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## Quality & Impact inspection

# The effectiveness of probation work in Staffordshire and Stoke

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An inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation  
January 2017

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Published by:

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation  
1st Floor Civil Justice Centre  
1 Bridge Street West  
Manchester, M3 3FX

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## Foreword

This is our second inspection of adult probation work undertaken in the Midlands division of the National Probation Service (NPS) and in a Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) owned by the Reducing Reoffending Partnership (RRP).

RRP is applying the same ambitious operating model in the two CRCs it owns, and it is reassuring to see the progress made since our inspection in Derbyshire just a few months ago. Implementation in Staffordshire and Stoke is almost complete - albeit case management software and systems are still pending - and the operating model is now almost fully fledged.

RRP's model provides for an extensive range of interventions and it was pleasing to see some in good use, for example, substance misuse services. We were impressed as well by RRP's commitment to specific services for women, and commend its strategy to others.


That said, the CRC is not yet delivering the full range of planned services. Delivery has been inconsistent during a period of rapid change, but there is the prospect of steadier times ahead. Individual caseloads, however, look set to stay high with some officers now responsible for up to 80 cases.

High individual caseloads are becoming commonplace in CRCs. Of course CRCs must manage within anticipated resource, but the public is at greater risk when officers are spread too thinly and if quality assurance is not robust.

In common with other regions, the Midlands division of the NPS has so far experienced less (and less complex) change. It was not surprising then that the organisation was more stable and effective. This is generally consistent with what we have found elsewhere.

Overall, the NPS work inspected was of sufficient quality but there were notable weaknesses in places, for example in the provision of rehabilitative services. There was little evidence of the NPS purchasing services from the CRC to assist here, whereas CRC provision of services to the NPS is a key tenet of the model for probation services nationally. In practice and despite leaders' intentions, the rate card (listing services available) and/or concerns over pricing remain sticking points, here and elsewhere in the country.

Both the CRC and NPS in Staffordshire and Stoke need to improve the quality and impact of their work. We hope that the findings and recommendations from this inspection will help them to do just that.



HM Chief Inspector of Probation  
January 2017

## Key facts

- 258,748** The total number of offenders subject to probation supervision across England & Wales<sup>1</sup>
- 13,797** The number of offenders supervised by the Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC<sup>1</sup>
- 43%** The proportion of the CRC cases which relate to a custodial sentence (pre or post-release supervision)<sup>1 2</sup>. The proportion for all England & Wales was 56%
- 67.1%** The proportion of offenders who were recorded as having successfully completed their period of licence or post-sentence supervision with the CRC<sup>2 3</sup>. The performance figure for all England & Wales was 74.6%, against a target of 65%
- 16,460** The number of offenders supervised by the Midlands division of the NPS<sup>1</sup>
- 1,303** The number of MAPPA eligible offenders managed by the NPS in Staffordshire<sup>4</sup>
- 18%** The volume reduction for the CRC caseload, comparing 2015-2016 annual data to initial assumptions<sup>2 5</sup>. The reduction across CRCs ranged from -6% to -36%
- 2 (of 21)** The number of CRCs owned by the Reducing Reoffending Partnership

1 Offender Management Caseload Statistics as at 30 June 2016, Ministry of Justice.

2 Figure for the Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC.

3 CRC Service Level 9, Community Performance Quarterly Statistics April - June 2016, Ministry of Justice.

4 Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Annual Report as at 31 March 2016, Ministry of Justice.

5 'Transforming Rehabilitation', National Audit Office, 2016.

# 1. Overall judgements and recommendations

- Protecting the public
- Reducing reoffending
- Abiding by the sentence
- Recommendations

In our 2012 inspection of Staffordshire & West Midlands Probation Trust<sup>6</sup>, we found that services were being delivered well enough in each of three areas of work inspected: risk of harm to others, likelihood of reoffending, and compliance and enforcement (see Table 1). While not fully comparable to the findings in our current Quality & Impact inspection, due to the differences in methodology and the geographic boundaries, these 2012 findings provide useful context in terms of previous performance. The then Chief Inspector expressed confidence that the trust was well-placed to deliver the required improvements.

