

Justice Social Work

Annual Performance Report 2021-22

1) Introduction

The Justice Social Work (JSW) service is diverse, complex and busy and consists of Caledonian, Community Payback Orders (CPO), Connections (Women's Centre), Pre-Disposal, Throughcare, Unpaid Work, Support Work and Admin. teams. Its primary remit is to provide statutory supervision and support to individuals who have offended, using interventions which are proportionate to risk and need. This supervision ranges from low level for those on Diversion to very high level, usually with multi-agency support, for the "critical few" who pose significant public protection concerns.

The individuals with whom the service works may have mental health problems, learning difficulties, personality disorders, drug and/or alcohol problems, behavioural/anger management problems, neurodiversity issues etc., often undiagnosed, and a poverty of aspiration for themselves. JSW staff are responsive to these increasingly complex needs and risks and accept their professional responsibilities to respond accordingly in a person-centred manner in order to deliver individual and statutory outcomes.

This Annual Report reflects the performance and effectiveness of the service in 2021-22, the second year of the Covid pandemic. It was a challenging year in many respects for the individuals that we work with, the workforce across all teams and all roles and the other agencies with whom we collaborate. The report demonstrates the continuing commitment that the service has to fulfilling the JSW Delivery Plan's vision that "Every person that we work with achieves the best possible individual and statutory outcomes".

2) Background

The Justice service Performance Management Board (PMB) first initiated the development of a service-specific performance management framework in 2019 as a means of highlighting the effectiveness of the diverse, complex and busy service.

A draft performance framework was submitted to the Care Inspectorate as part of the evidence portfolio supporting the service self-evaluation that was required by the inspection methodology. The Care Inspectorate inspection of the Justice service commenced in late 2019 however this was paused at the beginning of March 2020 because of the first Covid lockdown. The inspection restarted on a virtual basis in October 2020 and the report was published in February 2021.

The inspection outcome was very positive – "service users experience compassionate, consistent, focused and flexible support which frequently exceeds their expectations and is enabling positive change" - with only two recommendations to be taken forward by the service

- 1) To enable robust oversight and increased ability to demonstrate outcomes and impact, senior officers should ensure that the justice service delivery plan and performance management framework are agreed and implemented, and associated reporting cycles established.
- 2) To ensure key processes are effective, senior managers should further strengthen quality assurance to support consistent, confident and timely risk assessment and case planning processes, particularly those relating to risk of serious harm.

The inspection action plan which the partnership was required to submit to the Care Inspectorate no later than six weeks after the publication of the official inspection report said that a completed performance management framework would be submitted to the Risk, Audit and Performance (RAP) Committee. To add further assurance, the action plan also stated that an annual report in respect of justice social work performance and effectiveness would be submitted to the RAP Committee.

The Risk, Audit and Performance Committee agreed in June 2021 that the Performance Framework should be used as the basis for a report outlining the performance of the justice service and that this should be presented to the committee on an annual basis for its consideration and scrutiny.

3) Strategic Context

Justice social work is delegated by Aberdeen City Council to the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership's (ACHSCP) Integration Joint Board (IJB) as set out by the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014. The partnership's [Strategic Plan 2019-22](#) sets out the priority objectives (Prevention; Resilience; Personalisation; Connections; Communities) for all of the delegated functions and services. In addition, the Scottish Government have outlined those [national health and wellbeing outcomes](#) which all partnerships must strive towards.

ACHSCP is a statutory member of the local community planning partnership, 'Community Planning Aberdeen'. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 sets out how public bodies should work together with their local communities to design and deliver better services. There is a strong alignment between the integration partnership's strategic plan and the community planning partnership's [Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26](#). This improvement plan outlines the "Prosperous People" stretch outcomes that will be sought to promote the safety and wellbeing of the local population and contribute to the city's overall prosperity.

AHSCP is also a statutory community justice partner and as such has a shared responsibility for the strategic planning and delivery of local community justice services. The new community justice model is underpinned by the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 which sets out the [Outcomes, Performance and Improvement Framework](#) as guidance to community justice partners on how to improve their local outcomes. Community Justice Scotland, the national corporate body has also produced a [National Strategy for Community Justice](#) designed to help community justice partners prioritise key areas, facilitate

improvement and support communities to realise its vision of the country being safer, fairer and more inclusive.

