



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Hugh Widdis
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3 October 2025

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Dear Hugh

**MEMORANDUM OF REPLY: REDUCING ADULT REOFFENDING IN
NORTHERN IRELAND**

At its meeting on 2 October 2025, the Committee considered the Department's Memorandum of Reply to the report Reducing Adult Reoffending in NI.

At the outset, the Committee welcomes the fact that 11 of the 12 recommendations have been accepted. However, members have a number of significant concerns which require clarification and further assurance:

Recommendation 2

The Committee is concerned that Recommendation 2 has not been accepted and does not accept the Department's decision not to adopt reoffending reduction targets. The Committee is of the opinion that the explanation provided—citing fluctuating cohorts and cross-departmental dependencies—is not sufficient. The Committee therefore seeks urgent clarification on the

reasons for not accepting the recommendation and details of what will be done to ensure that the necessary data linkages will be established for effective delivery of a Cross-Executive strategy to reduce offending and reoffending.

Timelines and Slippage

Members also noted that a number of target implementation dates have been extended beyond the deadlines set within the report on Reducing Adult Reoffending. Most notably Recommendation 3, which had a target timeframe of six months, now has an implementation date of December 2027.

While recognising the complexity of some actions, the Committee considers such slippage to be unacceptable given the urgency of addressing adult reoffending.

The Committee therefore requests that the Department provide interim progress updates at regular intervals ahead of the final implementation dates, so that assurances can be given that work is underway and milestones are being achieved.

The Committee has requested a response by **3 November 2025** to these particular issues and an update on all other recommendations in 12 months' time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel McCrossan', with a small flourish at the end.

Daniel McCrossan
Chairperson
Public Accounts Committee