

Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee		
Report Title	National Probation Service (NPS) and Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) update	
Key Decision	No	Item No. 5
Ward	All	
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Class	Part 1	Date: 7 March 2018

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Safer Stronger Select Committee last received a report from the National Probation Service and the CRC at its meeting in March 2017. At that time there was an update on the London wide inspection of National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company. There were significant concerns raised the committee about the improvements needed to be made.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Lewisham Safer Stronger Committee.

2.0 Recommendations:

- To note the report
- Request an further update in a years' time

3.0 Background:

3.1 Until June 2014 Probation services in London were delivered by the London Probation Trust. Following the government's programme of Transforming Rehabilitation, the service was divided with the management of low and medium risk offenders being delivered by a Community Rehabilitation Company and the remaining work being undertaken by the National Probation Service.

4.0 The National Probation Service update:

4.1 The National Probation Service is responsible for the following areas of service delivery:

- Advice to the judiciary including Courts and the Parole Board
- Management of MAPPA cases
- Management of all those assessed as posing a High risk of Harm or Serious recidivism.
- Approved Premises
- Foreign National Offenders
- Victim Liaison.

4.2 In September 2016 HMIP conducted an inspection of work in the National Probation Service (NPS) and the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC). The inspection covered five boroughs in North London.

The inspectors made three recommendations:

1. Improve the quality of Court work
2. Improve Public Protection
3. Improve the relationship between NPS and CRC (this was a joint recommendation)

Improving Court work: Over the last year there has been significant progress including:

- All Local Delivery Units producing improvement plans
- A review of admin processes
- Better use of management information
- A Quality Assurance tool for pre-sentence reports
- Introduction of the SMART sentencing tool

As a result we have seen an increase in the number of reports prepared on the day of request in magistrates' and crown courts. In addition there has been an improvement on allocation timeliness. Staff are routinely using the Practice Improvement Tool to improve the quality of the advice given to sentencers. Now that we have processes embedded we will be focusing of the quality of reports and fully implementing the SMART sentencing tool.

Improved Public Protection: Activity has included.

- Mandatory Safeguarding (adults and children) and Domestic Abuse training for all staff
- Introduction of a Practice Improvement Tool for risk management planning
- Local briefings on specific areas of Probation work including TACT and Sex Offending

- Themed case audits where learning is shared across the Local Delivery Unit.

Public Protection is an absolute priority for the National Probation Service and staff in Lewisham are committed this aspect of the work. Over the past year there have been two cases where a full review was conducted because a service user committed a Serious Further Offence. In both cases the reviewers found that the cases have been very well managed and highlighted numerous areas of good practice. This learning is also being shared across the Local Delivery Unit.

4.3 **Relations with the CRC:** On a local level relations with the CRC have always been positive as staff share the building and can resolve issues informally. The introduction of area managers by the CRC has improved relationships greatly.

4.4 **HIMP 2017**
In September of this year HMIP undertook an inspection of the NPS across the whole of London. The report will be published in early January and its findings will be provided to the committee as a verbal presentation.



5.0 Update from the CRC

5.1 London CRC Operating Model

- London has been separated onto five areas with a single point of contact for each being appointed in the form of an Area Manager (AM).
- The imposition of AM's allows for strong managerial oversight for each individual area whilst ensuring there are clear lines of accountability and improved service delivery
- Furthermore, AM's working in geographical areas means that there is the ability to strengthen local links for both specific boroughs and the wider area.

5.2 South East Operational Community Teams

- Five boroughs make up the South East region of London CRC's operating model: Croydon, Bromley, Bexley, Lewisham and Greenwich
- There are eight Senior Probation Officers (SPO's) who report to the Area Manager. Each operational SPO has a span of control of 10-12 practitioners.

- Average caseloads across London South-East are within the 55 service user average (pro-rata). The reliance on agency temporary staff has remained low.
- Across these five boroughs, London CRC manage 3,791 Service Users who are assessed as being of a low to medium risk of harm others following conviction of offences ranging from violence, drugs, and acquisitive offending who are now subject to Community Orders, Suspended Sentence Orders, Licence and Post Sentence Supervision conditions.

Lewisham Specific: There are two SPO's who manage a team of 18 Probation and Probation Service Officers. These in turn manage a combined Service User population of 931.

5.3 **Area Manager Support Roles**

- The final quarter of 2017 saw the implementation of three new managerial roles within each operational area of London CRC.
- Interventions, Contracts & Partnerships and Quality and Performance Manager roles have been implemented to support the AM in issues relating to service delivery, performance against contract measures and increased visibility within our community partnerships.