4) Covid Impact

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the JSW ambition to build on the very positive Care Inspectorate inspection report and put in place further developments and improvements for the benefit of the individuals that the service works with, the service workforce and other stakeholders.

In addition to that very welcome Care Inspectorate report, it is worth noting that prior to the pandemic, JSW had also been positively referenced in the Hard Edges report (Robertson Trust and Lankelly Chase, 2019) as Aberdeen had one of the highest prevalence rates for the three-dimensional model of homelessness-substance dependency-offending. Justice social workers were praised by some people with lived experience as the most consistent and helpful service they had encountered. Front-line service providers too, generally acknowledged, that justice teams provided the ‘stickiest’ and most pro-active support that adults facing significant multiple disadvantages could expect.

The various public health measures that were implemented over the course of the past two years not only impacted, of course, on our own service delivery models but also on the wider justice system. As a result, the service has had to respond to legislative and operational changes brought in by other agencies, including the Scottish Government, the Justice Directorate, the Procurator Fiscal Service, Police Scotland, the court, prisons, housing, health and different third sector organisations.

There has been little opportunity for service development activities because of the pandemic’s impact but more positively, the collaborations with these other agencies, which were already of a high standard became even more closer and productive especially between JSW and HMP Grampian, ACC Housing, and the integrated Substance Misuse services.

Table 1 below gives an indication of the effects of the pandemic on some aspects of the JSW workload with 2019/20 as the pre-Covid benchmark (see also Appendix 1 for the 2020-21 CPO Annual Report).

Table 1: Covid Impact on Service Volumes

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Justice Social Work Reports	1,126	715	935
Community Payback Orders	1,055	506	667
Diversion commenced	114	150	168
Bail Supervision commenced	45	4	26
Structured Deferred Sentence	25	11	30
Throughcare cases commenced in the community	32	38	40
Total no. of hours of Unpaid Work completed	52,854	32,153	36,683

As these figures suggest, continuing to manage and support people to complete their orders during the pandemic was challenging. Limitations on interview facilities, workshops, work parties and even van space meant that the service had to be even more creative and flexible in developing alternatives. Our inability to facilitate groupwork meant that there was increased one-to-one arrangements to organise and oversee and extensions to many orders had to be requested. Even when groupwork was restarted on a capacity limited and distanced basis, there were difficulties in re-engaging clients due to Covid infection, the need to self-isolate, supporting family members and general anxieties.

Court and Town House closures meant that the service was unable to meet national/local targets such as the number of first Community Payback Order contacts within one working day. In addition, changes in the length of remands and virtual custody courts held in prison have also impacted on sentencing, early engagement in building relationships with clients, the ability to undertake post sentence interviews, induction of new orders and post-release planning.

The Justice Social Work service continued to deliver face to face contact throughout the pandemic to individuals coming out of court/custody, those considered to pose a high risk of harm to others and those considered to be particularly vulnerable. Wherever possible social workers maintained contact with clients via phone, WhatsApp, doorstep visits and socially distanced walks. Clients were provided with mobile phones if needed so that contact could be maintained.

The Scottish Government allocated additional funding to JSW in May 2021 to address backlogs and support recovery with an additional amount specifically for third sector. The funding was only available to 31st March 2022 which meant that the recruitment of additional staff could only be on a fixed-term basis and, as the recruitment to vacancies already in establishment was difficult during Covid, recruiting additional posts for a short time proved even more challenging.

In order to keep track of the ongoing service 'recovery' and associated staff workloads and to identify any emerging concerns or trends as quickly as possible, the service has been gathering weekly data benchmarked against pre-Covid figures as well as a wider suite of quarterly data including a tally of footfall in JSW premises. Sitrep data was submitted regularly to the Justice Directorate, and it is evident that the Aberdeen Justice Social Work experience was broadly similar to the rest of Scotland.

5) Headlines

Despite the significant and sustained impact of the pandemic on our service delivery over the past two years there have still been notable aspects that are worth highlighting and commenting upon.

