
Community Justice Transition Report

Report by Chief Social Work Officer

COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC BOARD

26 November 2015

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report sets out the current transition arrangements for making the changes necessary to meet the requirements of the Community Justice Bill and builds on the information provided to the June 2015 meeting of the Community Planning Strategic Board.**
- 1.2 By 31st January 2016 the Scottish Borders are required to submit a Community Justice Transition Plan to the Scottish Government. Work is already underway to draft the plan following the appointment of a project officer.
- 1.3 To date a Community Justice Board has been established reporting through the Community Planning Strategic Board with an agreed Constitution and Terms of Reference. Consultation and engagement activity has already commenced and will be sustained during and post transition. This forms part of the Communication and marketing plan supported by a stakeholder analysis.
- 1.4 The Community Justice Board are using analysis in the form of a Scottish Borders offender profile to aid decision making.
- 1.5 In support of the national transition process the Scottish Borders are acting as a test site for developing performance indicators, testing the Community Justice Authority *Framework for the support of families affected by the Criminal Justice System* and volunteered to work with the Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum to undertake a self-evaluation exercise for Third Sector providers within local authorities.
- 1.6 A project plan has been developed and is being managed through the Microsoft Project application.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 I recommend that the Board:-

- (a) Notes the update on current transition arrangements for Community Justice.**
- (b) Agrees that responsibility for approving submission of the Community Justice Transition Plan is devolved to the Community Justice Board.**

3 COMMUNITY JUSTICE TRANSITION UPDATE

- 3.1 The Scottish Government is establishing a new model for community justice in Scotland through the Community Justice (Scotland) Bill. Community Justice Partners will collaborate in delivering community justice in the Scottish Borders reporting through the Community Planning Partnership Strategic Board.
- 3.2 In the report to the Community Planning Strategic Board of June 2015 governance arrangements were agreed to establish a Community Justice Board which reports progress to the Community Planning Partnership Strategic Board. The Community Justice Board has been established and meetings have been held monthly. The meeting has two key aims, to progress ongoing Community Justice Authority business and to deliver the transition work. This group developed a constitution and terms of reference to give clarity of purpose to the Community Justice Partners. A project plan has been developed to capture all stages of the transition, timescales and interdependencies.
- 3.3 A Scottish Borders Offender Profile has been produced by the Community Safety Unit Partnership Analyst. The report identifies high tariff offenders within the Scottish Borders (male, female and youth) and their underlying social needs. This work will form the basis of initial intervention activity by the partnership. Further analytical work will follow to examine crime types, geographic spread and seasonal variation to allow for a forward looking approach to be taken. Analytical work will be used to identify individuals with an escalation in offending behaviour that services can be directed towards addressing.
- 3.4 Work is required to map the process of accessing services such as housing, training/employment, health (physical and mental), addictions, family and community connections all of which influence the likelihood of future offending behaviour. The Community Justice Authority produced a *Framework for the support of families affected by the Criminal Justice System* which will aid in this process.
- 3.5 There has been some initial activity in engaging the wider partnership including the Third Sector and communities. An event was held in 2014 to capture the partnerships perception and ideas around community justice. In September 2015 a request for information was sent out to identify existing reducing reoffending activity. This was followed by a consultation event in October 2015 to provide information and solicit ideas. It is recognised that greater involvement by the Third Sector, community and service users is required. The Scottish Government are funding the Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum to undertake a self-evaluation exercise for Third Sector providers within local authorities. The Scottish Borders have expressed an interest in this process and are waiting to see who has been selected to participate.
- 3.6 A Communications and Marketing Plan accompanied by a Stakeholder Analysis has been prepared. As community justice begins to transform it will be necessary to promote these changes through a variety of means across organisations and individuals in a phased way.
- 3.7 The Scottish Government have yet to publish the Community Justice

Strategy, outcomes and performance indicators. It is anticipated that the outcomes will be ready in the near future enabling the partnership to begin the process of checking alignment against these outcomes split between structural and person centric. The Scottish Borders have agreed to work with the Scottish Government and participate as one of five test sites for the performance indicators. Specifically the Scottish Borders have been asked to look at indicators demonstrating the involvement of the Third Sector, communities and service users. These will be shared and developed among the participating councils before wider circulation.

- 3.8 The Scottish Borders Transition Plan will capture progress outlined above since June 2015 and activity required during the transition year from April 2016 to March 2017. Explanatory text will be supported by documentation embedded in the plan to demonstrate progress already made. Looking forward the main activities necessary during the transition year will be:-
- process change to improve accessibility of services,
 - enhance the role of Third Sector, communities and service users in community justice,
 - maintaining equity in the involvement of Community Justice Partners
 - providing synergy of service provision and delivering effective, management of performance across different organisations and services.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

The Scottish Government are supporting the transition with up to three years of funding at £50k per year. The majority of the funding will be spent on cost associated with the employment of a project officer but will also support engagement and involvement in the development of the plan and the new arrangements.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

Risks are highlighted within the monthly highlight report to the Community Justice Board. The board consists of Community Justice Partners which enables a collaborative approach to risk and mitigation.

4.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.

4.4 Rural Proofing

Once the Scottish Government release the Community Justice Strategy there may be a need to develop a Scottish Borders Strategy to reflect local circumstances and the needs of communities.

4.5 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

None identified at this stage.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received are incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

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Title Chief Social Work Officer

Signature

Author(s)

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Background Papers: Nil

Previous Minute Reference: Nil

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Elaine Torrance can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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