



# **‘A NEW WAY FORWARD’ SOCIAL ENTERPRISE STRATEGY 2017-2019**



AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY



An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh  
The Probation Service



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

**People with education and training, who are in work, are less likely to offend. That is the principal theme of this strategy document.**

It was in recognition of the positive impact that securing employment plays in reducing re-offending rates and creating safer communities that the Probation Service and Irish Prison Service (IPS) established a Social Enterprise Steering Committee in March 2016, supported by the Department of Justice and Equality.

Its purpose was to oversee and drive the development of 'social enterprise' initiatives as a way of increasing employment rates of people with criminal convictions. This would represent an alternative and complementary approach to existing employment models in the sector.

## **1.1 OUR VISION**

The development of a vibrant social enterprise sector, supported by the Department of Justice and Equality, resulting in people with convictions securing sustainable employment leading to active citizenship, safer communities and fewer victims. We see this activity being carried on in the so-called 'Third Sector' by which we mean that sector of the economy consisting of non-governmental organisations.

## **1.2 MISSION**

This initiative will engage multiple stakeholders and support them to work together to develop social enterprises in Ireland to support the employment of people with convictions. We are committed to trialling new ways of working, changing systems to work in line with good practice and encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation.

### 1.3 DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

While awaiting the forthcoming National Social Enterprise Strategy and its agreed definition, we have adopted the Fórfas Report definition of social enterprise as a working description for this Departmental strategy, viz:

**‘A social enterprise is an enterprise: i) that trades for a social/ societal purpose; ii) where at least part of its income is earned from its trading activity; iii) is separate from government; and iv) where the surplus is primarily re-invested in the social objective.’<sup>1</sup>**

This Social Enterprise Strategy is co-owned by the Department of Justice and Equality and its executive agencies, the Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service. It is designed to operate within and support a wider employment focused approach by both agencies than is currently in existence. Social enterprise is a new and alternative approach to reducing recidivism rates by providing supported employment for those with criminal convictions. It is not designed to replace current approaches along the continuum of care but rather complement them by providing another option for progression.

Research<sup>2</sup> exploring the risks and rewards of social enterprises within the Irish criminal justice sector found that there were policy implications and other structural barriers that needed to be addressed to support the development of social enterprises.

Despite a recognition of the potential benefits of SE in the criminal justice sector, some key barriers identified included:

- An acknowledgment by decision makers that there are limitations in knowledge and awareness of SE within Ireland
- SEs need to be responsive to individual client and customer need, which requires flexibility in funding structures
- The need for clear interagency and interdisciplinary structures to support decision-making in relation to SE
- The need for leadership and specific entrepreneurial skills at all levels
- Management of public relations to harness support for SEs operating within the criminal justice sector

The four pillars of this strategy aim to address the barriers identified in this research.

1 Fórfas Report (2013), ‘Social enterprise in Ireland: Sectoral opportunities and policy issues’, Dublin: Fórfas, available at: <http://www.environ.ie/community/other/social-enterprise>

2 Cafferty, S., McCarthy, O., & Power, C., 2016, ‘Risk & tard: The development of social enterprise within the criminal justice sector in Ireland – some policy implications’. Irish Probation Journal, volume 13, October 2016.







## 2 CONTEXT



## 2.1 OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The Irish Prison Service (IPS) and the Probation Service both manage orders of the Criminal Courts handed down in respect of convicted offenders. It is the work of the Irish Prison Service to manage those sent to prison, in the first instance, and the Probation to manage such offenders in the community. Both organisations have as their primary goal the maintenance of public safety through the reduction in offending of those in their care.

Increasingly, offenders sentenced to periods in custody have periods under supervision in the community after release. For the majority of those incarcerated, and for those sentenced to sanctions in the community, the factors which lead to the risk of re-offending are the same. Lack of employment, abuse of alcohol and drugs, anti-social attitudes and companions, emotional and personal difficulties, poor educational achievement, family problems, and lack of housing or accommodation are prominent among them. Such multiple needs are often interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

The Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service need to bring together partners to develop and deliver responses that work to address the cycles of sustained offending behaviour. Criminal justice agencies need to have strong links with community resources so that work can start early in a persons' time in custody or on supervision in the community, building motivation and planning for release.