The continued increase in Diversion from Prosecution is very positive. While it may be indicative of the need to reduce court backlogs by using alternatives to prosecution, it enables individuals who have committed offences and have significant underlying needs to be diverted into support and, ideally out of offending and Court processes, at an early stage.

The use of Structured Deferred Sentences dropped during 20/21 but increased slightly last year and is continuing to rise. This disposal, particularly when imposed by the Problem-Solving Court, is again intended both as a lower level, albeit intensive, intervention and as a diversion from custody.

Covid legislation allowed for a number of unpaid work hours to be written off in certain circumstances and for orders to be extended beyond initial completion dates. Even so, lockdown measures, and the impact of these on placement opportunities, other activity options, transport and staffing meant it was more difficult than usual to get people through their orders.

The Unpaid Work Team therefore developed some creative solutions to enable unpaid workers to undertake their orders at home. One such solution was Blended Learning Packs, an educational approach that enabled individuals to reflect on how participating in Unpaid Work (UPW) can be of benefit to themselves and to the wider community. Other learning packs were developed - some with the assistance of Adult Learning and Development colleagues – and woodwork projects, including materials and instructions, were designed in our UPW workshop. Many of these completed projects produced outdoor equipment which has since benefitted nurseries across the city. This evident creativity and flexibility has enabled some individuals to complete their UPW Requirements despite these challenging circumstances and, unlike many other authorities, Aberdeen JSW does not have a backlog of Unpaid Work Requirements.

It is believed that domestic offences increased during the pandemic, but this has not increased the number of Caledonian Programme assessments undertaken nor requirements imposed. There is, however, a 35% increase in the number of Caledonian cases on workers caseloads which is reflective of the difficulty in delivering programmatic groupwork in the last two years and the timescale of orders having to be extended to complete. This has put considerable pressure on social workers and is compounded by the loss of Caledonian trained workers, the inability to recruit already trained workers, and the inability to access training for workers new to Justice Social Work or recently qualified.

6) Objectives

The JSW Delivery Plan 2021-2024 has four key objectives which seek to make Aberdeen a safer place in which to live, and which the service is working towards although again, the specific activities and initiatives aligned to each objective have been significantly impacted by the pandemic. These four objectives also form the basis of the Performance Framework together with a number of relevant, objective-specific metrics to enable the service to reflect on how well it is meeting or progressing towards each particular objective.

Please note that national data from 2021-22 has not yet been collected by the Scottish Government so 2020-21 has been referenced for comparative purposes.

To contribute to the creation of safer and fairer communities

One of the wider outcomes from supporting individuals with their assessed needs, helping them complete their orders and in doing so, assessing, and managing any risks that present themselves is the positive impact on our communities with the result that Aberdeen is a safer place to live and work.

A) Delivery of Community Payback Orders was a huge challenge during Covid. We prioritised workloads in respect of risk and need with those assessed as highest risk, most vulnerable, released from custody and those who did not have telephones being seen face to face. Wherever possible contact was maintained virtually with everyone else but many of our client group are “digitally poor” so had no access to computers and sometimes phones. We provided mobile phones where necessary so that contact could be maintained plus food parcels and practical support.

The behaviour of many of our clients did however surprise us as the majority abided by Covid rules, stayed at home, and wore masks when required. This is perhaps reflected in the 52% drop in numbers between 19/20 and 20/21 although we would like to think that the tenacious approach taken by social workers and support workers in keeping in touch with clients throughout the pandemic also had a beneficial impact. See also Table 4: Successful Completions and Table 7: Exit Questionnaires.

Table 2: Number of Community Payback Orders

	Scotland			Aberdeen			
	19/20	20/21	Change	19/20	20/21	Change 19/20 to 20/21	21/22
Orders	16,800	8,169	-41%	1,055	506	-52%	669
Male	14,299	6,987	-38%	894	441	-51%	570
Female	2,501	1,182	-42%	161	65	-60%	99
Under 18	349	151	-57%	17	7	-59%	5