**Table 1**

| Domain   | Scores from the English regions that had been inspected to date |         |         | Scores for Staffordshire and West Midlands |
|--|---|---------|---------|--|
|  | Lowest  | Highest | Average |  |
| 'Control' - 'Risk of Harm to others' work <i>(action to protect the public)</i>                  | 64%   | 83%     | 74%     | <b>78%</b>                                 |
| 'Help' and 'Change' - Likelihood of Reoffending work <i>(individual less likely to reoffend)</i> | 62%   | 82%     | 73%     | <b>75%</b>                                 |
| 'Punish' - Compliance and Enforcement work <i>(individual serves his/her sentence)</i>           | 69%   | 86%     | 79%     | <b>78%</b>                                 |

*Findings scores for the Staffordshire & West Midlands Probation Trust during the February 2012 inspection.*

The full findings from this inspection are summarised in the following chapters.

## Protecting the public

### CRC effectiveness

Overall, the quality of work was insufficient, although initial case assessment was good.

Assessments of risk of harm were done consistently and to an acceptable standard, thereby providing a good grounding for future work, but those assessments were not followed through sufficiently well. In almost half of the cases inspected we considered that insufficient steps had been taken to keep to a minimum the service user's risk of harm to others. Moreover, in a high proportion of cases in our sample, sentence planning was poor despite sufficient information being generally available from the point of sentence.

<sup>6</sup> We inspected probation services in Staffordshire & West Midlands in June 2012, when services now delivered by the NPS and Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC were still being delivered by the Probation Trust. As a result of some changes to questions, results for inspections post-April 2011 were not strictly comparable with scores prior to that date.

We saw no evidence of the CRC seeking to quality assure public protection work. Management oversight was limited. Whatever the risk of harm in individual cases, there was no evidence of cases being routinely reviewed.

We were pleased to note that the Building Better Relationships programme was well resourced. We saw a small number of cases, however, where attending the programme was the only form of contact with the service user for long periods of time, thereby undermining the programme's intended benefits for those individuals.

### **NPS effectiveness**

The quality of work was acceptable overall, but with some notable exceptions, and room for improvement.

We found that in over two-thirds of cases the NPS had adequately assessed, planned and reviewed the risk of harm service users posed. In two-thirds of the cases in our sample we found that responsible officers had taken all reasonable action to keep the risk of harm to others to a minimum. In a small number of cases, however, the work delivered was poor.

The absence of management oversight and other local quality assurance compounded matters.

We found that the risk of harm to the public, known adults and children had been well-managed by the responsible officer in most cases.

### **The CRC and NPS working together**

Working relationships between the two organisations functioned well, with appropriate arrangements in place to share information at allocation, to provide timely initial appointments and to manage enforcement processes efficiently.

Processes for identifying and notifying cases in which an individual committed a Serious Further Offence while under supervision were weak. This is a significant issue as such cases must be recognised and reviewed so that lessons can be learned.

## **Reducing reoffending**

### **CRC effectiveness**

The CRC was not sufficiently effective in delivering interventions to reduce reoffending.

We found that, in most cases, the CRC produced an assessment and plan sufficient for the purposes of reducing reoffending. There was evidence of some effective work but this was offset by adverse consequences of organisational change, particularly



disruption to the continuity of supervision due to frequent changes of responsible officer. We found that members of staff were confused about their roles, and the availability of appropriate interventions.

The use of 'step down', where contact is reduced or managed by telephone calls, was not compatible with the risks associated with cases, nor did it support rehabilitative work.

Progress had been made in the delivery of interventions in too few of the cases in our sample.

### **NPS effectiveness**

The quality of work was generally acceptable, but let down by shortcomings in translating plans into action.

We found good practice in respect of most court-related activity, including initial assessments.

While there were good examples of effective work being undertaken, practice was often limited to delivery by the responsible officer, with insufficient involvement of partner agencies. Given the range of services promoted by the CRC, we were disappointed not to see their use. NPS practitioners generally considered that services obtained via the rate card were too expensive, while refreshingly, managers subscribed to the view expressed by the Midlands Deputy Director that:

*“if a service user needs provision then they should get it”.*

Insufficient progress been made in the delivery of interventions in just over one-third of the cases inspected.

### **The CRC and NPS working together**

The two organisations had worked well to sustain partnership working with others, as evidenced by the availability of services to support Drug Rehabilitation and Alcohol Treatment Requirements. Elsewhere, such provision has often waned as the organisations have focused on more immediate *Transforming Rehabilitation* matters. In Staffordshire and Stoke both organisations had also maintained a resource commitment to multi-agency working in the delivery of Integrated Offender Management.

