

PRISON REVIEW OVERSIGHT GROUP
JUSTICE COMMITTEE SUMMARY REPORT
OCTOBER 2013

The purpose of this summary report is to provide the Committee with an update following the seventh meeting of the Prison Review Oversight Group (the Group), which took place on 11 September 2013.

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

- Nick Perry (Permanent Secretary, DOJ);
- Andrew McCormick (Permanent Secretary, DHSSPS);
- Patricia Gordon (Independent Member);
- Brendan McGuigan (Independent Member, CJINI); and
- Monica McWilliams (Independent Member)

3. Department of Justice officials Sue McAllister (Director General, NIPS), Mark Adam (Strategic Change Manager), Anthony Harbinson (Director, DOJ Safer Communities) and Gareth Johnston (Deputy Director, Access to Justice) attended to give supporting evidence to the group. Heather Stevens (Deputy Director, DHSSPS) was also in attendance, along with Brendan Whittle (Director, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust), and CJINI inspector Dr Ian Cameron. Duncan McCausland (Independent Member) sent his apologies.

Progress Update

4. The Minister noted that it had been agreed by the Group previously that much of the focus of this meeting would be on the Healthcare recommendations and therefore invited the Strategic Change Manager to

provide a brief update on progress across the Reform Programme since the Group last met in May. Mr Adam highlighted:

- Progress against the 100 day plans, announced by the Minister back in June, focusing on: the categorisation of prisoners; the prisoner incentive scheme; drugs and rehabilitation; the passport to employment; and resettlement;
- Senior staff moves within NIPS and the finalisation of the senior management team at NIPS Headquarters;
- Support and training for NIPS senior team, including the launch of a series of master-classes focused on both practical and more theoretical skills, and the establishment of a senior leaders' forum;
- Progress on the pending accreditation of the development scheme for prison officers;
- Developments around the updating of the prison estates, including plans for improvements at Ash House, noting that this would not be at the expense of a dedicated women's facility;
- An update on the four aspects of NIPS operating model: the staff deployment agreement; the staffing structure; the staffing profile; and the shift patterns;
- An update on the pending conclusion of the re-profiling of the shift patterns under the operating model, aimed at providing more flexibility for the regime; and
- The finalising of the award of the learning and skills contract.

5. The Independent Members asked about NIPS retention of its new recruits and how the opening of a PSNI recruitment competition would impact upon this. NIPS Director General accepted that there was a risk that prison staff would be attracted to PSNI, but hoped that the culmination of work to develop transparent career paths would help to mitigate against this.

Approved recommendations

6. The Oversight Group agreed that the outputs for the following three recommendations had been completed:

- PRT Recommendation 12 - Healthcare governance arrangements
- PRT Recommendation 15 - Transfer of healthcare staff
- PRT Recommendation 32 - Director of rehabilitation

7. Recommendation 32 was passed to Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) and recommendations 12 and 15 were passed to the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) for monitoring of the recommendation outcomes. When the outcomes have been monitored to a sufficient level to allow CJINI and RQIA to make assessments, the bodies will report back to the Oversight Group with an independent assessment on whether or not they consider the relevant recommendations to be complete.

CJINI Report on approved recommendations

8. CJINI reported in detail on the recommendations that were passed for assessment at the May 2013 Oversight Group meeting - recommendations 6 and 34. On recommendation 6 (role of Magilligan), CJINI was of the opinion that the outputs of this recommendation had been achieved, with management of delivery to be passed to NIPS Estate Programme. On recommendation 34 (Cross-departmental safer society strategy), CJINI reported that the publication of the Reducing Offending Strategic Framework delivered this recommendation, but urged the Department to include the voluntary and community sectors.

9. The Oversight Group agreed with this assessment and officially signed off the two recommendations as complete.

Healthcare recommendations

10. The DHSSPS Permanent Secretary provided an overview of the timetable for implementation of the ten recommendations being led by health (recommendations 12 to 21) and provided a general update across the recommendations. Mr McCormick reported that the Health and Justice Ministers had jointly agreed for officials to convene a project group to take forward detailed work on the development of a Joint Healthcare and Criminal

Justice Strategy. Clarification was also provided to the Independent Members, following their meeting with the Health and Social Care Board, that health and social care were provided through an integrated service.

11. The Independent Members expressed some disappointment with the time lag from the PRT Report being published and the timescales for implementation, along with disappointment that the joint strategy would be one of the final recommendations to be implemented; however, it was explained that this reflected the complexity of the recommendations and that the strategy would feed the other recommendations as it was being developed. The independent members reiterated the importance they placed on the timely implementation of the healthcare recommendations, particularly considering the vital role these recommendations play in the Prison Service meeting its objectives.

12. A meeting between the independent members of the Oversight Group and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust will be held before the Oversight Group meeting in December to discuss the role of the Trust in the development and delivery of the recommendations.

13. Chief Inspector CJINI expressed concern about aspects of healthcare emerging from preliminary work for a forthcoming Inspection and feedback from various stakeholders. The Director South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust undertook to examine these areas.

Independent members' update

14. The independent members of the Oversight Group continued to engage with stakeholders across the programme, reporting back in particular on meetings with the Justice Committee, NIACRO and with a recently established forum, Families with People in Prison. The independent members also reported on meetings with various health stakeholders held in advance of this Oversight Group meeting.

Priorities for the next quarter

15. Programme priorities for the next quarter (September to November 2013) are as follows:

Governance

- Preparations for Gateway Review of PRT Programme;
- Finalisation of benefits realisation plans, PIDS and project plans;

Strategy

- Development of outline business case to establish Fine Collection and Enforcement Service;
- Preparation of Statutory Time Limits in Youth Courts consultation paper;

Enabling Change

- Ongoing delivery of 100 day plans;
- Detailed planning for Secure College works configuration;
- Psychology workshop;
- Learning and Skills procurement;
- Award interim Learning and Skills contract;
- Award accreditation of Custody Officer training programme contract;
- Action plans for PRT recommendations 9, 10 and 11;
- Next stage of innovation workshops with Maghaberry;
- Options for recognising the positive work carried out by NIPS operational staff;

Partner Provision

- Initiation of project group to engage with stakeholders and to begin drafting joint healthcare and criminal justice strategy;
- Annual key performance indicators agreed with HSCB;
- New Pathways developed; and
- Two partnership events scheduled for October 2013.

16. Progress against these priorities will be explored, challenged and scrutinised at the next meeting of the Oversight Group.

Next Meeting

17. The Oversight Group is scheduled to meet again on 11 December 2013.

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