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## 2.2 THE STRUCTURES SUPPORTING SE

Following an initial discussion workshop in February 2016, hosted by the Probation Service, it was agreed that a Steering Committee should be established to oversee the development of social enterprises in the criminal justice sector. This workshop was attended by key stakeholders from the Irish Prison Service and Probation Service as well as representatives from the Departments of Justice and Social Protection, the 'Third Sector', researchers, academics and entrepreneurs.

The first meeting of the newly established Social Enterprise (SE) Steering Committee took place in May 2016 where the future direction of the committee was discussed and agreed. Terms of reference were developed with the action of recruiting a SE Project Manager to drive the development of the strategy as a priority. The committee had two subsequent meetings in 2016.

A SE Project Manager was identified, appointed and commenced work in the role at the end of November 2016. The Project Manager is jointly supported by the Irish Prison and Probation Service and reports directly to the committee. She is accommodated by the Probation Service and supported by a Principal Officer in IPS.

In consultation with the SE Steering Committee<sup>3</sup>, the Project Manager developed a 12-month action plan in order to support the development of a SE Strategy and other key activities for the sector. This action plan focuses on five key objectives with seven practical actions. This plan formed the foundation for this four pillar strategy which supports the development of social enterprise within the criminal justice sector. The Irish Prison Service and Probation Service developed this strategy with full recognition that the very nature of commercial businesses is that a certain percentage will not succeed.

The Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has the responsibility of developing the National Social Enterprise Strategy which is expected to be published in late 2017. The Social Enterprise Steering Committee are committed to carry out a mid-term review of the four pillars and actions to ensure greater alignment with the National Strategy once published.

3 Committee members include: Vivian Geiran (Director of the Probation Service), Michael Donnellan (Director of the Irish Prison Service), Domini Kemp (entrepreneur, chef and author), Kieran Moylan (Principal Officer, Care & Rehabilitation Directorate, Irish Prison Service), Brendan Whelan (Social Finance Foundation), Noel Dowling (Principal, Prisons & Probation Unit, Dept. of Justice and Equality), John Gallagher (Social Enterprise Task Force).



# 3 THE STRATEGY

### 3.1 PRINCIPLES WHICH UNDERPIN THE STRATEGY

- The strategy will support development of SE within prisons and through community based organisations partially or fully funded by the Probation Service. It will also support development of SE with new and existing social businesses not currently operating within the criminal justice sector
- We will work in partnership with all stakeholders. We understand that expertise from multiple sectors is required to create successful social businesses
- When we do it, we do it properly. We will learn from business and research and commit to high quality planning, management and evaluation of all new initiatives
- We will measure what counts. To ensure that we are making a difference, we will use good practice impact measurement

### 3.2 THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE STRATEGY



### 3.3 PILLAR 1 – CREATING ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS FOR SE

#### 3.3.1 Address insurance restrictions for businesses, including social enterprise, who are open to recruit people with convictions

KPI – 1) Multi-departmental approach to overcome insurance restrictions for businesses, including social enterprises, open to recruiting people with convictions

#### 3.3.2 Prisoner Pay for engagement in external employment including social enterprises

KPI – 1) Clear procedures in place for managing the employment and payment of prisoners' remuneration, on Temporary Release (T.R), by approved businesses, including social enterprises external to prison estates

#### 3.3.3 Establish a gaps and blocks reporting process that facilitates the capturing of any unforeseen barriers to the development of SEs within the sector and subsequent solutions, as a mechanism of supporting social entrepreneurs and start-up SEs

KPIs - 1) Number and type of gaps and blocks hindering the development of social businesses and entrepreneurship are reported along with solutions identified and implemented, 2) Number of gaps and blocks reported and resolved

#### 3.3.4 Explore the feasibility and implementation of Certificates of Employability in Ireland to increase employment opportunities and to address licensing issues for SEs and for employers in general

KPI – 1) Report on potential for the implementation of Certificates of Employability with recommendations agreed by key agencies, 2) recommendations implemented

#### 3.3.5 Ensuring progression from SEs into the mainstream workplace

KPI – 1) Support start-up and existing SEs employing people with convictions to ensure progression for their employees into the mainstream labour market; 2) progression outcomes recorded

#### 3.3.6 Explore the introduction of a ring fenced seed funding stream specifically to support SE activity within the criminal justice sector and one that facilitates access to existing SE financial supports

KPI – 1) Multi-departmental meetings held to explore the feasibility and administrative implications of a specific SE seed funding stream that complements existing financial support structures

