

Dear Convener,

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee on 14 December 2022 as part of your scrutiny of the Bail and Release from Custody (Scotland) Bill. There were a few areas I thought it may be helpful to provide some additional context on, as below.

As the national skills body, Skills Development Scotland's purpose is to drive a productive and inclusive economy by ensuring Scotland's businesses and people develop the skills they need to achieve their potential. SDS delivers Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) services across the country.

Community Justice and Throughcare

SDS has worked closely with Community Justice Scotland at a national level contributing to the implementation of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act alongside other partners. The relationship with CJS has been invaluable in helping SDS with relevant support and advice particularly on how best to deliver our role as a national statutory partner. This has also provided an opportunity to raise awareness of our service offers within the wider community justice landscape.

Given we are a national organisation, the relationship with Community Justice Scotland (CJS) is critical as it helps us to position our services in the context of new and emerging themes e.g. throughcare. The relationship CJS has in leading the development of local justice co-ordinators enables visibility of SDS and offers a useful communication channel over and above the local partnership groups.

Recently SDS operational and national leads met with one of the CJS national improvement leads to share and learn from experience across the wide range of local partnerships. The review work currently underway by the national improvement leads should inform the consistency and functioning of the local partnerships when considering skills and employability themes relating to throughcare.

Throughcare works best with the right services at the right time for the individual given the range of complex needs that may present themselves, and partnerships need to be enabled to effectively make their co-ordinated and collective contributions appropriately. The review work of CJS should support this going forward.

Regarding throughcare, the key stages and supports within an individual's journey must align to ensure individual stability that allows easier or earlier engagement with local statutory partner services. For example, access to accommodation, benefits and health care are recognised as initial *stability* priorities. Following on from this, other services and supports can be more effective.

Young Offenders

SDS works with the Scottish Prison Service in relation to young offenders who fall within our targeted group career service offer (within Polmont and Cornton Vale). The throughcare considerations of the committee should consider the specific needs of young people in the criminal justice system and the whole system approach regarding this group.

We are happy to provide any further written evidence if there are any other areas the Committee would like to explore.

Yours sincerely,

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Skills Development Scotland