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PRISON REVIEW OVERSIGHT GROUP JUSTICE COMMITTEE SUMMARY REPORT

The purpose of this summary report is to inform the Committee of the first meeting of the Prison Reform Oversight Group (Group) which took place on 15 February 2012.

2. The meeting was chaired by the Minister of Justice and was attended by Group members:

- Nick Perry (Permanent secretary);
- Dr Michael Maguire;
- Professor Monica McWilliams; and
- Patricia Gordon

3. Duncan McCausland was unable to attend and sent his apologies. Department of Justice officials, Peter May (Safer Communities), David Lavery (Access to Justice) and Colin McConnell (NIPS) attended to give supporting evidence to the Group.

4. The Group was informed about the resignation of the NIPS Organisational Change Manager which was due to personal reasons. Nick Perry assured the Group that the Department was taking the necessary steps to ensure that the vacancy would be replaced as soon as possible. This included engagement with the second successful candidate from the last recruitment campaign.

Terms of Reference

5. The draft Terms of Reference were discussed and it was agreed that they would be amended to include the following items:

- independent members will declare conflicts of interest at the beginning of each meeting;
- independent members can take soundings from their wider networks and outside organisations on the progress of reform to inform their contribution;

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- independent members can engage directly with key individuals related to the reform programme;
- independent members can meet separately from the Oversight Group to discuss aspects of the reform programme;
- the Group will prepare a progress report within 12 months illustrating progress made and setting the objectives for the following 12 month period;
- the Group will meet quarterly but the Terms of Reference should not specify the month of the meetings; and
- in the absence of the Minister, the meeting will be chaired by Professor Monica McWilliams or Duncan McCausland.

A copy of the revised Terms of Reference is attached at Appendix 1.

Oversight Process

6. There was a general discussion about the oversight process which included an overview of the existing structures within the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) and the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Group also recognised the role of the Justice Committee in terms of oversight.

7. Dr Michael Maguire provided an outline of the role of Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) in relation to reporting to the Oversight Group.

8. It was recognised that there was an urgent need for a representative from the Department of Health (DHSSPS) to be included within the oversight process and Nick Perry undertook to contact the Permanent Secretary of DHSSPS to discuss further. It was acknowledged that it is important the Group has a clear understanding of the status of the recommendations of the Prison Review Team report in relation to health issues, the implementation plans and the connections with NIPS in relation to the delivery of recommendations.

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9. The Group agreed to provide a copy of the quarterly summary update report to the author of the Prison Review Team report, Dame Anne Owers, to keep her updated on progress.

Progress Update

10. Colin McConnell presented a “Status Update Report” to the Group (a copy of which is attached at Appendix 2). He gave an overview of some of the key progress achieved to date whilst also setting out the scale and complexity of the reform programme and outlining the challenges faced by NIPS.

11. Colin McConnell discussed progress on the Exit Package, specifically that staff had until the 17 February to express their intention to leave and that the recruitment campaign for custody officers would be launched on 16 February. He also explained that the training programme, for new staff and those remaining within the Service, was well advanced and NIPS was engaged with the two main universities in Northern Ireland and leading academics in criminology in relation to the training for the new Offender Supervisor Grade. He also gave an update on negotiations with the POA.

12. The Group requested that the Status Update Report be developed to provide a more consistent way of reporting on a quarterly basis. This should include timescales and milestones, whilst also referencing the PRT recommendation which the work stream relates to. It was agreed that this would allow for the Group to easily identify whether progress was being made and on time.

13. The Group observed that its role, at this stage, would focus primarily on overseeing progress on the projects that are already in scope and the focus will be in relation to implementation planning and the project implementation. It was acknowledged that a more detailed discussion around outcomes will evolve as implementation evolves and the Group develops.

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14. The next meeting will take place in mid-late April.

**Oversight Group for the Implementation of the Prison Review
Team Report**

**Draft Terms of Reference
(December 2011)**

Background

The Prison Review Team was established in July 2010, in line with commitment given in the Hillsborough Castle Agreement, to conduct a review of the conditions of detention, management and oversight of the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS). The final report, published in October 2011, highlighted the need for end to end fundamental reform of the Prison Service and set out 40 recommendations to transform the Prison Service into one which is both good and effective.

