

Background

Apex Scotland has worked since 1987, with a range of partners, to improve the employment opportunities for individuals with a criminal record.

It also aims to inform discussion and influence policy on criminal justice in Scotland from a sound evidence base.

Mission

To reduce re-offending by working with offenders and young people at risk of offending to help them address their employability needs and progress them towards employment, education or training.

By helping offenders and young people at risk to realise their potential for employment we can reduce crime because the individual who finds and sustains a job is three times less likely to offend than if they are unemployed.

Scotland's Criminal Justice Plan – Supporting Safer Stronger Communities highlights that *'we know that an ex-offender is less likely to break the law if he or she has stable accommodation, supportive family relationships and employment opportunities. Alcohol and drug addictions, mental and physical health are also important factors.'* (December 2004, para 5.1)

Vision

To be the leading organisation in Scotland, working in partnership to deliver employability services to offenders and young people at risk.

By 2009, we will achieve this by:

- › Continuing to ensure the effective and efficient functioning and governance of the organisation;
- › Delivering high quality services and exploiting opportunities for new business development;
- › Monitoring performance;
- › Continuously reviewing our quality systems, policies and procedures and staff development programme;
- › Influencing policy;
- › Maintaining our high profile and recognition as a key player in criminal justice and beyond.



Apex Scotland



Strategic Plan

2006 – 2009



APEX THE ORGANISATION: To ensure the effective and efficient functioning and governance of the organisation by:

- › Ensuring financial viability
- › Reinvesting accumulated funds to aid development of the organisation and services
- › Reviewing employer's contribution to staff benefits with a view to increasing staff retention
- › Monitoring cost centres and taking action to reduce any deficits where necessary
- › Organising an Annual Staff Conference
- › Ensuring a standardised approach to Administrative procedures through our Quality Management Systems
- › Continuing to work with Law at Work to develop exemplary employment/HR practices
- › Continuing development of the Apex Information Management System (AIMS) and review of outcome measures to allow Apex to evidence value and impact of our services
- › Developing our computerised network to ensure a more efficient IT system
- › Maximising the contribution of the Board by focusing meetings on strategic development, setting up a Finance and Operations Sub Committee, continuing to organise Board Away Days and Unit visits and producing a Board Handbook



SERVICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH: To continue to deliver high quality services and pursue opportunities for new business development in response to the changing needs of clients and stakeholders as well as the environment in which we work by:

- › Monitoring service outputs and continuing to ensure realistic contract value for existing and new services
- › Continuing to promote consistency of services through our Best Practice Working Groups
- › Producing robust management information to support business development
- › Continuing to integrate quality into service delivery
- › Reviewing programmes and services offered to ensure we can respond appropriately to the needs of customers and clients
- › Pursuing a secondment to Disclosure Scotland
- › Analysing the implications of the Employability Framework and taking action to secure new business
- › Increasing our prison based services to a wider number of establishments
- › Drawing up a strategy for engaging with Community Justice Authorities to include the production of information for Chief Officers on local Apex Services and meetings with all Local Authorities, thereby ensuring that Apex is consulted by all CJAs and promoting the importance of linkages between community sentencing and employability/employment
- › Continuing our commitment to external environmental scanning
- › Developing a strategy for appropriate information sharing protocols with other agencies
- › Exploiting opportunities for working in partnership with organisations in the housing/homelessness, mental health and drugs fields



MONITORING PERFORMANCE: To consistently monitor, evaluate and review our performance in line with our commitment to continuous improvement by:

- › Maintaining and developing the AIMS database and further developing our IT systems
- › Developing a tracking system that will enable us to measure client progression and provide feedback to relevant partners on effectiveness and outcomes
- › Disseminating performance information to staff, relevant stakeholders and partners
- › Continuing to produce monthly Business Performance Reports for all Units and same service types
- › Developing our relationship with the Scottish Criminal Records Office (SCRO) to provide better and more robust data against which to measure performance and effectiveness
- › Pursuing opportunities for research Secondments from the Scottish Executive and SPS
- › Producing and disseminating a series of Research Briefing Papers on a number of one-off services as a marketing tool and aid to new business development including: Arrest Referral, Structured Deferred Sentence, Youth Crime Initiative and Further and Higher Education pre-access course

QUALITY SYSTEMS AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT: To continuously review the quality systems currently in place, such as EFQM, IIP and SQMS and maintain the relevance of our staff training programme by:

- › Increasing the number of staff appropriately qualified to deliver accredited and other programmes
- › Continuing our commitment to ensuring that all staff who work with clients have access to high quality, multi-sensory format training modules, created by our Training Module Development Officer
- › Implementing a service wide system of integrated and evidence based measurements of quality
- › Adapting our quality system in line with the changing needs of the organisation and emerging initiatives and policies
- › Implementing the learning from quality and performance audits of Apex Scotland and the 2005 Management Review
- › Reviewing and updating the Corporate Risk Register at Board Meetings
- › Reviewing policies to continually ensure the health, safety and welfare of Apex Scotland's staff, service users and their dependents and visitors
- › Continuing to promote a Health & Safety culture within Apex which sets and monitors objectives, targets and priorities and actively encourages ownership and accountability at all levels
- › Reviewing the Staff Development Programme to match needs of staff and organisation and take account of new skills required
- › Promoting occupational standards internally and developing opportunities to offer accredited training and programmes to other organisations
- › Maximising use and efficiency of the National Training Centre



Strategic Directive 5

INFLUENCING POLICY: To continue to influence policy in criminal justice and beyond, as befits a key player and a catalyst for positive change in the field of criminal justice and employment by:

- › Informing and influencing relevant inquiries of the Scottish Parliament's Committees
- › Engaging with the National Advisory Body on Offender Management and each Community Justice Authority to ensure that the importance of employment in reducing re-offending and the positive benefits of linking community sentences to employability skills/employment is highlighted in area plans
- › Continuing to contribute to relevant Scottish Executive Policy Groups to shape initiatives that will impact on our client group and area of work
- › Continuing our involvement with the Sentencing Commission and other groups such as the Scottish Consortium on Crime and Criminal Justice, Families Outside, the Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum, Skills for Justice, the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum, the European Offender Employment Forum and the Law Society of Scotland

Strategic Directive 6

RECOGNITION AS A KEY PLAYER: To proactively promote the organisation as a key player and the value of our work by engaging with the media, producing articles for newspapers and journals and giving conference presentations by:

- › Reviewing and updating material for our marketing folders
- › Developing a marketing/communications strategy
- › Producing and disseminating a high quality Annual Report each summer
- › Organising our Annual Lecture to provide a platform for debate on the Criminal Justice System in Scotland as it currently operates and might develop in the future



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