B) Our Unpaid Work Team was closed down during lockdowns and, once reopened, was only able to deliver very limited work placements due to restrictions in workshops, van capacity and the absence of individual placements. Order Supervisors did however maintain telephone contact with clients throughout and, through the provision of Learning Packs and home working projects, they and Task Supervisors enabled some clients to successfully complete their orders and produce craft and joinery work beneficial to the community. Despite Covid, 36,683 hours of unpaid work were undertaken in 20/21 (Table 1). See also Table 4: Successful completions and Table 7: Exit Questionnaires

C) The number of individuals in custody on 31st March 2022 where Aberdeen have Throughcare supervision responsibility was 151 and those in the community subject to licence conditions and Supervised Release Orders was 40. As of 31 March 2022 there were 90 registered sex offenders subject to supervision in Aberdeen, 16 subject to Throughcare Release Licence and 74 on Community Payback Orders.

There is an increasingly high percentage of remand prisoners and the Government and the Scottish Prison Service were taking steps to reduce this pre-Covid with a push to increase Supervised Bail as an alternative to remand. We successfully increased the number of Bail Supervision Orders imposed in Aberdeen to 45 in 19/20 but Covid Court closures etc. reduced that to 4 in 20/21 and 26 in 21/22 (See Table 8: Other Interventions).

Table 3: Number of Individuals Released on Licence

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Female	1	1	1
Male	37	39	32

D) Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) places a statutory duty on the responsible authorities in a local authority area to jointly establish arrangements for assessing and managing the risk posed by certain categories of offenders.

The MAPPA Co-ordination Unit provided statistics which reflect that on 31st March 2022 there were 8 active cases managed under MAPPA Level 2 Category 3 for violent offending in Aberdeen (29 in Scotland).and 11 over the whole year 2021-22. On 31st March there were 4 active cases managed under Mappa Level 2 Category 1 for sexual offending, and 10 throughout the year.

We are seeing a significant increase in MAPPA Category 3 referrals for domestic abuse offenders, primarily from HMP Grampian which, anecdotally, is at odds with the national picture. This may be explained by changes in practice within prison based social work at HMP Grampian who are very pro-active in undertaking Risk of Serious Harm Assessments and referring into MAPPA

E) Our scheduled programme of Quality Assurance oversight was one of the casualties of Covid. Delivery of a busy justice service at all in a pandemic was all consuming. Teams developed office rotas to ensure any crisis situation could be responded to with face-to-face appointments being available within social work buildings, virtual team meetings were held a minimum of weekly to ensure ongoing communication, updates and sharing of Health information, community programmes and supports for clients were maintained and maximised to support clients and their families. We ensured that there were always two duty senior social workers available and, where 3-month reviews were able to be held (difficult on face time but virtually impossible on phone), we undertook a QA Light to ensure that standards had been met up to that point. The QA programme will be fully re-established as soon as is reasonably practicable.

To fairly, effectively, and proportionately implement court orders and release licences

This objective is largely process-driven but in saying that, being able to say that JSW, as diverse, complex, and busy as it is, is an efficient service and that this contributes very significantly, to the effectiveness of the service and the achievement of positive individual and statutory outcomes is a noteworthy statement to make.

F) In 2020/21, 75.6% of Community Payback Orders (CPOs) were completed successfully, above the Scottish average of 73%. In 21/22 we increased this to 78.5% (Scotland data not yet available). It is however difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from CPO data (Table 4) as the imposition of orders was significantly affected by the pandemic such that numbers were down compared with pre-pandemic years. For example, the number of women made subject to orders decreased from 17% to 13% but was that because: the tenacious outreach and support delivered by the staff in the Connections Women’s Centre was successful; women complied with lockdown so offended less; or the Courts were prioritising higher risk cases. The answer may be any one of these explanations but is more likely to be a weighted combination of them all. Similarly, the reduction in the number of orders issued to under 18s is to be welcomed but invites more questions than answers; were they offending less, were more police warnings issued, were they being diverted from prosecution, or as court business was very limited were they prioritising higher risk/custody cases? As above, the answer is likely to be a weighted combination of all of these.