#### 3.3.7 Structures & supports are developed and implemented to facilitate the assessment of SE applications to the Irish Prison Service and Probation Service

KPI – 1) SE business model assessment process is developed, implemented and administered by both justice agencies and supported by external business partners, 2) SEs operating within the criminal justice sector are supported to increase employment and work experience/training opportunities for people with convictions

#### 3.3.8 Ensure procurement processes are accessible to SEs through the implementation of social clauses and social enterprise preferred clauses in accordance with the Office of Government Procurement guidelines (forthcoming)

KPI – 1) The Department of Justice and Equality, and its agencies, include social clauses and social enterprise preferred clauses in appropriate procurement processes, in accordance with the Office of Government Procurement guidelines to support external contractors to provide employment to people with convictions ; 2) SEs apply for specific tenders following the introduction of SE preferred clauses

#### 3.3.9 Liaise with IASIO in order to link people with convictions into SEs, as well as other referral routes, as an alternative progression route

KPI – 1) IASIO personnel nationwide are familiar and aware of local SEs, as well as other referral options, that are in a position to receive referrals for people with convictions, 2) No. of people referred to SEs by IASIO recorded along with the outcomes of these referrals

#### 3.3.10 Develop a positive media strategy highlighting the multi-faceted benefits of social enterprise activities within the criminal justice sector

KPI – 1) Clear media strategy developed and implemented to ensure consistent, positive messages resulting from social enterprises regularly filter out to the general public promoting improved perceptions and community support



## 3.4 PILLAR 2 – LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY

### 3.4.1 Develop a range of training supports and resources on SE (including guides, mentoring programmes and consultancy) for people working within statutory management roles, procurement, CBOs and prison environments

KPIs - 1) Training and support needs analysis undertaken, 2) Range of training, supports and resources developed, 3) Training, supports and resources evaluated

### 3.4.2 Accessing resources to support the implementation of the strategy

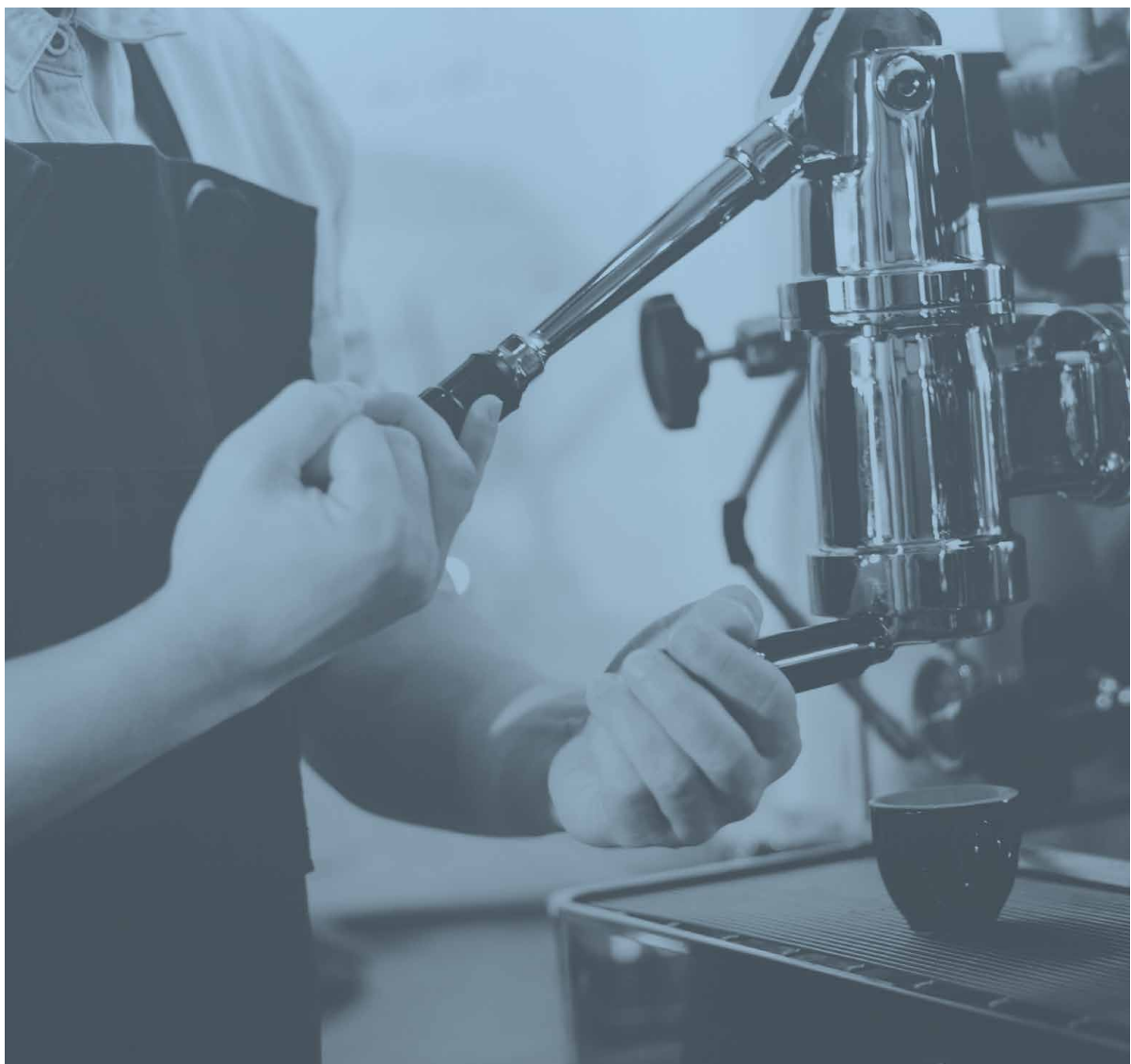
KPIs – 1) Resourcing plan developed featuring a range of funding options from statutory and philanthropic sources supporting the implementation of this statutory, 2) required resources, financial and others, are accessed from a range of sources which facilitate the implementation and progression of this strategy

