

## **Community Justice Outcomes, Performance, and Improvement Framework**

### **Frequently Asked Questions v1.1**

#### **The purpose of this document**

This document provides answers to some of the frequently asked questions on the Outcomes, Performance and Improvement (OPI) Framework developed under the new model for community justice in Scotland. It should be read in conjunction with OPI Framework itself, also available on the Knowledge Hub.

The audience is primarily those co-ordinating the implementation of the new model for community justice in their local area; be they those in a community justice co-ordinator role or individual partners.

#### **Updating the FAQ**

The intention is that FAQ be an evolving document and refreshed material will be published from time to time.

If there are specific questions and answers which you believe would be helpful to be included in this document then please email the redesign team at [redesignofcommunityjustice@gov.scot](mailto:redesignofcommunityjustice@gov.scot). These may include, for example, ones answered at a local level which you feel would be useful for all partners and areas to hear.

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q What is the purpose of the Outcomes, Performance and Improvement Framework?**

A The OPI Framework sets out the outcomes required to achieve the vision presented in the National Strategy for Community Justice. It provides a set of common outcomes and indicators which are strongly linked to supporting an individual's desistance from offending and a set of tools to allow for monitoring of progress against the vision.

These will support Community Justice Partners as they seek to make improvements in their local areas; by helping to set baselines, assess partner's respective contributions, evaluate collective services and activities, and report effectively on progress, recognising both strengths and areas for further development.

**Q Why do we need an Outcomes, Performance and Improvement Framework for Community Justice?**

A In part, the need for the new OPI Framework stems from criticism of previous community justice models for their inability to accurately measure, understand, and evidence success.

However it also addresses the clear desire, voiced during the public consultations to develop the new model for community justice, for both the better sharing of good practice and for assurance that improved outcomes are being delivered.

**Q Why isn't there a focus on performance "*management*" in the Framework.**

A The OPI Framework provides opportunities for change, for driving improvement in quality and services delivering improved outcomes, not just performance. When considering the OPI Framework, therefore, it is better to think of 'performance *reporting*' rather than 'performance *management*'.

The Framework is not intended to be a simple performance management tool or, indeed, a complicated system but, rather, a means to guide community justice partners to the information they need to focus efforts on the improvements that matter to their local areas. In so doing, it allows community justice partners and Community Justice Scotland to report on achievements as well as identify issues and blockages.

Performance management – ensuring that there are appropriate internal controls to monitor the extent to which the organisation is achieving what it is supposed to achieve - takes place within the partner agencies or within the boundaries of specific initiatives, including joint initiatives.

**Q What is the purpose of undertaking a community justice needs assessment?**

A To consider the specific community justice landscape and issues in the local area and to help understand which of the common outcomes require particular improvement action.

**Q How should the Common Outcomes and Indicators in the OPI Framework be used?**

A All of the common outcomes must be considered, delivered against and reported against for each local area.

It will be for the statutory Community Justice Partners for the area to work together to:

- Understand their local needs;
- Baseline achievement against each outcome; and

- Agree which of those outcomes will be priorities for specific improvement action for their area over the defined period for their Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan.

The statutory Community Justice Partners then select the relevant common indicators to support their achievement of the common outcomes locally.

In undertaking the above, statutory partners must include non-statutory partners in their planning, specifically the Third Sector and Community Bodies.

Offering this local flexibility whilst still considering and reporting against all outcomes respects the differing local needs and circumstances from one local area to another, but also allows for the sharing of best practice to develop a national picture of achievement across Scotland.

**Q What is the link between the structural outcomes and person-centric outcomes?**

A The person-centric outcomes are largely dependent on achievements made under the structural outcomes.

By way of an example, it is highly unlikely that securing decent housing for individuals can be achieved without good strategic planning, working in partnership and improving access to housing.

**Annex A** of this document shows the relationship between these outcomes as part of the Community Justice Outcomes Chain.

**Q Do statutory Community Justice Partners have to report against all of the common indicators?**

There is a presumption that all the indicators will be used.

However, where statutory Community Justice Partners for an area collectively identify that a particular indicator is not relevant for them *at that point in time*, they are able to specify this in their Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan.

Where they choose not to report on a common indicator the partners must specify in their plan why they feel it does not apply in their area, for example along the following lines: 'We don't know enough about this issue at this stage but we will do the following to address it – *specify action*'.

Another example may be that reporting is not possible, for example, in years 1 and 2 but will be for years 3 and 4 as certain initiatives will be coming on-stream during year 2.

Also partners may indicate that they will not report on a common indicator on the ground that it is irrelevant. However, strong justification would be required

for this to be the case as this was a factor in determining the common indicators.

**Q Why doesn't the framework include any specific and standardised tools for measuring the person-centric outcomes?**

A There are already some tools available and partners could be supported or may support each other to identify or develop relevant ones for their specific initiative.

What needs to be measured will depend on the specific project and the context. For example, an initiative on developing 'positive relationships' could relate to gang members, families and children, employers, role models, communities etc so a single, standardised 'positive relationships' tool would not be appropriate for all initiatives under this heading. It will be up to the partners and those delivering services to find or devise valid tools which are able to measure progress that are relevant to the aims and objectives of the initiative.

Therefore, no pre-defined list of standardised measures has been provided.