We were encouraged by the continued support of the Community Justice Mental Health team, including the secondment of staff by the NPS. We saw evidence of high quality work being undertaken in the NPS cases inspected. It was of concern that we saw no evidence of a clear pathway for CRC cases with mental health problems.

## Abiding by the sentence

### **CRC effectiveness**

Overall, the quality of work was good. Most CRC service users had abided by the conditions of their sentence. If they did not, appropriate enforcement action was taken.

Individual diversity was taken into account in the assessment, planning and delivery arrangements in almost all cases.

The high turnover of responsible officers was less of a problem in this area of work, but in almost one in four cases the lack of continuity led to unacceptable levels of contact and poor enforcement work. That said, we found that the levels of contact were generally appropriate to needs and requirements in most cases and that the CRC understood and responded appropriately to individual circumstances. Where appropriate and necessary, enforcement processes were used efficiently.

### **NPS effectiveness**

Overall, the quality of work was good. Most NPS service users abided by the conditions of their sentence. If they did not, appropriate enforcement action was taken.

The NPS responded well to individual need in delivering the sentence and there were appropriate levels of contact in almost all cases inspected. Where work with partner agencies was undertaken, there was good use of information provided in the process of case review.

We also found a good balance between the necessary use of enforcement and efforts to motivate service users by overcoming barriers to their engagement.

### **The CRC and NPS working together**

Working arrangements were generally positive, with most issues resolved professionally and appropriately.

There were some unanticipated teething problems with the new systems being used by the CRC, particularly the Customer Service Centre. They needed to be better managed in order to minimise disruption to service delivery.

# Recommendations

## **The Community Rehabilitation Company and National Probation Service should:**

1. further develop effective mechanisms, facilitated by the NPS, for information provision from the CRC to sentencers and to NPS court teams
2. improve access for service users to the menu of interventions available as part of a rehabilitation activity requirement or licence, on the basis of need.

## **The Community Rehabilitation Company should:**

3. develop a structured plan (including timescales for implementation) for the deployment of all rehabilitative interventions outlined in *Our Plan to Change Lives*
4. implement the activities contained in the Reducing Reoffending Partnership's recently developed Public Protection Framework, including in particular the oversight and quality checking of medium risk of harm cases by middle managers (practice development managers)
5. develop systems to distribute the caseload on an equitable basis.

## **The National Probation Service should:**

6. clarify the role and expectations of middle managers (senior probation officers) in implementing quality management processes
7. access the range of rehabilitative services on offer, including CRC interventions, in the delivery of supervision.

## **The National Offender Management Service should:**

8. manage the accreditation arrangements for new CRC assessment and planning tools in a manner which does not inhibit or delay the implementation of CRC's operating models.

## **2. The arrangements for delivering probation services in Staffordshire and Stoke**

- the national context
- the local context
- organisational arrangements

## National context

In 2014, the UK government extended probation supervision for the first time to offenders released from prison sentences of under 12 months (over 40,000 people each year<sup>7</sup>). Now, over 250,000 adults are supervised by probation services annually, and all offenders released from prison on licence are subject to supervision. In addition, since May 2015, in an initiative known as 'Through the Gate', probation services must provide offenders with resettlement services while they are in prison, in anticipation of their release.

Probation services were formerly provided by 35 self-governing Probation Trusts working under the direction of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). They are now provided in a mixed economy model, with an expectation of greater involvement of the third sector. The government wishes to promote innovation in probation services, and in June 2014, under the *Transforming Rehabilitation* programme, probation services in England and Wales were divided into a new public sector National Probation Service and 21 new privately-owned Community Rehabilitation Companies providing services under seven-year contracts with a lifetime value of approximately £3.7 billion.

The NPS advises courts on sentencing all offenders, and manages those offenders presenting high or very high risk of serious harm, or who are managed under Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). CRCs supervise most other offenders presenting low and medium risk of harm. In order to protect the public, probation staff assess and manage the risks offenders pose to the community. They help rehabilitate offenders by dealing with problems such as drug and alcohol misuse, and lack of employment or housing, so as to reduce the prospect of reoffending. They monitor whether they are complying with court requirements, so as to make sure individuals abide by their sentence, and report them to court or request recall to prison if they fail to comply.

CRCs operated as companies in public ownership until 01 February 2015 when ownership was transferred to eight separate organisations. Most CRC income is from a 'fee for service' related to the number of offenders under various forms of supervision and the requirements to which they are subject. These payments may be reduced if the CRC fails to meet certain service levels. In addition, there is the possibility of additional income - payment by results - triggered by reductions in proven reoffending, once relevant data is available. The various performance measures against which the CRCs are measured are currently the subject of a formal review by the Ministry of Justice.

