Item No: 18

Meeting Date: **Wednesday 25th November 2026**

Glasgow City Integration Joint Board

Report By: **Kelda Gaffney, Depute Chief Officer, Operations and Governance and Chief Social Work Officer**

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Justice Social Work and Community Justice Overview Annual Update

Purpose of Report:	To update the Integration Joint Board on: • Justice Social Work developments; and • Community Justice Glasgow developments.
Background/Engagement:	Engagement in relation to the community justice agenda is undertaken with service users, Justice Social Work staff and the broader community justice partners.
Governance Route:	The matters contained within this paper have been previously considered by the following group(s) as part of its development. HSCP Senior Management Team ☐ Council Corporate Management Team ☐ Health Board Corporate Management Team ☐ Council Committee ☐ Update requested by IJB ☐ Other ☐ Not Applicable ☒
Recommendations:	The Integration Joint Board is asked to: a) Note the contents of this report.

Relevance to Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan:

The Integration Joint Board is a named statutory partner to community justice through the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016. The work of Justice Social Work contributes to the achievement of the Vision and Partnership Priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan, particularly Priority 1 – Prevention, Early Intervention and Wellbeing and Priority 4 – Strengthening Communities to Reduce Harm.

Implications for Health and Social Care Partnership:

Reference to National Health & Wellbeing Outcome:	This proposal supports the delivery of all 9 National Outcomes, with emphasis on: • People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer. (Outcome 1) • People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected. (Outcome 3) • Health and social care services centered on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services. (Outcome 4) • People using health and social care services are safe from harm. (Outcome 7) • Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services. (Outcome 9)
Personnel:	No identified implications.
Carers:	No identified implications.
Provider Organisations:	Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership, Glasgow Community Justice and third sector commissioned services. Wider community Justice partners such as Police Scotland, Scottish Prison Service, Crown and Procurator Fiscal Service, Neighborhoods and Regeneration Services and Scottish Court Service.
Equalities:	Justice services play a key role in promoting equality by working with people and communities to tackle the causes of crime, which are often rooted in inequality. This is achieved through an increased emphasis on prevention and rehabilitation. Justice services work with specific types of crime, such as violence against women and girls, and all forms of hate crime.
Fairer Scotland Compliance:	In its planning, Justice Social Work takes account of the impact of poverty on those involved in the justice system.
Financial:	No identified implications

Legal:	No identified implications.

Economic Impact:	No identified implications.

Sustainability:	No identified implications.

Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:	None.

Risk Implications:	No identified implications.

Implications for Glasgow City Council:	Glasgow City Council is a named, statutory partner to Community Justice through the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016.

Implications for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde:	NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde is a named, statutory partner to Community Justice through the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016.

Direction Required to Council, Health Board or Both	
Direction to:	
1. No Direction Required	☒
2. Glasgow City Council	☐
3. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	☐
4. Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	☐

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Integration Joint Board on:

- Justice Social Work developments; and
- Community Justice Glasgow developments.

2. Key Justice Social Work Developments in 2025-2026

2.1 Prison Population Pressures and Justice Social Work Response

2.1.1 Scotland continues to face a sustained challenge in managing its prison population. To address these pressures, a number of emergency and legislative measures have been introduced in recent years. Following the prison population reaching a record high of 8,452 individuals, Scottish Ministers approved the Early Release of Prisoners (Scotland) Regulations 2025 on 5 November 2025. This enabled the implementation of a further emergency release scheme, delivered over seven tranches between December 2025 and April 2026. The scheme operated within strict eligibility criteria and public protection safeguards. Prisoners serving sentences of less than four years and within 180 days of their scheduled release date were considered for release. Individuals convicted of sexual offences or domestic abuse offences were excluded from eligibility. A total of 614 prisoners were released under this scheme. Justice Social work undertook checks for 429 eligible prisoners from Glasgow to support decision making with 75 ultimately released.

2.1.2 A further measure introduced to alleviate prison population pressures was the Prisoners (Early Release) (Miscellaneous Amendment and Transitional Provisions) (Scotland) Regulations 2026, which came into force on 12 May 2026. The legislation amended the Prisoners and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Act 1993, changing the automatic early release point for eligible short-term prisoners from two-fifths (40%) to three-tenths (30%) of their sentence. The change applies to individuals serving custodial sentences of less than four years. However, individuals serving sentences, or parts of sentences, for sexual offences or domestic abuse offences continue to serve 50% of their sentence. Implementation was managed through a phased approach, with initial releases under the revised 30% rule taking place between 26 May and 23 June 2026. This staggered rollout was designed to support safe implementation and assist in managing capacity pressures across the prison estate.

