

Councillor Anthea Dickson
Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership
First Floor East
Cunninghame House
Irvine
KA12 8EE

16 April 2019
Our Ref: KM/CW/RJ

Dear Councillor Dickson,

Supported and validated self-evaluation of community justice in Scotland

I am writing to provide feedback on the recent self-evaluation of community justice undertaken by the Ayrshire community justice partnership and validated by the Care Inspectorate.

Background

The Scottish Government has asked the Care Inspectorate to support the implementation of community justice in Scotland and to provide scrutiny in this area of work. We agreed that our approach to scrutiny at this early stage of community justice would be through a model of supported and validated self-evaluation¹ using 'A guide to self-evaluation for community justice in Scotland.'² The aim is to build capacity among community justice partnerships to quality assure their own work and use the insights gained to plan and implement improvements. For the purpose of this activity, partnerships who volunteered were asked to gauge their progress in relation to three specific quality indicators; *planning and delivering services in a collaborative way; effective use and management of resources and leadership of strategy and direction*.

Having expressed an interest in being involved in this work, the Ayrshire community justice partnership received notification on 12 November 2018 that we would undertake a supported and validated self-evaluation in their area. Scheduled activities took place between December 2018 and March 2019.

The community justice partnership is made up of North, East and South Ayrshire Council working alongside statutory partners³. It has established Community Justice Ayrshire as the partnership arrangement to lead on the strategy and vision for community justice in Ayrshire. This is referred to as "the partnership". It includes representation from voluntary and third sector organisations and people who have been involved in the justice system or used community justice services. An elected member of North Ayrshire Council chairs the community justice board on behalf of the partnership. Community Justice Ayrshire reports

¹<http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/4690/Supported%20and%20validated%20self%20evaluation%20of%20community%20justice%20in%20Scotland.pdf>

² <https://www.hub.careinspectorate.com/media/437466/a-guide-to-self-evaluation-for-community-justice-in-scotland.pdf>

³ The statutory community justice partners are: local authorities, health boards, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Skills Development Scotland, Integration Joint Boards, Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service and Scottish Ministers (in practice, the Scottish Prison Service and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service).

into the three Ayrshire community planning partnership boards under a delegated authority model.

We engaged with partners in Ayrshire in the following ways:

- Through regular communication and dialogue we supported partners to become more familiar with the quality indicator model, building capacity to undertake their own evaluation. We also offered general guidance on what constitutes robust supporting evidence.
- We read carefully the written self-evaluation and supporting evidence which the partnership submitted to the Care Inspectorate.
- Care Inspectorate staff met with relevant partners and groups to explore the supporting evidence and triangulate key findings of the self-evaluation.

As a result of the activities undertaken we are pleased that we are able to validate the partnership's approach as appropriately robust and mature. We consider that through their self-evaluation, the partnership has been able to appropriately identify strengths and areas where improvement is required. We are confident that the partnership is well placed to establish a shared culture of continuous improvement as they strive to achieve excellence in the implementation and delivery of the community justice model.

We note the key messages below:

Partnership approach to self-evaluation

The partnership demonstrated an enthusiastic and well-planned approach to the self-evaluation process from the outset. This was enhanced by strong representation and engagement from a wide range of statutory and non-statutory partners throughout the process. This was with the exception of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service which were not involved in the self-evaluation. This meant that partners did not benefit from the contribution of these agencies to the self-evaluation process. Partners involved in the process showed a clear interest in developing their approach to self-evaluation and becoming more familiar with the quality improvement model. The partnership also demonstrated ownership of the process and effective use of available resources and expertise by engaging with colleagues across the three local authorities with particular self-evaluation experience.

The partnership had already established a community justice team made up of a community justice manager, planning and performance officer and business support officer to lead on the development of the community justice outcome improvement plan and to co-ordinate the work of the partnership. This was achieved through combining the funding provided to the three local authorities by Scottish Government to support the implementation of community justice. This approach has worked well as the team has ensured that community justice has remained a high priority for the local authorities and partners. The team confidently led on and co-ordinated the self-evaluation process. This included organising and bringing partners together over two well-attended development sessions. These sessions provided partners with an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the quality indicators and enabled them to make a meaningful contribution to the self-evaluation process. The sessions reflected a collaborative approach and a clear desire to gather a range of views and evidence against the quality indicators. Following the development sessions, the community justice team provided a template to partners to request additional examples of supporting evidence related to the quality indicators and the

three core questions of *How good are we now? How do we know? and How good can we be?* This generated meaningful contributions from partners which enhanced the self-evaluation process and the confidence statements within the submission.