The transition from Probation Trusts to the mixed economy model has been challenging (as reported in our series of *Transforming Rehabilitation* reports), and the new expectations of probation providers are demanding. Those serving short sentences are more often prolific offenders, less receptive to rehabilitation. Through the Gate services require persistence and good joint working, and for the moment those arrangements appear the least well-developed.

Nationally, NPS workloads have risen noticeably in the last year and staffing levels have risen marginally, whereas CRC caseloads (and income) do not match the assumptions underpinning CRC contracts. Caseloads and staffing levels vary across

<sup>7</sup> Figures relate to releases from determinate sentences of less than 12 months during 2015 (excluding 15-17 year olds). Source: Offender Management Statistics, Ministry of Justice, October 2016.

the CRCs. The most recent published proven reoffending statistics indicate that the one-year reoffending rate varied from 31.4% to 37.4% between regions for those offenders starting a court order and managed by probation providers in the period from January 2014 to December 2014<sup>8</sup>.

## Local context

Here we report on probation services delivered in the Staffordshire and Stoke area by both the Staffordshire & West Midlands (SWM) CRC and the NPS Midlands division. These services were formerly provided by the Staffordshire & West Midlands Probation Trust. The area is served by two local authorities; Stoke-on-Trent Unitary Authority, and Staffordshire County Council covering the eight district authorities of Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, South Staffordshire, Stafford, Staffordshire Moorlands and Tamworth. It is coterminous with the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner area.

We provide demographic data and information about the area in Appendix 2. Within a population of approximately 1.114 million there are clear differences between the districts comprising Staffordshire and the Stoke-on-Trent Unitary Authority. This is most marked in relation to unemployment rates, where Staffordshire (at 3.5%) is considerably lower than the national average (of 5.1%) and Stoke-on-Trent is higher (at 6.4%). Stoke-on-Trent has experienced three decades of economic decline. Traditional industries of coal mining and steel have been lost. Other areas have seen a growth in financial services to compensate for this decline but Stoke-on-Trent has seen a reduction in such services. Although other towns in Staffordshire are seemingly more prosperous they all have their pockets of deprivation.

In common with others nationally, the NPS area caseload is higher than anticipated and the CRC's lower. The CRC is the second largest in the country by contract value<sup>9</sup>. At the time of the inspection, the CRC was being evaluated on three service levels against national targets[1] and four assurance metrics. The most current published data covering April – June 2016 showed that the CRC was performing below the national target on two of the service levels and below the national average on two service levels. The CRC was performing below the national target and the national average on all four of the assurance metrics. They were, however, already meeting the national target for six of the other twelve measures to which financial penalties do not currently apply and exceeding the national average on eight of these measures. An improvement plan to address deficiencies in performance is monitored and reviewed regularly by the senior team in conjunction with the NOMS contract management team.

At the time of the inspection, the NPS was being evaluated on nine service levels against national targets. The most recent data covers April-June 2016 and shows the Midlands division of the NPS performed above the national target on six of the nine measures and at or above the national average on five measures. The measures where the NPS division did not meet the target related to allocation of unpaid work requirements, Sex Offender Treatment Programme completions and completion of community orders and SSOs<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Source: Proven Reoffending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin: January to December 2014: England & Wales, Ministry of Justice.

<sup>9</sup> Target Operating Model. Rehabilitation Programme. September 2013.

