



**Safer and Empowered Communities Forum**  
**Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 10am**  
**Tamfourhill Community Hub**

**Present:**

Lynsey Hansford (LH)	CVS Falkirk & District
Eloise Wilson (EW)	CVS Falkirk & District
Kerrie Hoggan (KH)	CVS Falkirk & District
Norry McNeill (NM)	Transform Forth Valley
Claire Hughes (CH)	Transform Forth Valley
Nicola Bruce (NB)	Community Justice Partnership
Donna Laidlaw (DL)	Strathcarron Hospice
Justine Nicolson (JN)	Strathcarron Hospice
Lou Carberry (LC)	LGBT Youth Scotland
John Hosie (JH)	Tamfourhill TRO and Hub
Lynne Boslem (LB)	Tamfourhill Hub
Louise Brown (LBr)	Tamfourhill Hub
Magali Redding (MR)	Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs
Maria Throp (MT)	1 <sup>st</sup> Step Development Ventures
Sharlene Ramage (SR)	Carers Centre
Susan Milne (SM)	Christians Against Poverty

**Guests:**

Phillip Heaton	Lead Officer, Falkirk Alcohol & Drug Partnership (ADP)
James Paterson	Policy & Research Officer, Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

LH introduced herself, welcomed Forum members present to the first in person Safer & Empowered Communities Forum.

**2. Previous Minutes and Action Tracker**

The minutes of the meetings held on 21 February 2024 were approved as an accurate record of meeting.

**3. Highlighting the work of Falkirk's Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP)**

LH introduced Phil Heaton, ADP Lead Officer for Falkirk. Phil shared that he had been working in substance use services since 2000 across Edinburgh, Fife and, for the last two years, Falkirk. He confirmed that the ADP was aligned to the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) with 31 ADPs across Scotland. Each aligned to local needs.

Phil shared a presentation with the group, which could be found [here](#) on the CVS Falkirk webpage and the following points were noted:

- i. The ADP was funded by Scottish Government, with the level of funding determined by the level of drug use in the individual authority. Some of this allocation would be used by the ADP to fund local organisations working in the delivery of alcohol and drug services.
- ii. Nationally the ADP strategy was governed by:

[Alcohol Framework 2018](#)

[Rights, Respect, and Recovery: Scotland's national Alcohol and Drug Treatment Strategy](#)

- iii. Within the second document was a vision which included five key aspects: Prevention and Early Intervention; Developing Recovery Oriented Systems of Care Getting it Right for Children, Young People, and Families; Public Health Approach in Justice; and Alcohol Framework 2018.
- iv. Underlying all approaches was the bedrock understanding that a drug or alcohol problem is a health condition. Consequently, help should focus on understanding, hope, and kindness. With a goal to reduce stigma around an individual and their families. Both drug and alcohol use were impacted by poverty, deprivation, and other inequalities.
- v. The ever-increasing complexity of the landscape was acknowledged, including the changing drugs market, a rise in poverty and deprivation, and covid recovery. And a full needs assessment would be undertaken in 2024 to assess the new landscape, the last one was in 2024.
- vi. Key documents were also
  - Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards Implementation Plan
  - Residential Rehabilitation Pathway
- vii. The importance of lived experience was emphasised, particularly to tackle stigma and link reality to theory.
- viii. The Falkirk ADP worked closely with Clackmannanshire & Stirling, with Simon Jones as its lead contact.

A discussion took place which looked at specific areas, the themes discussed included:

- i. Simplifying and streamlining the prescribing process.
- ii. The provision of local support services such as [Change Group Live](#) (CGL) and [Transform Forth Valley](#).
- iii. Psychosocial support for families, where the link between addiction and mental health was recognised. It was also noted that often family members did not recognise themselves as carers, frequently due to stigma as often addiction was not recognised by others as an illness, or it risked an impact on the family, this was particularly the case for women. Therefore, they did not seek out the available support.

- iv. That, at present, much of the support was third sector led, without a well thought out pathway and this was what the ADP was addressing, Phil acknowledged this was a very complex and difficult journey.
- v. The similarities to stigma within the LGBT community, as well as the generational and/or community experience of addiction, and the wariness of families towards key workers. Together with the issue self-stigmatisation.
- vi. The crucial need to replace drug or alcohol use with another activity for individuals to engage in. This was where several third sector organisations provided engagement.
- vii. Acknowledgement that the ADP was often involved in the high-profile challenges around addiction, such as anti-social behaviour, whilst not ignoring the potentially quieter aspects, such as addiction to painkillers.

#### **4. Transform Forth Valley's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Project**

LH invited NM to speak about Transform Forth Valley's project, Time 4 You, which had been set up for parents, carers, and kinship carers of children of any age. Transform Forth Valley had been successful in its application to round three of the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Project. The goal was education and support, together with the establishment of a supportive group of people who faced similar challenges. Meetings would be held fortnightly, in Falkirk and Stirling.

Details could be found on Transform Forth Valley's Facebook page. [Transform Forth Valley | Alloa | Facebook](#)

#### **5. ADP and the voice of Lived Experience**

James from the HSCP, outlined the work closely aligned to the ADP to establish a Lived Experience Panel. The goal was to embed this in the decision-making process of the ADP. It was open to over 18-year-old individuals, staff, support workers and/or carers and family members that had either been impacted by or employed in services related to alcohol and substance use. More details could be found on the Falkirk ADP webpage [here](#) and training for volunteers would be provided.

James also promoted the [Conversation Café](#) which would take place on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

#### **6. Any Other Closing Business**

MR from Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs (SFAD) shared with the Forum that it had a visit from Christina McKelvie, Minister for Drugs and Alcohol Policy during Mental Health Awareness Week. During the visit she received feedback from family members of them impact of the service on them and the team at SFAD were able to highlight what was working well in the community.

NB, Community Justice Co-Ordinator, Falkirk Council, outlined the plan to enhance the pages of the Community Justice Scotland webpage to highlight all relevant services in each local area on the CSST. The relevant page to be enhanced can be found here.

This proposal was scheduled to be discussed at the beginning of June, ahead of this NB would value feedback on:

- a. The service information
- b. The approach in general

She could be contacted at [nicola.bruce@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.bruce@falkirk.gov.uk)

**[Post meeting note:** The proposed feedback form, titled 'CSST Feedback Form' was circulated to Forum members via email on Tuesday 28 May].

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 4 September 2024,  
2pm – 4pm**