportunities has already included court report skills, risk practice training and accredited high risk offender interventions, whilst some individuals will take part in the second pilot of training for unpaid work staff from January 2020.

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1 November 2019

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Improvement Action Plan
Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

Key messages from Care Inspectorate Report

Key message (KM1):

Individuals subject to Community Payback Orders are treated with respect and value the support they receive from staff. The service now needs to develop ways of being able to demonstrate the difference this support is making in improving outcomes for individuals and its contribution to community safety.

Key message (KM2):

A culture has developed in justice social work services whereby National Outcomes and Standards are not routinely adhered to. Practice is not consistent with the national framework for assessment and management of risk. In a high proportion of instances, case management plans are not completed, which impacts on the quality of targeted intervention individuals receive. Plans are not reviewed in accordance with national guidance.

Key message (KM3):

There has been poor performance in the delivery of unpaid work over a sustained period. However, recent improvement actions are encouraging and delivering success in a few important aspects.

Key message (KM4):

A new management team is in place and recognising the need for urgent improvement and modernisation of practice. Leaders need better systems to support them in gaining oversight of performance across all justice social work services. Given the scale of the improvements required, this is essential to identify priorities and ensure decisions regarding service planning and delivery are well informed.

Quality Indicators	Actions for improvement	Responsible	Timescales/ Review	Evidence of Improvement	Update on activity: October 2019
What Key Outcomes have we achieved?	Enhanced processes developed and introduced to ensure orders commence within timescales eg: appointments on day of sentencing, included in court reports; monthly performance report (KM1, 2, 3, 4)	Service Manager Unpaid Work Manager Senior Social Workers Information Lead	December 2019	Practice upholds national guidance	- Induction appointments now take place at court on date of sentence. - First appointment arranged for 24 hours after sentence. - Sheriff Court portal now generates Orders within 24 hours of sentence. - Performance report being developed and tested.
1.1 Improve life chances and outcomes for people subject to Community Payback Orders	Evidence of impact to reduce offending behaviour will be monitored and recorded on individual case management plans (KM1, 2, 4)	Senior Social Workers Service Manager Information Lead	December 2019	Effective, evidence-based interventions	

Summary Improvement Action Plan: Inspection of Criminal Justice Social Work Services (6 August 2019)

Quality Indicators	Actions for improvement	Responsible	Timescales/ Review	Evidence of Improvement	Update on activity: October 2019
	Access to improved range of accredited programmes to reduce re-offending (KM1, 2)	Head of Service Service Manager	March 2020	Improved case management plans	Justice Outcome Star training completed for some staff. Site visit to nearby area will inform implementation plan.
	A Training Needs Analysis is being completed and training will be delivered to support practitioners around risk assessment and risk management plans (KM2, 3, 4)	CJ co-ordinator Community Justice Scotland (Head of Learning, Development & Innovation)	<i>October 2019</i>	Risk assessments are fully completed and directly inform case management plans	Underway by Community Justice Scotland and local co-ordinator.
How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders? 2.1 Impact on people who have committed offences	The unpaid work service will be further developed to maximise opportunities to benefit the community and build on skills of individuals, working with Council departments, local charities and other community partners (KM 1, 2, 3)	Unpaid Work Manager Council Department Leads Third sector organisations	December 2019	Tailored unpaid work placements to support people to complete their Orders	Unpaid work manager has engaged with Council assets team to identify suitable workshop premises.
	Increase opportunities for individuals to undertake 'other activity' requirements to reduce re-offending by linking with key partners eg: addictions, employability, literacy (KM1, 2, 3)	Unpaid Work Manager Senior Social Workers	December 2019	Expanded opportunities to address underlying issues	- Pathway to addiction services developed which removes self-referral requirement. - Pathways for mental health and learning disability services in development.
	Increase volunteering, employability and training opportunities particularly for individuals who have completed their Orders in partnership with Community Volunteering Services (KM1, 2, 3)	Unpaid Work Manager CVS	December 2019	Range of opportunities for individuals following completion of their orders	

Summary Improvement Action Plan: Inspection of Criminal Justice Social Work Services (6 August 2019)