**Q Why are we not using reconviction rates in the outcomes and indicators?**

A There are two main reasons why reconviction rates are not very useful measures of performance at local level, this being a crucial point for what is a local model for community justice:

- Analysis has shown that after controlling for differences in the characteristics of people with convictions or a history of offending in each area (e.g. age, gender, and criminal history), local differences in reconviction rates almost disappeared. In other words, differences in reconviction rates at the Local Authority level can largely be explained by differences in the people mix in each area, rather than differences in performance. For details of the reconviction analysis, see chart 7 and chart 8 here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/03/9783/6>

- Secondly, reconviction rates are affected by a range of variables so it would be difficult to determine what factors are responsible for any observed changes to reconviction rates, and hence to make an informed judgement on 'what worked' (or didn't work) in terms of actions from partners.

In addition, reconviction rates may also be influenced by local variations in practice and wider systemic and structural changes over time, including changes in police/prosecution policy and practice, legislation and sociodemographic characteristics.

**Q If my area has an interest in reconviction rates, where can they find more information?**

High level justice outcomes and national progress on reconviction rates will be tracked over time via the [Justice Dashboard](#) and [Scotland Performs](#).

**Q What role have partners and stakeholders had in designing the OPI Framework?**

A The development of the OPI Framework required a range of partners to come together to design a toolkit for continuous improvement under the New Model for Community Justice.

The OPI Framework is the culmination of nearly two years of considered thought, workshops and input from the following partners and stakeholders who came together in the Outcomes, Performance and Accountability Working Group;

- Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers – ALACHO;
- Care Inspectorate;
- Community Justice Authorities;
- Community Justice Co-ordinators;
- Community Planning Managers;
- COSLA;
- Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum – representing the Third Sector;
- Health Boards – Public Health;
- Local Authorities – including Criminal Justice Social Work;
- Police Scotland;
- Risk Management Authority Scotland;
- Scottish Prison Service; and
- Scottish Government Policy and Justice Analytical Services.

Those statutory Community Justice Partners not directly represented on the Working Group were engaged with via local and national events and membership of the Redesign and Performance Management of Community Justice Project Board or its Statutory Partners Group

**Q How does one ensure the co-operation of partners in contributing to the delivery of improved outcomes?**

A The new model is defined by an improvement culture and emphasises collective responsibility through partners coming together locally to plan and deliver community justice.

A duty has been placed on statutory Community Justice Partners under the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 to co-operate with each other and with Community Justice Scotland in planning and reporting on community justice for their local area.

At a practical level, statutory Community Justice Partners will decide amongst themselves their own roles and responsibilities for local planning and collaboration.

**Q How will accountability arrangements for the individual statutory Community Justice Partners operate under the new model?**

A The formal accountability lines for individual statutory Community Justice Partners will remain as for their respective organisations.

There will be no accountability direct from partners to Community Justice Scotland so that partners' existing accountability lines can remain distinct and so that Community Justice Scotland can provide its independent assurance function.

Accountability is, however, intrinsically linked to governance and assurance. Sound governance and assurance, with clear lines of accountability, should provide assurance that community justice in an area is working effectively for local communities and in line with the statutory duties set out in the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016.

**Q Who will be responsible for providing governance and assurance, and ensuring that required improvements are put in place?**

A Most areas have established or refined existing partnerships, groups or networks to come together for planning, governance and assurance purposes.

Ensuring that the operation of community justice and the achievement of improved outcomes is effective is, first and foremost, the responsibility of the statutory Community Justice Partners, working with the Third Sector, community bodies and communities.

All partners – statutory and non-statutory - will work together to provide the shared leadership required to set an ambitious vision and take a quality approach to driving improvement in their area

Partners will test and scrutinise progress and wherever necessary challenge each other in effective ways which support continuous improvement. A self-evaluation tool is being developed to provide a mechanism to carry out such scrutiny and challenge. However, such challenge may also be carried out in meetings or informally.

Governance and assurance, will, therefore, be provided locally through this challenge, self-evaluation and annual reporting.

These efforts will be supported nationally by Community Justice Scotland. Community Justice Scotland will provide independent professional assurance to Scottish Ministers and to Local Government Leaders, as required, on the collective achievement of community justice outcomes across Scotland and to provide improvement support to partners where required.

**Q Are partners able to identify additional local outcomes and indicators?**

A Partners may identify additional locally determined outcomes (and associated indicators), targets and initiatives as they consider appropriate based on the profile and needs of the local area. For example, these may be issues that have been raised by the Third Sector, community bodies, communities – including people with convictions, victims and families - or local partners as requiring attention.

Quality has been at the heart of developing the set of common outcomes and indicators for community justice but quality can be subjective and will differ from area to area and activity to activity. Further local measures may, therefore, be applied.

Taken together, the common outcomes and indicators and any additional local information will allow partners to effectively progress local priorities in order to provide a clear account of how they are driving improvement within their respective areas

**Q How could individual services or initiatives and their intended outcomes be evaluated?**

A Service providers and funders will be able to use the Scottish Government's 'Five Step Approach to Evaluation', which has been designed by Justice Analytical Services and is determined to be an essential part of the improvement journey and also a key element of strategic commissioning.

**Q What role, if any, will scrutiny and inspection bodies have in the new model?**

A A new approach to the inspection of community justice will be developed with the Care Inspectorate and partner scrutiny bodies.

Such an inspection would be intelligence-led and would likely follow serious and persistent concerns having been identified. It would be taken forward on a case-by-case basis with reference to the accountability structures for the statutory Community Justice Partners.

**Contact details for this FAQ document:**

Should you have any queries on this FAQ or additional questions and answers which you would wish to share, please contact the redesign team at:

[Redesignofcommunityjustice@gov.scot](mailto:Redesignofcommunityjustice@gov.scot)



## Community Justice Outcomes Chain