Table 4: Number of Successful CPO Completions

	Scotland		Aberdeen		
	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total	16,271	10,034	976	680	652
Successful	66.62%	72.93%	73.4% (716)	75.6% (514)	78.5% (512)
Breach	16.35%	10.95%	10.5% (102)	7.9% (54)	5.67% (37)
Other	17.02%	16.12%	16.2% (158)	16.5% (112)	15.8% (103)

G) The Court and associated Pre-Disposal Team is effectively the front door to the Justice Social Work service and the importance of that first contact with cannot be underestimated. That front door was literally closed for most of Covid which has impacted on our First Contact/ Induction/ Case Management figures. This is particularly unfortunate as, pre-Covid, we had made considerable improvements in these areas (approx. 80% of first contacts were immediately after court). Footfall through the Court door is now increasing, and we are working towards our pre-Covid level of first contacts, although realistically this may take some time.

Table 5: Number of First Induction/Case Management Meetings within 5 Days

	Scotland		Aberdeen		
	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total	16,800	8,169	1,055	506	669
On time	72.4%	61.0%	719 (68.2%)	245 (48.4%)	409 (61.1%)
Late	18.3%	28.6%	229 (21.7%)	215 (42.5%)	196 (29.3%)
Information not available	9.3%	10.5%	107 (10.1%)	46 (9.1%)	64 (9.6%)

H) We continued to deliver MAPPA, MARAC and any other multi agency public protection meetings throughout the pandemic, in collaboration with partner agencies to achieve the best possible outcomes during challenging times for clients and communities. The number of MARAC meetings has by necessity increased considerably.

I) JSW in Aberdeen is accredited to deliver the Caledonian System which includes a Men's Programme for higher risk perpetrators of domestic abuse in tandem with a support service for women and children harmed. The majority of Justice Social Work reports to court for offences of a domestic nature are assessed for Caledonian with approximately a third resulting in the imposition of Community Payback Orders with 2-year Caledonian Requirements. Where a Supervision Requirement is imposed without a Caledonian requirement we will still be supervised by Caledonian trained workers because of the nature of the offence.

Table 6 shows the drop in assessments in 20/21 when court business was greatly reduced and a gradual increase in assessments and orders the following year. Domestic abuse accounts for a significant amount of the workload across the service for Admin, support work, social work, MARAC, MAPPA and Throughcare.

Table 6: Number of Caledonian Assessments undertaken, and Requirements imposed

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Assessments	225	171	202
Orders	42	49	64

J) The national LS/CMI risk/needs assessment tool for JSW has been the subject of investigation following the discovery of glitches in the system and is under review by the Risk Management Authority and the Scottish Government. Aberdeen Justice Social Work have representation on the national LS/CMI user group to ensure appraisal of updates on tasks and progress as well as remedial actions for the Scottish Government to get back on track are undertaken, understood, and shared appropriately,

The computer-based system has been closed down since 01 March 2022 and we have been informed that the reporting function cannot be relied upon at this stage or until the outcome of the review and adaptations to the system complete. The current practice as advised by the Scottish Government is to utilise the paper-based system for this risk assessment. This has implications for resources as this takes considerably more time and the system will have to be updated with the paper-based assessments once operational. However, we are undertaking these assessments as required, the focus remains on completion of the LSCMI risk assessment within 20 days and the LSCMI case management plan being agreed with the individual accordingly.

Progress has been made in these areas but again affected by Covid and a lack of access to training which is a national issue. We have requested training from the Risk Management Authority in respect of assessment of Risk of Serious Harm Assessments and associated Risk Management Plans, but no dates have yet been offered.

To reduce offending by promoting desistance

The essence of this objective is our JSW value base. This is what we do day-in and day-out and what we did to the best of our ability despite the impact of the pandemic. We prioritised, assessed, supported and sometimes fed. We gave out phones so that we could remain in contact with individuals. When we couldn't do home visits we chatted on doors and remained at a social distance as required, sometimes we walked and talked together. We worked creatively to overcome Covid challenges including unpaid workers making garden play equipment for nurseries in their homes. We delivered food for CFine and Social Bite. We also worked alongside SPS, Housing and Substance Misuse services to ensure that everyone leaving prison had accommodation, medication, and support.