The community justice team ensured that statutory and non-statutory partners, colleagues and community groups were informed of the partnerships involvement in, and key stages of, the supported and validated self-evaluation activity through a newsletter and electronic bulletins. The self-evaluation was clear, focussed and accompanied by a range of strong supporting evidence. Strengths and areas for improvement were clearly identified and well supported by evidence. The rationale for the evaluations reached in respect of the three quality indicators presented as well balanced, carefully considered and realistic given the relative early stage of development of the community justice model.

Feedback on self-evaluation against the quality indicators

Planning and delivering services in a collaborative way

The partnership has effectively built upon robust structures and relationships which were established under the previous Community Justice Authority arrangements. It has established Community Justice Ayrshire as the partnership arrangement to lead on the strategy and vision for community justice in Ayrshire and an implementation group to take forward operational tasks emanating from the community justice outcome improvement plan. Partners have also set up four thematic groups with a remit to address specific themes identified by partners as priorities. The groups are focussed on progressing the partnership's whole systems approach for women and improving outcomes in respect of throughcare and community integration, children and families affected by the justice system and health and justice. They have demonstrated strong collaborative working and have introduced a number of projects and approaches which are well linked to the vision, values and objectives of the community justice outcome improvement plan. The groups have benefitted from wide representation from statutory partners and third sector agencies. However, some statutory partners are not as involved as they need to be. Engagement with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service takes place within a Sheriffdom model which limits opportunities to develop local justice connections. Similarly, the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service has had limited involvement in the work of the partnership. The partnership has not yet put a plan in place to address this.

Partners have produced two community justice outcome improvement plans, both of which are clear, accessible and specific to the aspirations and needs of Ayrshire. A strong ethos behind the current plan of 'Beginnings, Belonging, and Belief' is well understood across partner agencies and is threaded throughout the work of the partnership. An annual report has been produced in accordance with legislation and guidance. While the report meets the required standards, it does not reflect progress made on all of the projects, services and initiatives that have been established as a result of collaborative working and outlined in the community justice outcome improvement plan (CJOIP). The partnership has committed to examining their approach to reporting on what has been achieved against the objectives set out in the CJOIP. The CJOIP is appropriately aligned to the three local authority local outcome improvement plans and clearly sets out commitments across common themes. Partners consulted widely in the development of the plan, reaching out to statutory and third sector partners, groups representing victims and families, and people with lived experience of the justice system which has enhanced the quality of the plan.

The partnership has strong links with the violence against women and alcohol and drug partnerships in Ayrshire. This allowed them to share knowledge and expertise and agree

on projects which cut across the three Ayrshire authorities. There is a strong commitment to supporting and investing in the third sector alongside clear examples of partners working collaboratively to plan and deliver services. Partners hosted a very well attended 'Third Sector Brunch' event in August 2018, which allowed attendees to find out more about community justice and identify additional opportunities for collaboration. The partnership has benefitted from strong collaboration with NHS Ayrshire and Arran, representatives of which were actively involved in the aforementioned implementation and thematic groups. The model of having one community justice partnership across the three local authorities has made it easier for NHS Ayrshire and Arran to deliver on their commitments and has increased their contribution. This has also been the case for other partners including HMP Kilmarnock and the Ayrshire Division of Police Scotland.

Effective use and management of resources

The partnership demonstrated a clear commitment to joint funding for services and efficient use of resources where possible. The establishment of the aforementioned community justice team provides a strong example of this commitment. Joint resourcing has also meant that the partnership could pursue specific initiatives that the individual CPPs could not have afforded to do alone. For example, partners have introduced a service user involvement forum in each local authority area. These are taking an innovative approach to involving individuals with lived experience of the justice system in the planning and delivery of services.

As a result of combined funding from North, South and East Ayrshire Councils, Ayrshire benefits from a well-established justice social work partnership delivery team that delivers a variety of accredited programmes. The partnership has effectively built upon pre-existing Community Justice Authority arrangements to expand and better support the range of work delivered by the team. This includes a designated service for women on community payback orders, a bail supervision programme and supervision of drug treatment and testing orders along with other services. This jointly resourced pan-Ayrshire approach has enabled partners to achieve economies of scale that would not have been possible as individual local authorities.