2.1.3 Justice Social Work services have had to respond quickly to measures addressing prison population pressures. Emergency release arrangements and the reduction of the release point for short term prisoners from 40% to 30% have impacted on release planning timescales, placing additional pressure on prison-based and community-based Justice Social work teams to coordinate safe release and reintegration arrangements.

2.2 Glasgow Sheriff Court Social Work Team

2.2.1 Glasgow Justice Social Work is working with the Scottish Government and local third-sector partners to test a Pilot model for individuals assessed as suitable for Bail Supervision whose unstable accommodation and complex needs contribute to an individual being remanded. The model combines supported accommodation with intensive community-based support. The 12-month test phase began in autumn.

2.2.2 The court Justice Social work and Bail team continue to maintain a strong presence in courts for advice and short notice reports. They undertake bail assessments in a timely manner and continue to have a positive impact in strengthening partnership working between Justice Social Work, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service, and Sheriffs.

2.2.3 Updated National Guidelines on Diversion from Prosecution in Scotland were published on 10 June 2026. The revised guidance introduces clearer Pathway A and Pathway B arrangements, enabling intervention to commence immediately following assessment under Pathway A, while Pathway B requires further COPFS agreement prior to intervention and provides additional safeguards for more complex cases. Importantly, the pathway is not determined solely by offence type, with diversion remaining focused on identified needs rather than offence-focused risk assessment or management. COPFS determines whether a case meets the threshold for diversion, while Justice Social Work is responsible for assessing the individual's needs and suitability for intervention. The revised guidance strengthens the emphasis on early, person-centred and trauma-informed intervention and provides a framework for reviewing local pathways to ensure diversion is used consistently and to its fullest appropriate extent.

2.3 Drug Treatment and Testing Orders (DTTOs)

2.3.1 During 2025-26, the Glasgow Drug Court Team has continued to build on feedback and review from the previous reporting period. This work has focused on ensuring that the service remains responsive to changing patterns of drug use, offending behaviour and the complex needs of individuals appearing before the courts.

2.3.2 Following engagement with key stakeholders, there remains a commitment to introduce a Structured Deferred Sentence (SDS) Only pathway for individuals who may not meet the criteria for the more intensive DTTO. The proposed SDS Only model aims to provide an additional community-based option that would support earlier engagement with Social Work and addiction services, allowing for comprehensive assessment and intervention prior to sentencing.

2.3.3 The SDS Only model has the potential to strengthen links between the Court and community services, improve opportunities to address underlying needs such as substance misuse, housing and mental health issues, and support more informed sentencing decisions and improved rehabilitation outcomes.

2.4 Unpaid Work (UPW)

2.4.1 In 2025–26, Unpaid Work (UPW) strengthened community links through partnerships with established organisations across Glasgow's three localities. Neighbourhoods Regeneration and Sustainability (NRS) remained the main squad placement provider. Placements across providers supported environmental improvements, maintenance, clean-ups and local organisations. Tasks included clearing paths, cutting grass for vulnerable residents, supporting community cafés, food banks and charity shops, collecting and restoring furniture, and painting and removing graffiti for local services. These placements made community payback more visible, delivered tangible local benefits and helped service users develop skills, confidence and community connections. Developing personal and squad placements that reflect individual needs and interests remains a priority. Positive media coverage in July 2026 highlighted UPW's restorative value and contribution to safer, stronger communities.

2.4.2 UPW placements provide practical skills that can support future employment and training, while promoting reintegration and rehabilitation. Contributing directly to their communities can also help individuals develop a sense of fulfilment and see themselves as responsible, valued members of society. By witnessing the positive impact of their work, participants have meaningful opportunities to repair harm and build accountability.

2.4.3 Development of the UPW Booking System continues as a key Justice Services business improvement priority. The system will replace the current labour-intensive spreadsheet process, improving the management and utilisation of placements, reducing the potential for error and supporting people to complete their Community Payback Orders more efficiently. Glasgow continues to work with other local authorities to ensure local operational, reporting and monitoring requirements are reflected within the shared solution.

2.5 Prison and Community Throughcare

2.5.1 The Care Inspectorate and HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland published the second phase of its Thematic Review of Prison-Based Social Work in May 2026 following their inspection at the end of last year. The findings highlighted capacity pressures across prison social work services whilst recognising the value of effective risk assessment and case management processes. The recommendations will inform ongoing national and local service development.