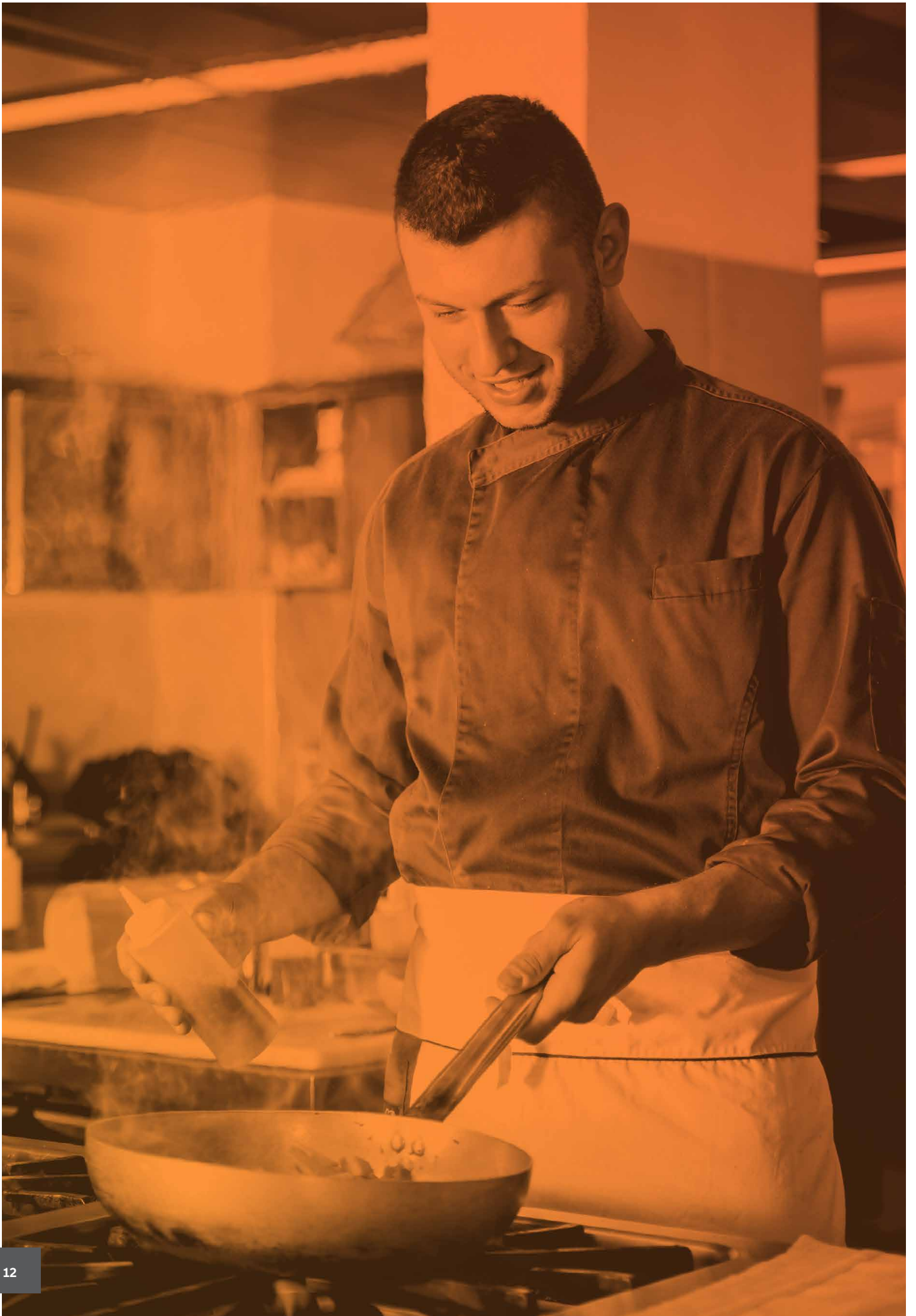
### 3.4.3 In collaboration with social enterprises, as well as community organisations with relevant expertise, organise awareness raising events on all aspects of SE targeting criminal justice personnel and agencies