The partnership has built on pre-existing positive relationships to assist them in leveraging and managing available resources with third sector partners. For example, an integrated service delivery approach between the partnership delivery team and the Shine Women's Mentoring Service supports the delivery of a new groupwork and support service to women in the criminal justice system. A collaborative approach to deploying resources is reducing demand for specialist services and is evidence of a proactive 'spend to save' approach. Partners established a crisis resolution team involving Police Scotland and NHS Ayrshire and Arran in response to the significant demands placed on operational policing from vulnerable individuals experiencing mental ill health. This provides an immediate response to individuals in crisis. The approach has significantly reduced the amount of time police officers spend at accident and emergency services and has introduced a helpful triage system to improve the experience of services for individuals.

Partners have demonstrated sound analysis of projects and initiatives to identify what has worked well and what needs to change or improve. As a result of this, partners have identified the need to provide support to HMP Kilmarnock to overcome the challenges associated with the lack of funding for throughcare support officers and the impact that this has on the delivery of throughcare support to those being liberated. While the initial approach to commission Turning Point Scotland to deliver a 'Prisoner Support Pathways'

service to coordinate the throughcare arrangements within the prison was successful, lack of funding made it unsustainable. The partnership is working closely with partners to identify an alternative model of throughcare support however the longer term sustainability of the model remains an area which will require attention from the partnership.

Though partners are in the early stages of considering joint budgeting there is a commitment to continue to examine opportunities to maximise impact and influence in the effective use and management of available resources.

Leadership of strategy and direction

Collaborative strategic planning has benefitted from clear lines of accountability and governance and well-established links to community planning partnership structures including the three local authority community safety groups. The objectives of the community justice outcome improvement plan are well-aligned to other partnership plans demonstrating shared accountability. An example of this is the NHS Ayrshire & Arran Public Health business plan which sets out its role in delivering actions from the CJOIP. Strong leadership provided by the chair and membership of the partnership has ensured a clear and coherent approach to directing resources to early intervention and preventative approaches. Positive examples include the diversion from prosecution project and the court screening service for women which are delivered by the partnership delivery team.

The partnership has effectively built on and expanded the arrangements established under the aforementioned Community Justice Authority. It has extended the number and range of well-planned and resourced partnership services. It has increased the prominence of the voice and influence of individuals with lived experience of justice services through the introduction of service user involvement forums. The introduction of the implementation and thematic groups has provided an increased focus on a range of needs identified as priorities within the CJOIP. They have taken a best practice, research based approach to the introduction of new initiatives and services. This has included researching the feasibility of a 'community navigator' pilot within HMP Kilmarnock in order to provide an enhanced throughcare service (including gate pick-ups upon liberation) to increase the potential for successful liberation and reintegration to the community. A piece of research into prostitution was commissioned by the three violence against women partnerships, under the auspices of the 'Equally Safe Ayrshire' group, the result of which has allowed leaders to better understand the experiences of women involved in prostitution and has informed their approach to strategic planning of services.

Partners demonstrated strong leadership and clarity on the future direction of community justice in Ayrshire. An example of this is the ambition to embed a trauma informed approach across agencies and services. This is particularly evident in the partnership approach to tackling adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma. Partners organised two well-attended conferences on ACEs and have delivered training on a trauma-informed approach to a large number of staff across agencies. The Chief Executives of the three local authorities and NHS Ayrshire and Arran, and the Divisional Commander of Ayrshire Police pledged their support to the formation of a pan-Ayrshire strategic group to act as a vehicle to drive forward a community led approach to tackling ACEs and trauma.

Next steps

Partners have committed to developing an improvement plan which incorporates the learning from their self-evaluation including establishing outcome measures and a performance framework to effectively monitor progress and deliver intended results. This is intended to take the partnership forward to the next stage of being able to identify what difference their work is making to the lives of individuals and for communities. Partners will work towards including all statutory partners in future self-evaluation in order to bring additional value to the process. The partnership improvement plan will include measures to improve annual reporting against the CJOIP. We are confident that the partnership has the ability, capacity and leadership required to achieve the objectives of their improvement plan.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Mitchell', written in a cursive style.

Kevin Mitchell
Executive Director of Scrutiny & Assurance
Care Inspectorate