

## **TAYSIDE COMMUNITY JUSTICE AUTHORITY**

**Meeting** Tayside Community Justice Authority – 16 September 2014

**Title:** Report on Tayside's Reconviction Rates (Offender cohorts ) 2004-05 to 2011-12

**Report by:** Chris Johnston, Planning Officer

**Report No:** TCJA223-2014

**Abstract** – This report provides an overview of Tayside's reconviction rates for offender cohorts from 2004-05 to 2011-12. Breakdowns are provided per local authority, age, gender, court disposal, sentence length, crime type, and number of previous convictions.

### **1.0 Recommendation(s)**

It is recommended that the Authority:

- 1.1 notes the content of the report; and
- 1.2 requires further reports annually

### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Management of Offenders etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 established Community Justice Authorities (CJAs) in order to work with statutory partners to bring about a reduction in re-offending. The key performance target for CJAs was originally to reduce the 2-year reconviction rate by 2%. CJAs were tasked to do this by 2011 (measured by the 2-year reconviction rate for the 2007-08 offender cohort). In doing so, CJAs would contribute to the Scottish Government's "Safer and Stronger" national objective. This target was achieved by Tayside CJA, and was reported to the Board in December 2011.
- 2.2 There are, however, a number of problems analysing reconviction rate data, not least when using them to measure the efficiency of criminal justice interventions to reduce reoffending. The reconviction rate indicator is a proxy measure of reoffending.
- 2.3 Furthermore, the production of reconviction rate data is a lengthy process. Data relating to penalties imposed in the current financial year (2014-15) will not be published as reconviction rate data until 2017. Therefore any conclusions as to the effectiveness of a sentence or intervention are undeniably undermined by such a long time lag.

- 2.4 The Scottish Government use a 1-year reconviction frequency rate. While the reconviction rate provides an indication of progress in tackling recidivism at a national or regional level, it may not be sensitive enough to detect individual-level progress as a result of local interventions and programmes in the criminal justice system. Such programmes may have been successful in reducing the frequency or severity of reconviction, but not in stopping reconviction completely.
- 2.5 The CJAs started work in 2007-08, and the Authority started to engage partners to develop new policies and new ways of working, with these generally starting to be implemented in 2008-09 – when, generally, those sentenced in 2007-08 would be carrying out their sentences, engaging with interventions, etc. Therefore 2007-08 is the first offender cohort which the work of the CJA and (specifically) its partners could influence. This report includes offender cohorts up to 2011-12.

