

CITIZENS ADVICE SCOTLAND

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: 2018 – 2023

The Citizens Advice network in Scotland is the largest independent advice service in the country. Citizens Advice Scotland is a charity within this network: we act as a national organisation supporting and representing the service as a whole and the interests of citizens.

At the core of the network there are 60 individual Citizens Advice Bureau organisations across Scotland, all operating as independent charities in their own right, and generally focusing on providing support directly to citizens. Each of these organisations is a member of Citizens Advice Scotland. Also providing significant added value are the national elements of the service run out of Citizens Advice Scotland, such as the Extra Help Unit.

Our vision and purpose

Citizens Advice Scotland will help build a fairer society by:

- enhancing and adding value for the Citizens Advice network (which provides free access to quality information and advice for all)
- influencing for positive change

Across 2018 – 2023 we will focus on four strategic focus areas:

1. Funding and income
2. Enabling service delivery
3. Building brand
4. Advocacy and influence

1) Funding and income

We recognise that appropriate funding and income is critical to the success and impact of the whole Citizens Advice network in Scotland, and that we have a key role to play in securing it.

Across 2018-2023 we will:

- **Maximise funding opportunities for the network**
- **Create sustainable funding models for the network**
- **Pilot new models and ways of generating income for the network**
- **Demonstrate the impact of the network to funders to secure future investment**
- **Provide the network with expertise and support on income generation**

2) Enabling service delivery

High quality advice and information should be available for all who need it – and to make that a reality we must work together effectively across the network.

Across 2018-2023 we will:

A. Enhance the services we offer the network by:

- **Providing and enhancing high-quality, effective tools and services, delivered in a shared way where this will increase efficiency**
- **Respecting and reflecting member differences in service design**
- **Ensuring consistent and timely internal and external communications on key issues, and with provision for internal peer-to-peer support**

B. Enable network to prepare for and invest in the future of service delivery by:

- **Understanding citizens' current and future information and advice needs, and ensuring that the network delivers multi-channel services that meet those needs**
- **Develop and expand digital skills across the network**
- **Implement service design changes and digital channels effectively, where they are required for maximum benefit to the network and to citizens**

C. Maintain and support high quality of advice by:

- **Monitoring and maintaining consistent high quality advice across the network, addressing issues where they arise**
- **Promoting the quality of advice provided by the network and ensuring it is recognised externally**
- **Supporting the network to recruit, develop and retain volunteers**
- **Protecting and enhancing the national footprint of the Scottish network**

3) Building brand

The brand of the Citizens Advice network in Scotland is a valuable asset. We believe it should be protected and that by building it we can provide greater support to the network and to citizens.

Across 2018-2023 we will:

A. Protect and enhance the reputation of the network's brand by:

- **Developing a brand position and corporate narrative for the network, with positive outcomes for citizens at its core**
- **Building awareness and understanding of the work of the network and encouraging engagement in a way that demonstrates its value**
- **Protecting the brand from reputational damage and issues which may diminish trust in the network**

B. Position the network at the heart of Scotland's volunteering agenda by:

- **Celebrating the value that the network's volunteers add to citizens, the service and society**
- **Becoming a leader in developing Scotland's national volunteering strategy on behalf of the network.**

C. Maintain high levels of corporate governance by:

- **Maintaining our commitment to best practice governance arrangements**
- **Supporting the network to adopt best practice governance arrangements**
- **Supporting the network to recruit and retain skilled trustees**

4) Advocacy and influence

Citizens Advice Scotland acts as a voice for the network in Scotland, influencing decision-makers in the interests of the network as a whole and of citizens.

Across 2018-2023 we will:

- **Bring about change for the benefit of the network and citizens**
- **Speak with a single voice on behalf of the network to improve outcomes for citizens**
- **Support the network to influence effectively to deliver change locally as well as nationally**
- **Champion the interests of citizens and consumers**
- **Embed influencing capacity through the network to deliver maximum impact by:**
 - **Understanding the political landscape and pro-actively building relationships, gathering intelligence, evidence and data relevant to the network**
 - **Monitoring issues across all relevant external policy areas and developing and adapting the Citizens Advice Scotland position in response, using data from advice provision as key points of evidence**
 - **Understanding the implications of policy proposals and being effective influencers for delivering change**
 - **Deploying effective and appropriate strategies to bring about change**