2.5.2 Glasgow Justice Social Work has played a leading role in a national working group with SPS, Scottish Government and Social Work Scotland to review the future role and sustainability of prison-based social work. A key outcome was securing Scottish Government funding for four additional Social Workers and an additional Team Leader within the HMP Barlinnie team, increasing capacity in response to rising prison populations and demand. The group has now transitioned into a longer-term programme extending to 2027, focusing on workforce capacity, performance frameworks and the future development of prison-based social work.

2.5.3 Justice Social Work contributes to national initiatives led by the SPS reviewing prisoner pathways and progression planning, including a review to clarify and potentially expand social work's role in custodial settings.

2.5.4 The HMP Barlinnie prison-based social work team, working with community colleagues, explored a proposed test of change to extend social work's contribution beyond statutory responsibilities, particularly in addressing social care needs within the prison estate. The proposal aimed to address unmet programme needs and provide more holistic support for individuals in custody but did not proceed due to limited funding time scale. This is an area that we plan to revisit within Justice within the next reporting period.

2.5.5 Justice Social Work Throughcare Services currently provide statutory throughcare support to all individuals released from custody subject to post-release supervision and licence conditions. This support is delivered through a multi-agency approach involving Justice Social Work, addiction services, prison-based homelessness services, health partners and relevant third sector organisations. The focus of this work is to manage risk and support successful reintegration into the community and address factors that can contribute to vulnerability following release, including housing, income, health, substance use and social isolation.

2.5.6 There has been a poor uptake of voluntary support provided by Justice Social Work Services for prisoners released from short custodial sentences where there is no statutory requirement for supervision. This is despite there being an entitlement for individuals leaving custody to access voluntary throughcare support for up to 12 months following release. Nationally, this support is currently delivered through the Upside service, which provides practical and emotional support to individuals leaving custody following a short sentence or period of remand. However, there have been capacity issues with Upside with demand often exceeding resource availability resulting in the individual not receiving support. Individuals may also refuse support from this service.

2.5.7 Recognising the increased risk that can arise when individuals leave custody without support, Justice Social Work through Social Work Scotland has been working with SPS and partner agencies to strengthen arrangements for voluntary throughcare provided by Social Work. In response, processes are being developed in partnership with Social Work Scotland and SPS to identify individuals who may not receive support through Upside and ensure that a voluntary throughcare offer is made prior to release. This aims to reduce gaps in support during the critical transition from custody to the community and improve access to services that promote wellbeing, stability and community safety. This process will aim to increase voluntary throughcare provision for short term prisoners, with the exception of those on remand who are released straight from Court. A solution to capturing these individuals and ensuring they receive offers of support remains in discussion.

2.6 Caledonian Team

2.6.1 In 2025-26, the Caledonian Team advanced its specialist domestic abuse team model, strengthening risk assessment and oversight of high-risk and complex cases. Investment in women's worker provision expanded support for victims and children, while dedicated children's worker pathways improved identification and assessment of children affected by offending. Targeted training strengthened practitioner skills in domestic abuse risk practice, throughcare, cyber-enabled coercive control and emerging forms of abuse. The team began supervising throughcare cases, with further development planned for the coming year. These changes enhanced the service's capacity to identify, assess and manage domestic abuse risk, supporting safer outcomes for victims, children and communities across Glasgow.

3 Community Justice Glasgow

3.1.1 The Community Justice Glasgow Partnership delivers the statutory functions of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, bringing together the statutory partners named in the Act and local third-sector representatives. Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership is a key partner, reflecting both its statutory role and a shared commitment to achieving a common vision through collaboration and communication. Community Justice governance sits within Glasgow Community Planning Partnership structures, with alignment to Glasgow City Integration Joint Board and local scrutiny arrangements for Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service through the SAFE Glasgow Partnership.

3.1.2 Community Justice Glasgow aims to improve outcomes for people affected by the justice system, reduce reoffending and make Glasgow safer for everyone. Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan 2023 - 2028, developed jointly with direct partners and stakeholders, guides this work. A full overview of the work of Community Justice partners can be reviewed within the most recent Annual Report.

3.1.3 Community Justice Glasgow and its partners support people who have committed offences throughout the justice process, from arrest and prosecution to community or custodial sentencing and reintegration. Recognising imprisonment's wider impact, the partnership also works with victim organisations, communities and affected families.

4 Recommendations

4.1 The Integration Joint Board is asked to:

a) Note the contents of this report.