- K) "Desistance is the process of abstaining from crime amongst those who previously had engaged in sustained offending." It is neither quick nor easy and can take a considerable time to change thinking, behaviours and underlying problems. Desistance research emphasises the need to: adopt an individualised approach; develop positive relationships as individuals are influenced to change by those whose advice they respect and whose support they value; recognise and build on people's strengths.
- L) It is important that individual outcomes as well as statutory outcomes are achieved as a result of the engagement between our staff and the individuals that they supervise and support. We know that many, if not most of our clients have experienced bereavement and adversity in childhood which has significantly impacted on their thinking and behaviour. We are very aware of the need to listen to our clients as to what works for them and seek their views on how they think services could be improved. We are also very mindful of the factors that have led people to offend and seek to reduce the influence of these on an individual's behaviour. Getting feedback about what has worked is beneficial to the ongoing improvement of our person-centred service delivery.
- M) For Covid related reasons we were only able to gather feedback from 80 Exit Questionnaires in 2020-21 (51 Supervision and 29 Unpaid Work) and 157 Exit Questionnaires in 2021-22 (56 Supervision and 101 Unpaid Work) and the content may

be skewed by changes to JSW service delivery and difficulty in accessing other services during the pandemic.

The Exit Questionnaire stand out headline would have to be that in 2021/22, 90% of JSW clients reported improvement in at least one area. It is also significant that, in a time of considerable stress, clients reported that their mental health and coping skills had improved, likely attributable to the support that they had received. There was a drop in improvements in relation to Drugs and Alcohol, possibly due to increased use during Covid and /or difficulty in accessing specialist services, and a reported deterioration in Personal Relationships, again likely to be Covid related. Some improvements are also potentially attributable to Covid, so, for example Education and Employment scored highly in 21/22 when we were “opening up” services again.

Table 7: Number of Exit Questionnaires and comparison of ‘Before’ and ‘After’ Supervision Improvements

	2020-21		2021-22	
UPW responses	29		101	
Supervision responses	51		56	
	People	Improvement	People	Improvement
People with issues at start of order/ % reporting improvement in at least one area	40	85%	42	90%
Housing	13	56%	20	66%
Education and Employment	7	46%	17	70%
Drugs	13	93%	13	77%
Alcohol	13	82%	8	75%
Personal Relationships	18	81%	25	62%
Self Esteem	25	73%	23	79%
Mental Health	27	53%	33	82%
Physical Health	8	50%	11	59%
Money Issues	10	52%	17	71%
Coping Skills	24	76%	25	89%

To promote the social inclusion of people with convictions

This objective is about improving outcomes for people in the justice system by intervening at the lowest possible level, providing both supervision and support, linking into other services and agencies as appropriate and, ideally, linking individuals into community supports in the longer term.

N) A Fiscal Work Order is a Direct Measure offered by the Procurator Fiscal as an alternative to Court and the numbers of these tend to fluctuate. Diversion from Prosecution is also an alternative to Court and in Aberdeen all 16/17 year olds are referred to Barnardo's while individuals aged 18 and over will be offered a bespoke service tailored to their individual needs. This is overseen, and may be delivered by JSW but clients are referred on to whatever service best meets their needs e.g. mental health, Children’s services, ADA, housing. One of the Covid positives is that, in trying to reduce court backlogs, individuals

with slightly higher risk/ needs offending than previously are now being referred thus allowing us to assess and address underlying needs at an early stage. The use of Structured Deferred Sentences dropped during 20/21 but increased slightly last year and is continuing to rise. This disposal, particularly when imposed by the Problem-Solving Court, is again intended both as a lower level, albeit intensive, intervention and as a diversion from custody.

Table 8: Other Interventions

	19/20	20/21	21/22
Fiscal work orders	13	16	7
Diversion From Prosecution	114	150	168
Structured Deferred Sentence	25	11	30
Bail Supervision	45	4	26
Drug Treatment and Testing Order	7	0	13

O) One of the benefits of the past two years has been improved partnership working across a range of services and the challenge will now be to build on this further by developing a shared care model with mental health and substance misuse services. We have also commissioned services from Aberdeen Foyer to deliver Other Activity and Employability services and there are opportunities for wider collaboration and development through this service and Community Education and Learning.