### 3.0 Tayside CJA 1-year Reconviction Frequency Statistics 2004-05 to 2011-12

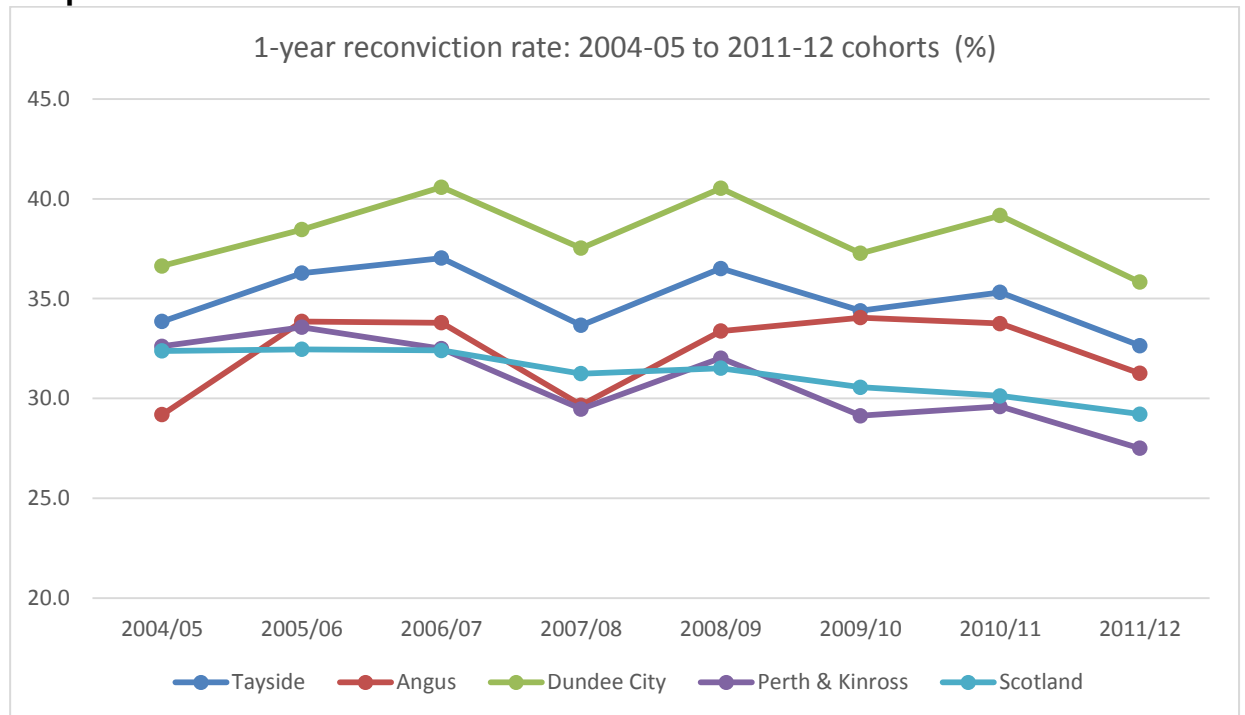
Graphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 below show the 1-year reconviction rates and the 1-year reconviction *frequency* rates respectively. As can be seen, the frequency rates ‘track’ the trend of reconviction rates. Therefore, subsequent graphs in this report will use the 1-year reconviction *frequency* rate.

### 4.0 Local Authority Breakdown

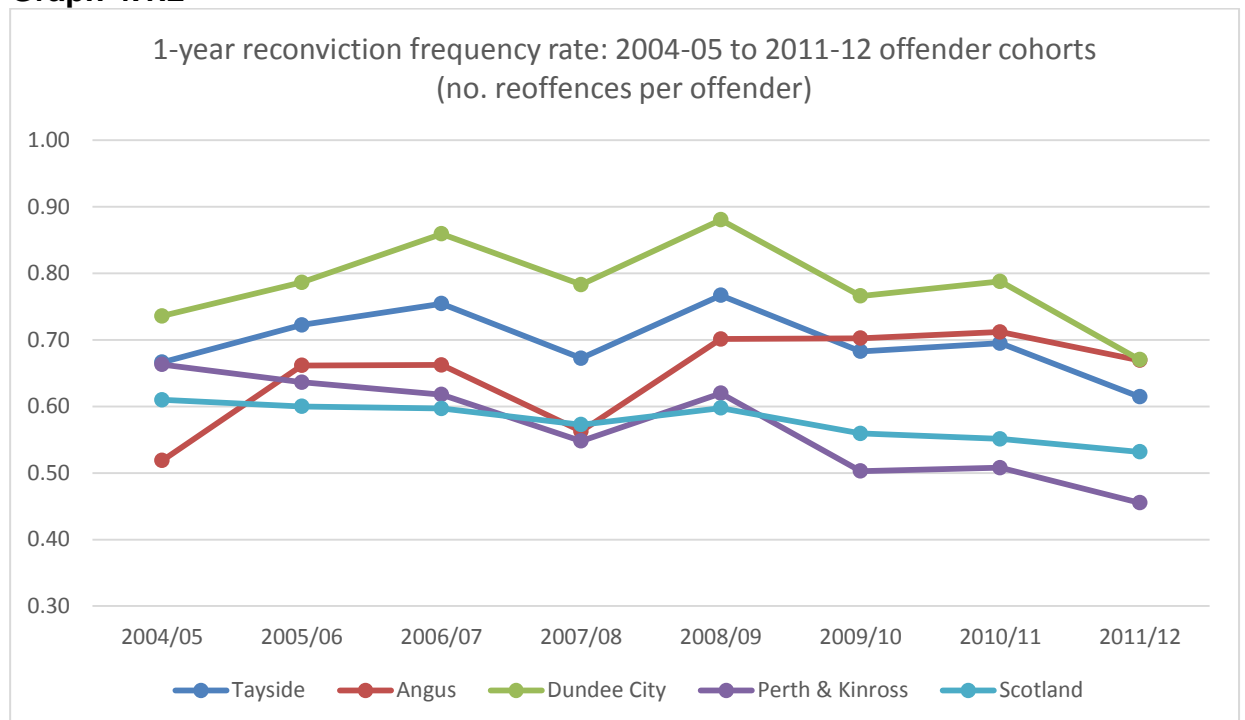
- 4.1 Graphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 below show the progress made in each local authority area in reducing reoffending. Similar trends are observed for both the reconviction rate and the reconviction frequency rate. Over the longer term, since CJAs formed (2007-08 cohort) Tayside, and each of its three constituent local authority areas, show fluctuating increases and decreases. The overarching trend, however is reduction in the reconviction rate, with the exception of Angus, where the long term trend shows an increase.
- 4.2 Over the last two data sets, Tayside and each of it’s constituent areas show reductions. The following table summarises the general trends in terms of % change.