2. The report emphasised that responsibility for the reform of the prison system in Northern Ireland extended beyond the Department of Justice. One recommendation – the development of a Safer Society Strategy – was directed at the Executive as a whole and nine recommendations, relating to Healthcare, fall largely to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to implement. However, the majority of the recommendations within the report fall to NIPS, the Department of Justice and its other agencies to take forward.

Functions & Responsibilities

3. The Oversight Group (the Group) has been established by the Minister of Justice, in response to Recommendation 23 of the PRT final report, which states “There should be oversight of the change process, by a high-level Ministerial group including external involvement from a non executive director of the Prisons Board and the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice, with regular reports to the Justice Committee. The

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CJINI should be given additional resources to carry out independent monitoring of outcomes against our recommendations”.

Primary Functions:

- i. oversee the implementation of those recommendations made by the Prison Review Team that fall specifically to the Department of Justice (DOJ);
 - ii. test and challenge the assurances which are to be provided to the Minister of Justice and the Justice Committee in relation to the implementation of recommendations; and
 - iii. provide regular summary reports to the Justice Committee after each meeting
4. In taking forward its Primary Functions the Group may also consider interdependencies arising from the wider Strategic, Efficiency and Effectiveness Programme.
5. The work of the Group will be supported and informed by:
- i. regular progress reports from the Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service and the DOJ “Safer Communities” and “Access to Justice” Directors, as required; and
 - ii. independent analysis of progress against recommendations, as provided by Criminal Justice Inspection of Northern Ireland.
6. Independent members of the Group can receive opinions from its wider networks and outside organisations on the progress of reform to inform their contribution.
7. Independent members of the Group can engage directly with key individuals related to the reform programme (to be arranged through NIPS Secretariat).

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8. The Group will continue to meet until it is satisfied that the Prison Review Team's recommendations have been appropriately implemented. It is anticipated that the role of the Group will extend throughout the duration of the 2011 – 15 budget period, subject to review.

9. The Group will act in an advisory capacity, has no executive powers, and will take no formal role either in the formulation of policy or in the direct delivery of the Department's business.

Membership

10. The members of the Group include:

- Minister of Justice (Chair)
- Nick Perry (DOJ Permanent Secretary)
- Patricia Gordon (independent member and NIPS Non-Executive Director)
- Dr Michael Maguire (independent member and Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland)
- Duncan McCausland (independent member and former Assistant Chief Constable, PSNI)
- Professor Monica McWilliams (independent member and former Northern Ireland Human Rights Commissioner)

Reporting

11. The Group will formally provide summary reports in writing to the Justice Committee after each meeting.

12. At the end of each 12 month period the Group will produce a report summarising progress made and setting the objectives for the following 12 months.

Meetings

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13. Meetings of the Group will be chaired by the Minister of Justice. In the event that the Minister is unable to attend a meeting, either Professor Monica McWilliams or Duncan McCausland will chair the meeting.
14. The Group will meet at least four times per year. The Chair may convene additional meetings, as deemed necessary.
15. All meetings will include core items as agreed by the Group.
16. All meetings will require a quorum of three members before proceeding to business.
17. Group meetings will normally be attended by the:
 - Group Members;
 - Director General of NIPS;
 - NIPS Organisational Change Manager;
 - a CJINI Inspector (TBC); and
 - the Group Secretary
18. The Group may ask other officials from the DOJ - in particular the Directors of “Safer Communities” and “Access to Justice” - to attend in order to assist it with its discussions on any particular matter.
19. The Group will be given the opportunity to declare any conflict of interest at the beginning of each meeting.
20. The Group may ask any or all of those who normally attend but who are not members to withdraw to facilitate open and frank discussion of particular matters.
21. Independent members may meet separately to the Oversight Group and will be arranged through NIPS Secretariat.

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Papers

22. All matters for inclusion on the Agenda should be received by the Secretary at least 10 days in advance of each meeting.