7) Conclusion

As the report shows, we did our best in exceptionally challenging circumstances and due to the committed endeavours of the entire justice workforce, kept the service open throughout the year and prioritised the individuals we support according to the highest risk and greatest vulnerability.

As has been referenced earlier, particular highlights included an increase in diversion from prosecution, and structured deferred sentences, Unpaid Work striving to adjust its supports to meet the needs and requirements of the individuals that it works with, and the ongoing challenge posed by a significant increase in Caledonian caseloads.

The flexibility, pragmatism and innovative practice that was evident during this time was commendable even though every member of staff had their own personal pandemic circumstances to navigate.

As the country learns to live with Covid, it is worth acknowledging that we are not out of the woods yet as we continue to be impacted by court backlogs, the impact of new legislation and guidance, the recruitment and training issues, implications of the national breakdown of the LSCMI Risk/ Needs assessment database, the resource implications of introducing D365 and more.

However, on the plus side we have learned a lot from the past two years – some people communicate better on the phone, some can undertake unpaid work at home and there is likely to be more that we don't yet know.

It is likely that pandemic-related, whole-sector changes that are remaining in place and the introduction of new legislation in 2022 will mean that the Delivery Plan and the Performance Framework may need to be revised so that they continue to highlight the future direction of travel for the service and its continued effectiveness.

In conclusion, the justice social work service is confident that it will continue to provide robust, person-centred support that will keep our communities safe through the effective assessment and management of risk and also deliver positive individual and statutory outcomes by helping individuals address the impacts of the multiple disadvantages that they have experienced in and throughout their lives.

COMMUNITY PAYBACK ORDER ANNUAL REPORT

FINANCIAL YEAR: **2020/21**

LOCAL AUTHORITY: **Aberdeen City**



In this section, please report on the following:

- **The total number of unpaid work hours completed during the year;**
- **Types of unpaid work projects which have been carried out (list of bullet points will suffice); and**
- **One example that helps to demonstrate how communities benefited from unpaid work.**

We recognise that compliance with pandemic restrictions and related SG guidance significantly impacted on the capacity of services during the reporting year. (Max 300 words.)

- 32,153 – The total number of unpaid work hours on the 302 UPW and OA Requirements which were completed in the year, albeit that many of these orders will have been imposed in the previous year or before.
- The majority of these (74.2%) were completed before the reduction in hours applied.
- 30,000 – the actual number of “participation hours” undertaken in the year, a drop of approx. 47% on last year for Covid related reasons.
- Blended Learning Packs (BLP) - an educational approach allowing the individual the opportunity to reflect on how participating in UPW can be of benefit to the wider community and how being subject to an order helps the individual to appreciate the impact of their own behaviour upon their community.
- Woodwork design project – the success of the BLPs led to the development of other packs, both educational (with the help of our Adult Learning & Development colleagues) and practical woodwork projects designed in our UPW workshop, all of which could be completed at home.
- Home knitting projects – a niche project
- Landscaping, gardening, environmental projects
- Home workers also upcycled furniture, undertook blended learning packs, worked on art therapy books and undertook other projects as appropriate. We also restarted outdoor work as soon as we could in August 2020. Our thinking was that if we could support people to continue with their Unpaid Work and Other Activity and get them to complete their orders, then we wouldn't have so much of a backlog in the long run.

Example

- Our building is looking much better both inside and out. The garden is a safer area for children using it. We have also had lots of positive feedback from staff and service users about the improvement in the environment.

Quotes from both people subject to CPOs and the beneficiaries about the impact of the unpaid work on them and/or the community. (Again, bullet point will suffice - max 300 words.)

People Subject to CPOs

- “I really enjoyed my time at both Somebody Cares and the other place. Both were welcoming and made me feel like any volunteer. I am staying on as a volunteer as I enjoyed it so much. Something good came out of my personal nightmare.”