	Since CJAs formed	Last 2 data sets
	% change	% change
Tayside	-18.6%	-11.6%
Angus	1.1%	-6.0%
Dundee	-22.0%	-14.9%
Perth and Kinross	-26.3%	-10.4%
Scotland	-10.9%	-3.5%

**Graph 4.1.1**



**Graph 4.1.2**



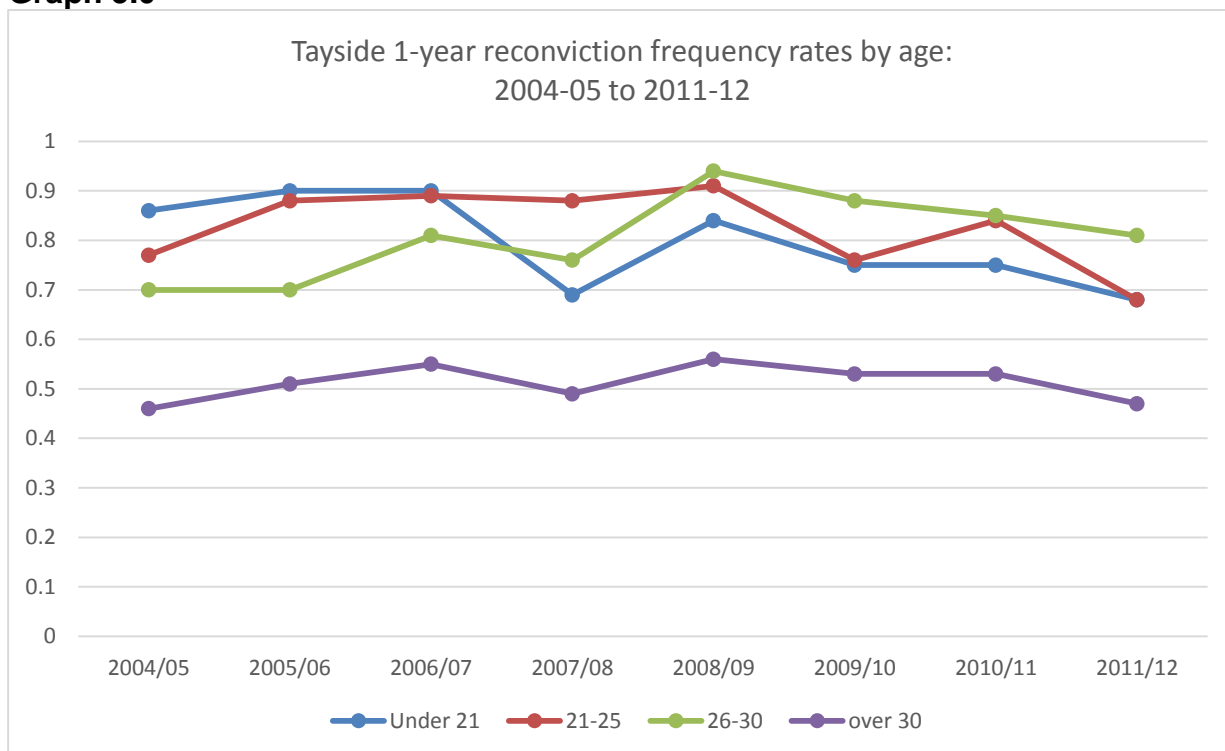
## 5.0 Age breakdown

- 5.1 Graph 5.0 below shows that over the longer term, since CJAs formed, a gradual decrease is observed across all age categories (26-30 shows no change overall, but has reduced in 3 successive years). Again an increase is observed for the 2008-09 cohort.

- 5.2 Over the last two data sets, Tayside shows a reduction in all age categories. The following table summarises the general trends in terms of % change.

	Since CJAs formed % change	Last 2 data sets % change
Under 21	-24.4%	-9.3%
21-25	-23.6%	-19.0%
26-30	0.0%	-4.7%
over 30	-14.5%	-11.3%

**Graph 5.0**



- 5.3 The data above does not reflect the mentoring work currently being done with offenders aged 25 and under in Tayside (and across Scotland) through the delivery of mentoring PSPs. These projects commenced in 2012-13. Should they prove successful it is anticipated that reconviction in this age category will continue to drop.