Quality Indicators	Actions for improvement	Responsible	Timescales/ Review	Evidence of Improvement	Update on activity: October 2019
	Improved access to evidence-based interventions that are shown to reduce re-offending (KM1, 2)	Head of Service CJ co-ordinator CJ Scotland (Head of LDI)	March 2020	Evidence of individuals being supported to reduce re-offending	- Scoping vulnerable men's group to mirror existing intervention programme for vulnerable women - Following training needs analysis, Community Justice Scotland to explore resource provision for local delivery of accredited programmes - Two staff undertaking accredited training for high risk offender programme
How good is our delivery of services? 5.2 Assessing and responding to risk and need	Achieve compliance with National Outcomes and Standards by developing monthly reports, include in case reviews and staff supervision (KM2, 4)	Service Manager Senior Social Workers Information Lead	March 2020	Evidence of performance quality and quality standards	- Unpaid work induction sessions in place on Monday and Thursday each week, linked to busiest court days. - Improved recording of failures to attend and reason to ensure appropriate follow-up.
	Appropriate, accredited risk assessments to be fully applied and reviewed by managers to measure impact of interventions (KM1, 2, 4)	Community Justice Scotland (Head of LDI) Senior Social Workers	March 2020	Robust risk assessments, quality case management plans and interventions	
	Sample audit of high risk offender cases (KM1, 2, 4)	c/o Head of Service	July 2019	Summary of findings informs training needs analysis & staff supervision	- COMPLETE: 5 case files audited and findings reported; has informed training needs analysis and individual supervision. - Further action: review of all high risk offender cases by service manager.
	Joint awareness session for MAPPA for social work and Police (KM1, 2)	MAPPA co-ordinator	January 2020	Improved relationships & understanding around high risk offender management	Training to community police officers completed (September 2019).

Summary Improvement Action Plan: Inspection of Criminal Justice Social Work Services (6 August 2019)

Quality Indicators	Actions for improvement	Responsible	Timescales/ Review progress	Evidence of improvement	Update on activity: October 2019
How good is our delivery of services? 5.3 Planning and Providing effective interventions	Regular review of supervision plans, improved frequency of home visits and increased focus on addressing risk and need, supported by enhanced case recordings and reports (KM1, 2, 3)	Senior Social Workers Information Lead	March 2020	Robust case management with regular review of effectiveness	
	Seek feedback from service users, their families and local communities to shape and enhance local services (KM 1, 2, 3)	Social Workers Senior Social Workers Information Lead	March 2020	Enhanced and community awareness and service provision	
	Introduce a programme of development and supervision for practitioners and managers (KM 2, 4)	Head of Service OD Manager (WDC) Community Justice Scotland (Head of LDI)	December 2019	Skilled workforce with continuous development opportunities	- West Dunbartonshire confirmed as the 2nd pilot area for training programme for three unpaid work staff commencing January 2020. - Service Manager joining Social Work Scotland Justice Standing Committee.
	Introduce monthly reports to monitor compliance with key performance indicators and national standards (KM 1, 2, 4)	Information Lead Head of Service	November 2019	Effective oversight of demand analysis and performance standards	Performance report in development – will include 3 national key performance indicators, unpaid work activity and caseload data.
How good is our leadership?	Weekly management meetings to monitor progress to achieve action plan (KM2, 4)	Service Manager Senior Social Workers	July 2019 onwards	Management oversight, accountability and monitoring	Improvement plan is a standing item on weekly management meetings.
9.4 Leadership of improvement and change	Appoint to new post of criminal justice service manager (KM2, 4)	Head of Service	Interviewing 8 August	Enhanced leadership for improvement activity	COMPLETE: Service Manager in post 14 October 2019.

Summary Improvement Action Plan: Inspection of Criminal Justice Social Work Services (6 August 2019)

Quality Indicators	Actions for improvement	Responsible	Timescales/ Review	Evidence of Improvement	Update on activity: October 2019
	Report on inspection/improvement plan and regular update reports to HSCP Board, Clinical & Care Governance Committee and Safer DIG (KM2, 4)	Head of Service Chief Officer	Board: 7 August (complete) CCG: TBC Safer DIG: TBC	Governance and oversight of inspection findings; regular updates to monitor improved practice	Monthly update report by service manager on improvement activity. Propose regular report to HSCP Board, Audit Committee or Clinical and Care Governance group.
	Develop the service with a clear, aspirational vision, purpose and direction (KM4)	Head of Service Community Justice Scotland (Head of LDI)	October 2019	Motivated committed workforce with clear, meaningful, shared objectives	- Piloting monthly professional supervision groups (social workers, paraprofessionals, admin support) which will also inform service vision. - Manager on national unpaid work practice network - Confirm representative for Adult Justice Throughcare Practice Network from November 2019

Criminal Justice Key Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Q3 2017/18	Q4 2017/18	Q1 2018/19	Q2 2018/19	Q3 2018/19	Q4 2018/19	Q1 2019/20	August 2019	
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Target
Percentage of Criminal Justice Social Work Reports submitted to court by noon on the day prior to calling.	89%	82%	89%	95%	84%	85%	87%	75%	88%	95%	98%
Percentage of Community Payback Orders attending an induction session within 5 working days of sentence.	87%	84%	87%	57%	56%	55%	64%	63%	56%	76%	80%
Percentage of Unpaid work and other activity requirements commenced (work or activity) within 7 working days of sentence.	0%	11%	2%	57%	29%	35%	48%	50%	58%	78%	80%