- “Glad to be done and now get a job thanks to team.”
- “Was good to work with my task supervisor as he has changed my way of thinking. If I have done this for nothing he said I should be working even a job like we have been doing. Hope I won't be back.”
- “Gave me a sense of wellbeing and makes me want to get back to a full time job.”
- “Learn't to work in groups as a team and time is easier when you get the work done. I wasn't good in groups before. Now I want to work after doing that for nothing”
- “Enjoyed being helpful to elderly people and liked to interact with public service.”
- “Feeling good helping less fortunate people”
- “Art work can be given to community and sold etc. Community see I am paying price of offence etc”

Beneficiaries

The Team supported us by delivering hundreds of food parcels to our vulnerable beneficiaries across Aberdeen during Covid. It was an essential service that would not have been possible without the support of the UPW Team.

Outdoor benches were upgraded/repared and additional items were made to support our Early Years practice outdoors. These included alphabet and number boards, wooden insect boards (children use these every day on their bug hunts), measuring sticks and boards for children to throw balls and beanbags through. These are also very well used. Pallets were also sanded and painted to ensure they were safe and protected.

The team went above and beyond making outstanding items for the nursery. They were very helpful and offered ideas and possibilities that we had not considered. Our children have high quality bespoke resources that are supporting their continued learning and have improved our environment. I have already recommended the Team to other managers.

Types of "other activity" carried out as part of the unpaid work/ other activity requirement. You may want to reflect on learning from new ways of working within other activity and the benefits of this. (Again, bullet point will suffice - max 300 words.)

- Blended Learning Packs
- Adult education
- Deliver food parcels
- Volunteer at gym
- Volunteer at playgroup
- Volunteer at charity
- Coaching young people
- Forklift training course
- Attendance at drug/ alcohol/ mental health services
- Online courses and activities – Resource library set up for workers to use with, or send to, clients

**1. It is acknowledged that pandemic restrictions will have limited the local opportunities to consult on both the nature of/reduction in the capacity of unpaid work – however, if you were able to undertake this, how did you do so?
2. If you were unable to undertake this type of consultation, please advise how you organised the available unpaid work activity over the year, e.g. responding to requests from local COVID resilience committees, etc. (max 300 words).**

- Sheriffs were updated regularly by email on status and delivery of JSW services.
- Covid related information in all JSWRs.
- Some consultation from January to March 2021 but less to do with requests for service and more to do with availability of suitable projects i.e. those that had sufficient space to maintain 2 metres, accessible on foot or by public transport, availability of welfare facilities etc. Projects identified by ACC Environmental Manager, schools and third sector.

The pandemic restrictions also affected access to wider support services which are provided by partners (e.g. drug and alcohol services, etc.). Please outline any significant issues which were identified for people involved with Justice Services and what was put in place to resolve matters relating to these issues, e.g. access to services, etc. (max 300 words).

JSW maintained face to face service for individuals who were high risk, vulnerable, released from court/custody throughout pandemic. Most other services were closed but evidence of good communication and information sharing to provide wraparound support for those in need. Weekly meetings with Prison, Housing, JSW, Drug/Alcohol services to ensure that accommodation, medication/ food in place on release. When UPW closed to clients, Task Supervisors delivered food parcels across the city for Social Bite and CFine foodbank.

Any other relevant information not previously highlighted - this may include:

- **Learning from and/or comment on new ways of working and different benefits which were achieved.**
 - **Examples of any work carried out with people on CPOs to address their offending behaviour.**
 - **Examples of work carried out in partnership with 3rd Sector partners.**
 - **Any other areas identified for improvement and planned next steps**
 - **Any other relevant points you wish to highlight.**
- (max. 300 words – bullet points only if preferred.)**

Our learning / new ways of working / different benefits which were achieved and the changes we have incorporated into our daily practice.

Using our WFH approach, we found that certain individuals who would not normally have managed traditional placements in traditional settings completed many more

hours and completed their orders. This was successful with both men and women and specifically those with health, mental health, drug/alcohol and childcare issues.

Order supervisors maintained, and in some cases increased, contact by telephone with unpaid workers during lockdowns. This led to improved relationships as conversations were more about welfare and less about compliance.

Our WFH options also worked well for women who often do not manage male dominated settings. This has resulted in us creating a women's only Order/ Task Supervisor hybrid worker who only holds women's orders and has a much more hands on approach.

In addition, our move from a central sign in locus to a project locality sign in resulted in improved attendance of some clients due to smaller groupings.

COMPLETED BY: Lesley Simpson

DATE: 29th October 2021