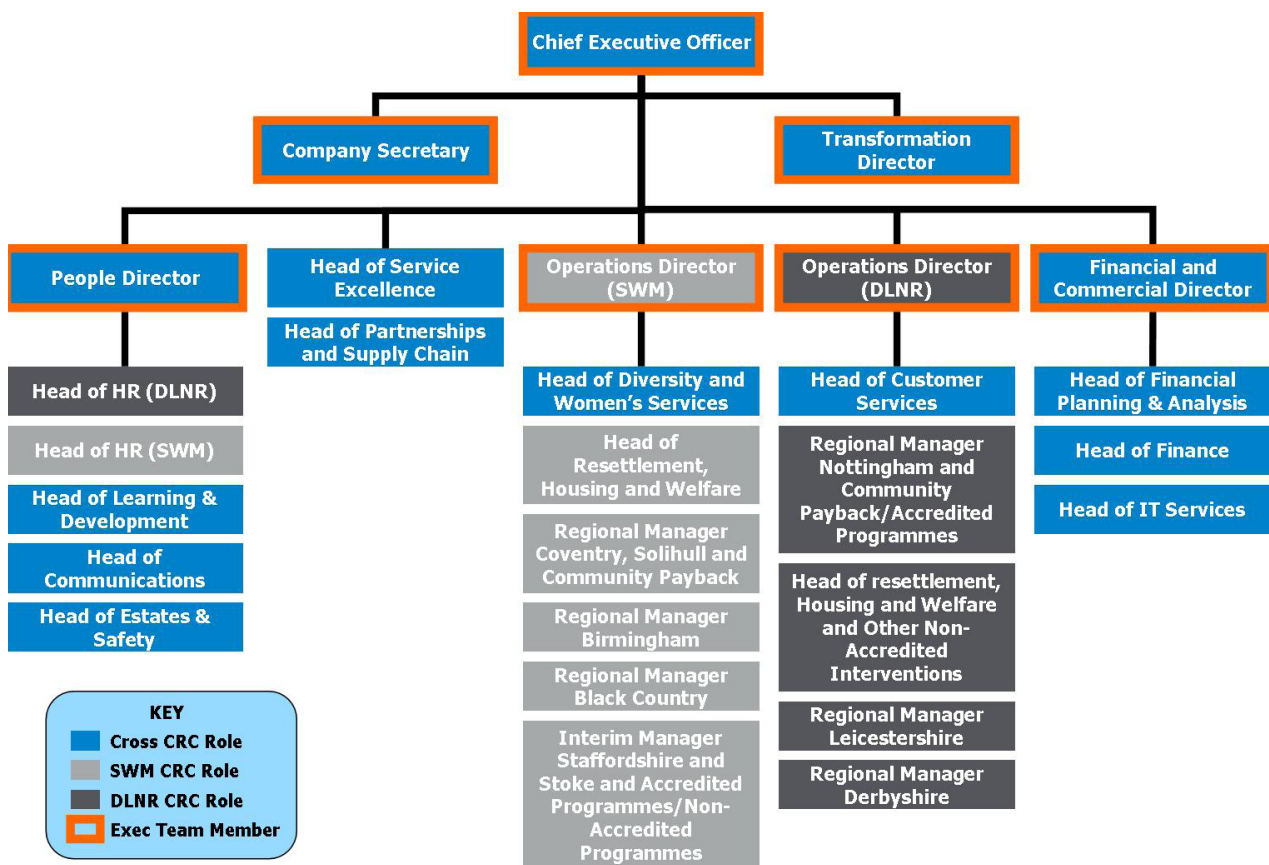
<sup>10</sup> Community Performance Quarterly Management Information release, Ministry of Justice April-June 2016.

# Organisational arrangements

## The CRC

The Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC is wholly owned by the Reducing Reoffending Partnership (RRP), itself made up of three organisations: Ingeus (a private company) and two charities, St Giles Trust and Change, Grow, Live. RRP also owns the neighbouring Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire & Rutland CRC<sup>11</sup>. The two are run by RRP broadly as one organisation, with one Governance Board and one Chief Executive Officer.

**Figure 1.1**



*Organogram of the structure of the Senior Leadership team of the Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC as of 26 May 2016. Source: Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC.*

## The operating model in practice

RRP is applying the same ambitious operating model, known as *Our Plan to Change Lives*<sup>12</sup>, in the two CRCs in its ownership. This plan outlines in detail the way in which services are to be delivered.

<sup>11</sup> We inspected probation services in Derbyshire earlier this year.

<sup>12</sup> Reducing Reoffending Partnership (December 2015) *Our Plan To Change Lives*.

Implementation has progressed throughout 2016 (see Table 2). Each CRC has a Customer Services Centre (CSC) to provide administrative support to front-line staff who are to be enabled, in turn with new software, to help manage cases efficiently and effectively. There are new operational and management structures (see Figure 1.1) and new premises. Where it is appropriate, policies and practices are being harmonised across the two CRCs. The model provides each CRC with an extensive suite of interventions from a wide range of providers, with specific arrangements and interventions for women service users.