23. All papers for consideration by the Group should be received by members 5 working days in advance of each meeting.

24. The minutes should be circulated to members for comment within 5 working days of each meeting.

Secretariat

25. The Group Secretary is a member of NIPS Secretariat.

Review

26. Terms of reference will be reviewed as required by agreement of the Group

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Appendix 2

STATUS UPDATE REPORT

The purpose of this paper is to provide Oversight Group members with a highlight of:

- key work undertaken by the DOJ to date since publication of the Prison Review Team Report; and
- critical dates for progress in the coming months.

2. The progress set out in the table below has been grouped thematically, rather than according to recommendation numbers.

Theme:	NIPS Structural Reform
Action Taken:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 9 November – Launch of NIPS staff Exit Scheme;▪ December – Appointment of an Infrastructure Manager to lead on the draft Estate Strategy;▪ 31 January – Completion of Full Body Searching Review which is currently with the Minister for consideration;▪ Development of a Target Operating Model (TOM)▪ Draft report on the Development of the Role of the Team Leader under consideration by NIPS;▪ Work to develop a Training & Development Implementation Plan is underway; and▪ Ongoing discussions with Staff Associations (POA / PGA).
Forthcoming Critical Dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 16 February – NIPS will launch a recruitment campaign for Custody Officers. First recruits expected to be deployed by December 2012;▪ 17 February – Closing date for eligible staff to indicate their intention to avail of the Exit Scheme;▪ 29 March – Draft Estate Strategy and consultation paper shared with the Justice Committee;▪ 29 March – NIPS officials will appear at the Justice Committee on the Review of Corporate Governance

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	<p>Framework;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 31 March – First tranche of staff will leave the Service under the Exit Scheme; ▪ 1 April – Launch of the TOM and subsequent roll out on a phased basis; ▪ 1 April – Transfer of Healthcare staff to the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust; ▪ 1 June – Professional Standards Unit to be established; ▪ 30 June – Code of Ethics to be published for consideration; ▪ 30 June – Completion of the Review of Learning & Skills which will consider options that could ensure the provision of quality education, skills training and work experience relevant to prisoners’ needs; and ▪ Work to develop a Training & Development Implementation Plan is underway.
Theme:	Oversight Mechanisms
Action Taken:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 14 December – Establishment of Ministerial-led Oversight Group; ▪ 14 December – Announcement of Organisational Change Manager in NIPS along with other members of the Change Team (the Finance & Corporate Services Project Manager is in post and the Offender Services Project Manager has been appointed with security clearance pending); ▪ 9 February – NIPS progress update to Justice Committee; and ▪ 15 February – First meeting of Oversight Group.
Forthcoming Critical Dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 29 February – Agreement on resourcing of CJINI to provide independent analysis to the Oversight Group on recommendations; and ▪ 31 March – Target for agreement on how healthcare recommendations can be incorporated into oversight arrangements.

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Theme:	Policy Progress
Action Taken:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 January – Launch of first Supervised Activity Order pilot in Newry; ▪ 2 February – Justice Committee briefed on plans for fine enforcement including deductions from earnings and benefits for fine enforcement; and ▪ 6 February – Announcement of intention to introduce Statutory Time Limits (STL).
Forthcoming Critical Dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ March – Submissions of Strategic Outline Case for civilian enforcement; ▪ March onwards – Drafting instructions for legislative change; ▪ July (TBC) – Evaluation of first SAO pilot; and ▪ Second pilot launched later in 2012.
Theme:	Strategic Workshops
Action Taken:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7 February – First strategic workshop completed resulting in three main action points to be taken forward prior to the next workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Mapping the desistance model</u> NIPS, PBNI, DOJ and Health to work jointly on mapping out components for a departmental desistance model; ○ <u>Departmental engagement</u> DOJ to consider how best to present the tangible benefits of investment in a reducing offending strategy to other government departments; and ○ <u>Stakeholder management</u> DOJ and NIPS official to develop an approach to engagement with key stakeholders.
Forthcoming Critical Dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Week commencing 27 February – Second strategic workshop.