KPIs -1) SE information events organised targeting key stakeholders at decision making and operational levels, supported by various SE network organisations; 2) Events delivered and evaluated

### 3.4.4 Develop learning communities to support knowledge sharing in new and existing SEs

KPIs – 1) Online learning community developed to share expertise and knowledge amongst SEs operating within the criminal justice sector





### 3.5 PILLAR 3 – INCREASING ACCESS TO MARKETS & DEVELOPING SE BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

#### 3.5.1 Maximise links between prison & CBO-based training to ensure it is labour market led & meets the needs of employers, including social enterprises

KPIs – 1) Definition / quality indicators for labour market led training established, 2) Audit of existing programmes undertaken against quality indicators, 2) number of new / revised training programmes that meet the quality indicators

#### 3.5.2 Liaise with specific employer organisations, including social businesses, in conjunction with IASIO, to conduct an employer needs assessment for labour market areas with employment gaps

KPIs – 1) Employer needs assessments conducted; 2) Report compiled on results; 3) Report disseminated to key stakeholders

#### 3.5.3 Explore the feasibility and promotion of new and existing incentivised employment schemes for businesses open to recruiting people with convictions, in conjunction with IASIO

KPIs – 1) Report compiled on the feasibility of new incentivised employment schemes in operation in other jurisdictions as well as recommendations for the promotion of existing schemes in Ireland specifically for employers open to recruiting people with convictions

#### 3.5.4 Support prison and community based work place training schemes to sell products

KPIs – 1) Feasibility study to explore potential markets which can be developed, based on potential products which can be produced in prison setting, 2) business plan developed for 1 or more business opportunities, 3) turnover of new business

#### 3.5.5 Develop a universal brand and marketing plan for bringing goods and services made within criminal justice agencies to the marketplace

KPIs – 1) Universal brand developed alongside a comprehensive marketing plan; 2) Products sold in the marketplace

#### 3.5.6 Explore promotion and sale of products on a purely commercial basis with retail partners, to enable stand-alone testing and marketability of products produced. Seek a relevant main street partner for selected product(s), which would be marketed on a commercial basis as well as through a designated pilot outlet

KPIs – 1) Report completed on the testing and marketability of products as well as partnerships explored with main street retailers open to selling these products

#### 3.5.7 Pilot the effectiveness of an urban outlet market facility in assisting with the commercial sale of goods produced within criminal justice agencies

KPIs – 1) Appropriate commercial site secured & stocked with marketable goods produced within criminal justice agencies; 2) Goods sold by consignment; 3) Evaluation of pilot completed

### 3.6 PILLAR 4 –MEASURING IMPACT

#### 3.6.1 Establish an input & outcomes framework for measurement of all new schemes and SEs with guidance and measurement tools to include measurement of commercial activity as well as social impact

KPIs – 1) Framework developed, 2) high quality data attained in relation to all interventions