For the South East, Andrea Farley-Moore is the Interventions Manager, AJ Brooks is the C&P Manager with the Q&P Manager yet to be named.

5.4 **Community Payback**

- A new administrative Community Payback operating model was launched on the 6th of November 2017 with six teams across London managing all stand-alone CP requirement cases.
- Each team consists of an operational manager and a number of PO/PSO's and case administrators.
- The South East CP team is located in Bromley and currently consists of eight PO/PSO's who have oversight to 1069 cases with 325 cases being based in Lewisham.
- A review of field operations, typically the unpaid work placements, will commence in early 2018.

5.5 **Custody Cohort**

- This operating model has now been rolled out in three of the five London boroughs: South East, South West and North East. The two remaining areas are to be rolled out over the coming months.

- There are three PSO's allocated to each area, with responsibility for assessment and through the gate delivery
- Eligibility for the cohort requires a male Service User to be sentenced to a custodial term of 20 months or longer and have no outstanding community based Orders with a CP requirement nor meet the criteria for IOM.
- As well as liaising with the prison and preparing SU's for release, the cohort team also complete necessary HDC and ROTL applications.
- Five days prior to release, area based PO's are given an in-depth handover document outlining the preparations made for the SU's release and the case is formally transferred.

5.6 **HMIP Inspection**

- Following on from the inspection held in December 2016, a further HMIP Inspection was held across all boroughs in October and November 2017.
- The inspection was the largest conducted by HMiP, in respect to the number of cases reviewed and length of time (the inspectors were with us for a total of 5 weeks)
- The inspection involved two phases, the first of which saw 148 cases in total being inspected pan London. Inspectors attended all bar two CRC offices across London. The two not visited were due to logistical consideration of the inspectorate.
- Whilst unable to comment of the outcome of the field work, we are aware that no case alerts were identified within the inspection period which is a significant improvement on the previous year
- The second phase saw focus groups attended by practitioners and managers over the various operational levels of London CRC.
- The outcome of the inspection will not be made available until March/April 2018.

5.7 **2017 in Review**

- The focus for the London CRC over the past year has been "Back to Basics" – a return to the fundamentals of our practice to ensure that we, as an organisation, are meeting our performance targets whilst reducing re-offending with a focus on compliance and engagement.
- Increased operational oversight has led to greater accountability which has seen an increase in performance against our contractual measures.

- This year has seen an improved interface relationship with the National Probation Service (NPS), within Courts and local offices, and improved visibility across local stakeholder and partnership forums

5.8 Focus of 2018

- London CRC is now building on the practice developed and strengthened through our recent “Back to Basics” approach to move towards quality intervention and engagement.
- Our focus in 2018 will be looking at intervention strategies to further expand our current offer to Service Users. This focus on targeted, bespoke rehabilitation and reintegration will increase the level of engagement we receive from SU’s whilst reducing their risk of further offending.
- The commencement of an Interventions Manager and Contract and Partnership manager will also enable us to build on local approaches and improve visibility

5.9 Transforming Rehabilitation Review (Justice Select Committee)

MTCNovo, the parent company of London CRC, are leading the response into this review.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 places an obligation upon Local Authorities to have a committee which scrutinises crime and disorder within its area.
- 6.2 Within the context of the powers of this committee, the section provides that it should have the power to “ (a) review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities for example, police and other relevant partner agencies of their crime and disorder functions; (b) to make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions.”
- 6.3 Further, where this committee makes a report or recommendations it shall provide a copy— (a) to each of the responsible authorities, and (b) to each of the persons with whom, and bodies with which, the responsible authorities have a duty to co-operate under section 5(2) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (“the co-operating persons and bodies”).

6.4 The Local Government Act 1999 places a duty on the local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to the combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

6.5 These statutory duties amongst others are relevant to the production of the Council's Safer Lewisham Strategy.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report for the Council

8.0 Environmental Implications

8.1 Specific environmental implications of crime and disorder are reviewed annually through the strategic assessment process and appropriate action taken as required.

9.0 Equalities Implications

9.1 Equalities implications are considered throughout the delivery of this model.

10.0 Crime and Disorder Implications

10.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988, as amended, places a duty upon Local Authorities to consider crime and disorder implications and in particular, "to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area." This statutory obligation is the same for the Authorities "responsible partners" too. The level of crime and its impact is influenced by the decisions and activities taken through the day-to-day functions of local bodies and organisations.

10.2 Responsible authorities are required to provide a range of services in their community from policing, fire protection, planning, consumer and environmental protection, transport and highways. They each have a key statutory role in providing these services and, in carrying out their core activities, can significantly contribute to reducing crime and improving the quality of life in their area.

Background Documents

None

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