

Organisation:

South Lanarkshire Council – Justice Services

Key Rights Applied:

All

Background & Context:

South Lanarkshire Justice Services have been working to redesign their service and have committed to a public health and human rights-based approach. Many individuals who come into contact with the Justice system face complex challenges - such as poor mental health, housing instability, and family breakdown - and the service has committed to a more holistic, rights-based approach.

This has included the creation of the Recovery-Oriented Justice Service (ROJS), a multidisciplinary team supporting people through the Alcohol and Drug Problem Solving Court (ADPSC) and promoting alternatives to remand, such as Structured Deferred Sentences. The aim is to ensure justice responses are therapeutic, person-centred, and grounded in human rights. Justice Services have also strengthened partnerships with housing and commissioned services to improve access to rehabilitation, digital inclusion, and family support - ensuring rights are upheld throughout a person's justice journey.

Use of the Charter Toolkit:

The Charter of Rights and accompanying Toolkit have helped shape both strategic and operational decisions. The Charter was embedded in the terms of reference for working groups reviewing the Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO) service. Staff across Justice Services were introduced to the Charter and Toolkit through internal communications and the launch video, which helped generate discussion and build awareness.

Results to date:

- Engaged with ADP colleagues and partners to embed the Charter and clarify duty bearer responsibilities.
- Held internal discussions on collaborative, rights-based practice with individuals and families.
- Created new ways for people to share experiences through the *Care Opinion* platform.
- Reviewed and redesigned services, establishing a new Public Health Court and Recovery Team and roles led by people with lived experience.

Lessons Learned:

- Embedding the Charter is most effective when it's done collaboratively and with genuine engagement from people with lived experience.
- A rights-based approach helps reframe service delivery, shifting the focus from punishment to support and recovery.
- Staff need time, space, and support to understand and apply the Charter meaningfully.
- Listening to feedback and acting on it builds trust and improves outcomes.

Recommendations for Others:

- Start by involving people with lived experience in service design and delivery.
- Use the Charter and Toolkit to guide both strategic planning and day-to-day practice.
- Make rights-based approaches visible and accessible to staff - through training, discussion, and practical examples.
- Promote cross-sector collaboration to ensure people's rights are upheld across housing, health, justice, and recovery services.