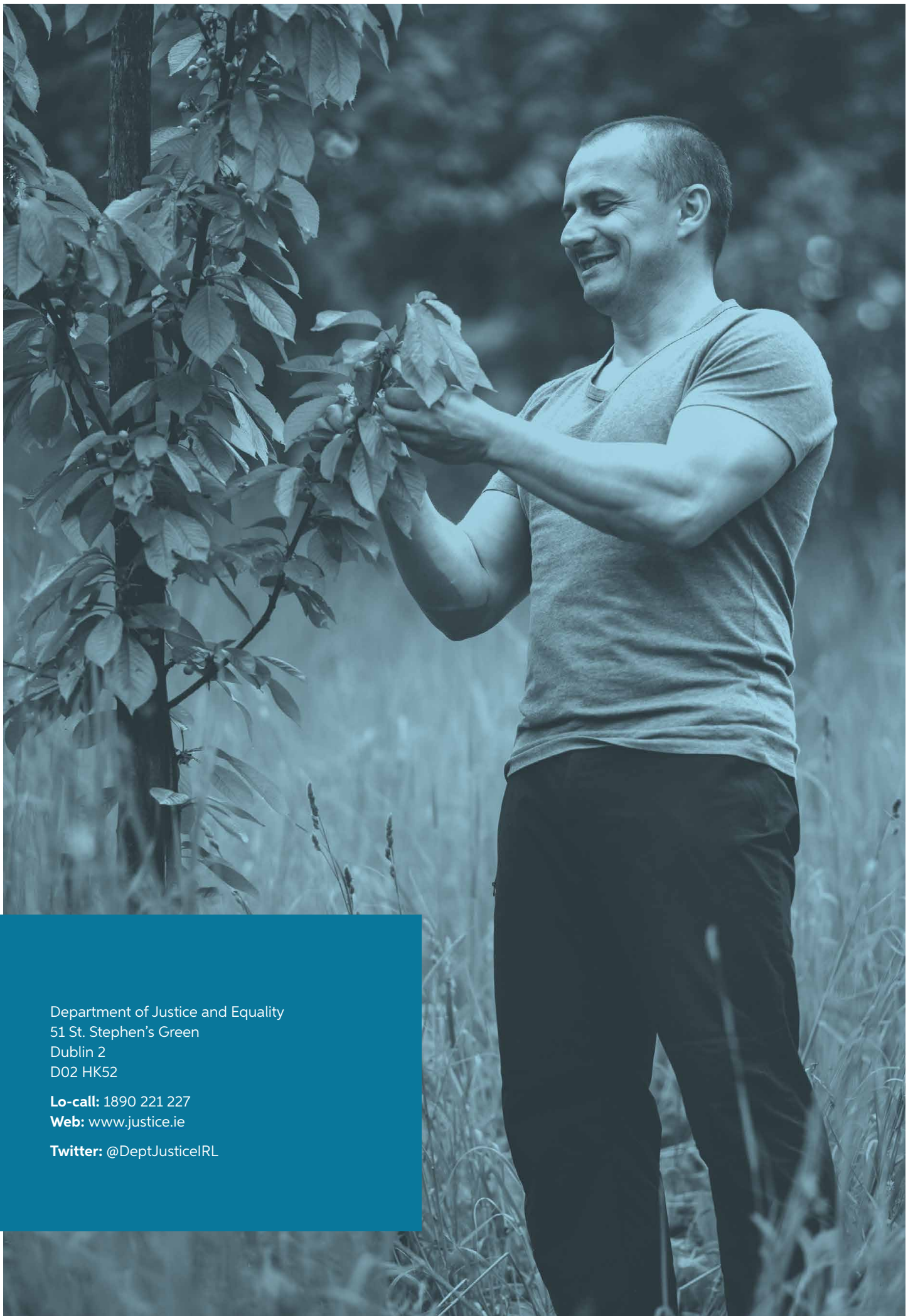
#### 3.6.2 Develop national information gathering system to support analysis of impact of national programme

KPIs – 1) Key data agreed, 2) system established to gather data, 3) data collected to a high standard

#### 3.6.3 Undertake cost benefit analysis / Social Return On Investment (SROI) on any significant new programmes to measure social value impact across a number of variables

KPIs – 1) Understanding of the cost benefits of various social enterprise models 2) Mechanisms in place to clearly demonstrate the return on investment using evidence based social value measurement tools





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