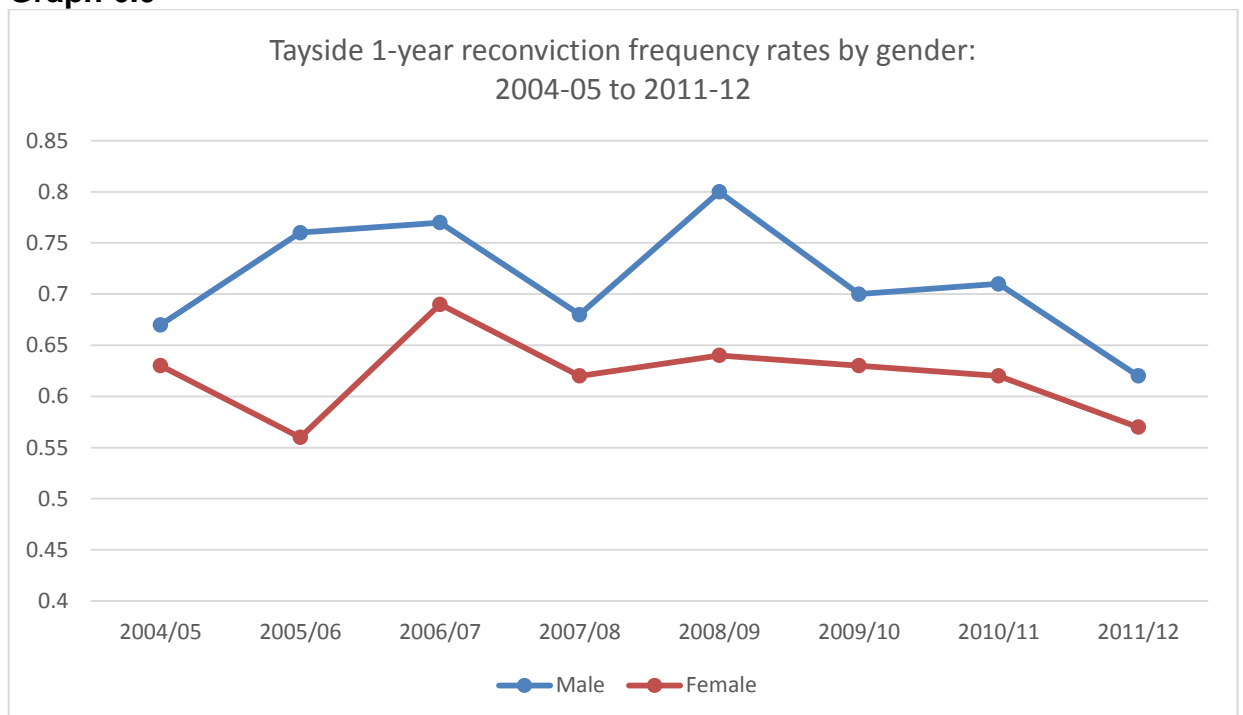
## 6.0 Gender breakdown

- 6.1 Graph 6.0 below shows that over the longer term, since CJAs formed, a gradual decrease is observed in both male and female offenders. Again an increase is observed for the 2008-09 cohort – sizeable for males and slight for females. Since then the rate for females has fallen gradually but consistently. The rate for males has fallen considerably. It is noteworthy that the gulf in the rate between males and females observed in the 2008-09 cohort is closing.
- 6.2 Over the last two data sets, Tayside shows a reduction in all age categories. The following table summarises the general trends in terms of % change.

	Since CJAs formed % change	Last 2 data sets % change
Male	-19.5%	-12.7%
Female	-17.4%	-8.1%

- 6.3 The data above does not reflect the work currently being done with women offenders in Tayside (and across Scotland) through the delivery of women's justice centre projects. These projects launched last year. Should they prove successful it is anticipated that reconvictions among women offenders will continue to drop.

**Graph 6.0**

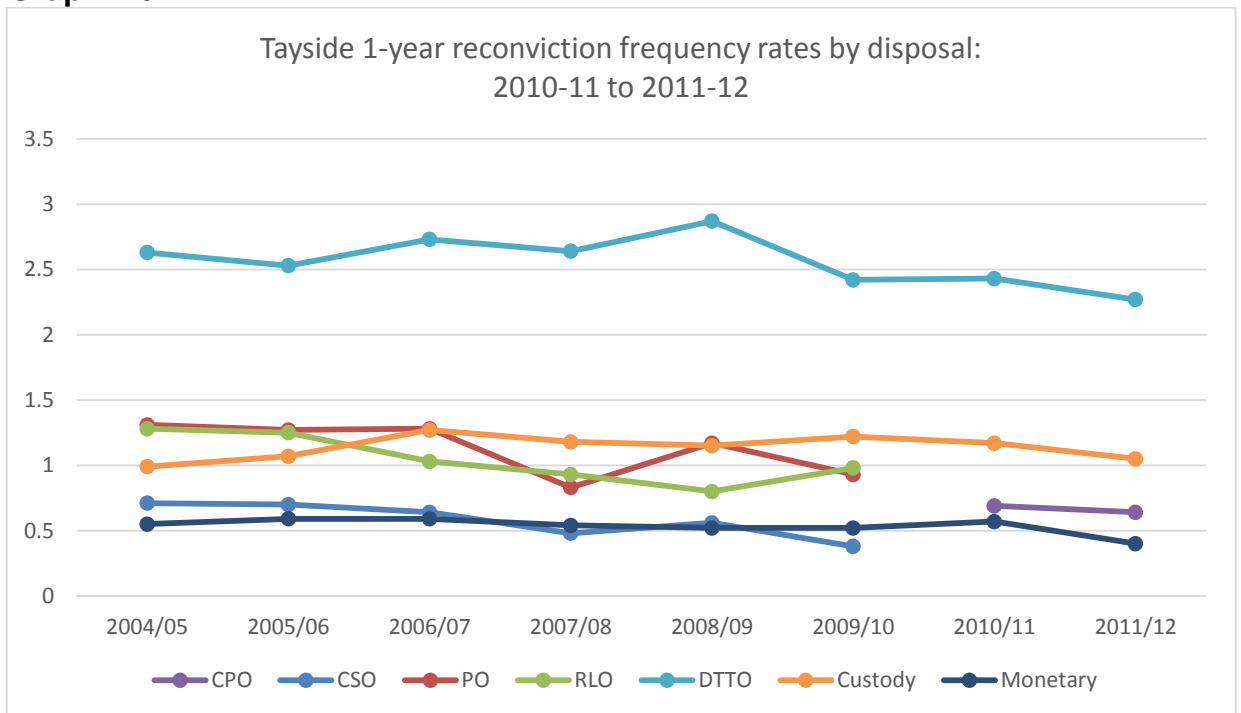


## 7.0 Court Disposal breakdown

- 7.1 The 2011-12 cohort represents the second cohort for which reconviction rate data is available for offenders serving CPOs, and as can be seen a slight improvement (reduction) of 7.2% has been achieved. CPOs replaced Community Service Orders (CSO), Probation Orders (PO) and Restriction of Liberty Orders (RLO), and the graph shows how CPOs compare with their respective trends.

As expected, DTTO has the highest rate of reconviction – which reflects the particularly chaotic lives of typical DTTO clients – but a marked improvement can be seen across the last four data points.

**Graph 7.0**



Trends for each category are gradual. The following table summarises the general trends in terms of % change.

	Since CJAs formed	Last 2 data sets
	% change	% change
CSO	-40.6% *	Order no longer delivered
PO	-27.3% *	Order no longer delivered
RLO	-4.9% *	Order no longer delivered
CPO	**	-7.2%
DTTO	-16.8%	-6.6%
Custody	-17.3%	-10.3%
Monetary	-32.2%	-29.8%

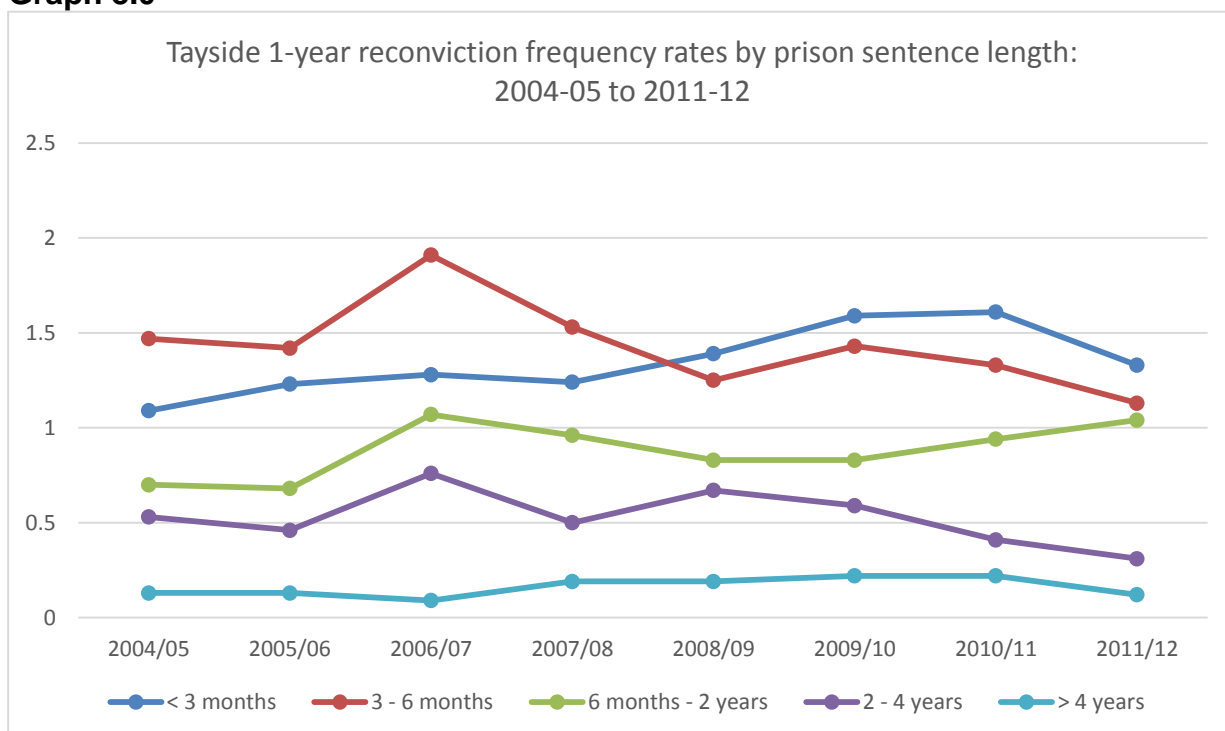
\* Up to 2009-10 cohort

\*\* CPO delivery started with 2010-11 cohort so only last two data sets apply

## 8.0 Prison Sentence Length breakdown

- 8.1 Graph 8.0 below shows the trends for each sentence length category. The < 3 months category shows an overall increase, albeit with a decrease over the last two data sets. While the 3 – 6 month category shows an overall downward trend the 6 month – 2 year category shows a consistent increase in recent years. A number of initiatives are underway in Tayside with regards to short-term prisoner throughput, and this is the focus of Priority 1 in the new CJA Area Plan 2011-14.

**Graph 8.0**



The following table summarises the general trends for each sentence length category, in terms of % change.

	Since CJAs formed	Last 2 data sets
	% change	% change
< 3 months	3.9%	-17.4%
3 - 6 months	-40.8%	-15.0%
6 months - 2 years	-2.8%	10.6%
2 - 4 years	-59.2%	-24.4%
> 4 years	33.3%	-45.5%

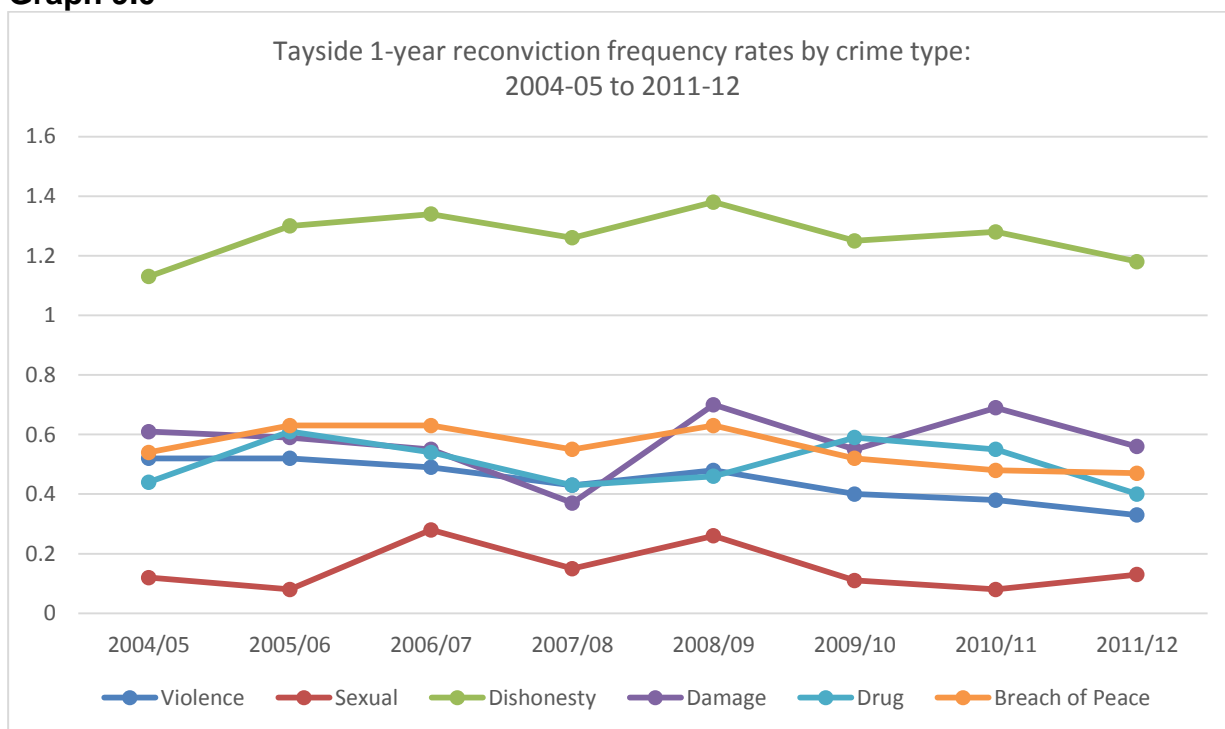
## 9.0 Crime Type breakdown

9.1 Graph 9.0 below shows the reconviction frequency rate trends for key crime types. Offenders committing crimes of dishonesty (e.g. housebreaking, theft etc.) are far more likely than any others to be reconvicted – the overall trend for this type is static, though there have been noticeable reductions across the four most recent datasets.

The same is true for drug related crimes, violent crime and breach of the peace. The damage category (e.g. vandalism) shows a relatively static trend.

By far the lowest rate is the Sexual crimes category, reflecting the successful MAPPA arrangements in Tayside.

**Graph 9.0**



## 10.0 Analysis of reconviction rate and frequency rate between CJA areas.

10.1 Appendix 1 shows the trends in the reconviction rate and reconviction frequency rate for each CJA area in Scotland, compared to the Scottish average.

10.2 The most recent data shows Tayside remains one of the worst areas for reconviction (second highest to Glasgow). Importantly though, Tayside is the second most improved CJA area, with the number of reconvictions per offender falling by 18.7% since CJA formation. This is testament to the efforts of, and excellent partnership working between, Tayside CJA's constituent partner organisations.

## 11.0 Consultation

11.1 All CJA Statutory Partners were consulted in the preparation of this report.

## 12.0 Financial/Resource Implications

12.1 There are no resource implications.

## 13.0 Conclusion

13.1 The 2014 data (2011-12 offender cohort) published recently shows that the number of reconvictions per offender fell by 11.6% on the previous year.



13.2 The limitations associated with the use of reconviction rates, specifically the time-lag between offences taking place and associated data being published, makes it difficult to draw conclusions on what may have caused the trends within specific demographics. However, the general trend of improvement observed demonstrates that the CJA's partners are working effectively together (and against the backdrop of ever-decreasing budgets, are working efficiently) to reduce reoffending in Tayside.

#### **14.0 Background Papers:**

14.1 There were no background reports referred to when writing this report.

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**16 September 2014**

## Appendix 1 – 1-year reconviction frequency rates by CJA Area – 2005-05 to 2011-12 offender cohorts

Year of Publication	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Trend since CJAs formed (2006/07 cohort)	% change since CJAs formed	Trend last 2 data sets	% change last 2 data sets
Offender cohort	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12				
Fife and Forth Valley	0.6	0.7	0.67	0.64	0.6	0.56	0.54	0.57			0.03	5.6
Glasgow	0.7	0.6	0.63	0.6	0.65	0.6	0.58	0.62			0.04	6.9
Lanarkshire	0.5	0.5	0.51	0.52	0.55	0.54	0.5	0.5	-0.01	-2.0	0.00	0.0
Lothian and Borders	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.48	0.52	0.51	0.49	0.41	-0.08	-16.3	-0.08	-16.3
Northern	0.6	0.5	0.58	0.59	0.6	0.55	0.53	0.5	-0.08	-13.8	-0.03	-5.7
North Strathclyde	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.55	0.56	0.54	0.53	0.52	-0.07	-11.9	-0.01	-1.9
South West Scotland	0.7	0.6	0.61	0.56	0.56	0.52	0.57	0.49	-0.12	-19.7	-0.08	-14.0
Tayside	0.7	0.7	0.75	0.67	0.77	0.68	0.69	0.61	-0.14	-18.7	-0.08	-11.6
Scotland	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.57	0.6	0.56	0.55	0.53	-0.07	-11.7	-0.02	-3.6