The current inspection sample was drawn from cases commencing around January 2016. The organisational changes since that time within the Staffordshire and Stoke area of SWM CRC are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

| Organisational Change | Description   | Inspectors' comments   |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Estates               | <p>The CRC has vacated all properties shared with the NPS and has moved to three main locations: Hanley, Stafford and Tamworth.</p> <p>Integrated Offender Management (IOM) teams are co-located in Longton and Tamworth police stations. There is also satellite reporting at the Leek police station.</p> <p>Women's services are delivered at Chepstow House in Stoke.</p> | <p>CRC offices are zoned. Zone 1 is the reception area (including a groupwork area, Zone 2 is an open-plan office area where most staff work and service users are seen (each has some facility for private interview space) and Zone 3 is an area restricted to staff alone.</p> <p>The premises are modern and well-equipped and the working atmosphere is positive. The aim is to treat service users in a non-stigmatising manner, receiving a service as they would any other public service.</p> |
| IT                    | <p>The first phase of IT development has meant the provision of laptops and mobile internet access devices for staff.</p> <p>The next major change will be the implementation of RRP's case management and assessment system which remains subject to NOMS's approval. RRP intends to implement this change in 2017.</p>  | <p>We used this equipment to access the case management system (n-Delius) and the Offender Assessment System (OASys) during the field work week of the inspection. It was wholly satisfactory.</p>   |



|                         |  |   |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Staffing                | <p>Numbers have been reducing since November 2014, by natural wastage and voluntary redundancy. At the time of the inspection, numbers were finalised, with some probation officers (POs) and administrative staff made compulsorily redundant.</p>  | <p>Staff estimated they held between 70 and 100 cases per full-time equivalent member of staff. As outlined in Table 3, this estimate is at variance with the management information provided, which indicates a high but more manageable caseload, albeit inequitably distributed. In addition to the PO reduction, all administrative staff either left or were made redundant and the only remaining posts are the 'site hosts' at each of the CRC offices. The site hosts, as well as providing reception as the first point of contact with service users, prepare group rooms for whatever activities are planned. Site hosts also undertake some business functions such as the ordering/purchasing of equipment or facilities. They are responsible for copying and scanning requests from responsible officers locally.</p> <p>All other administrative support is now located in the CSC.</p> |
| Customer Service Centre | <p>The CSC became operational in September 2016. It takes all calls from service users, (through an 0800 number) and forwards those calls to the appropriate person in SWM; it supports and provides the site hosts to the SWM offices; it does all case administration tasks (including assigning cases, sending initial letters, enforcement and recall paperwork) and it has a range of business functions (such as placement coordination for unpaid work, data analysis and resource management).</p> | <p>As in Derbyshire, the introduction of the CSC has had some teething problems. There have been reported problems associated with telephony and the allocation of cases. The senior manager of the CSC estimated that, at the time of inspection, the centre was operating at 60% of its intended functional capacity.</p>   |

*Operational changes implemented by the CRC post HMI Probation's case sample specification date range. Source: Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC.*

## Staffing and caseloads

We were advised by the CRC that the Staffordshire and Stoke caseload is 2,523; this is 17.8% of the SWM caseload of 14,164.

The staffing establishment in Staffordshire and Stoke for the delivery of casework is outlined in Table 3.

**Table 3**

| Staff grade  | Establishment | Mean average caseload |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| practice development managers (middle managers)                | 4             |                       |
| probation practitioners - probation officer equivalent         | 16.5          | 66                    |
| probation practitioners - probation service officer equivalent | 19            | 72                    |

*Breakdown of average caseload per full-time equivalent employee grades for the Staffordshire and Stoke local delivery unit of the CRC. Source: Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC.*

The average caseload figures mask a variation in the distribution of work, with some probation officer grades holding up to 80 cases. Through discussion with responsible officers, there was a perception that caseloads had markedly increased over the last year and were too great to be delivered effectively. Some responsible officers reported an inability to meet performance targets and felt exposed should anything in the case go wrong.

Most staff had ready access to a manager but the level of structured, planned supervision appears to have diminished to the point where many responsible officers are receiving little or no formal oversight of their work. One of the methods envisaged of managing the workload is described in *Our Plan to Change Lives* as step down reporting. This includes referral and signposting to community organisations, Customer Services targeted calling, non-offence focused rehabilitative groupwork, informal support, biometric reporting and digital learning. During the period in which the cases inspected were active many of these options were unavailable, although the introduction of biometric reporting and Customer Service calling were viewed as imminent.

## Available services and involvement of the third sector

Services are provided through a mixed economy of in-house, private and voluntary sector provision and there is evidence of an increasing range of available interventions, which is encouraging.

The CRC has maintained a suite of accredited programmes including the Thinking Skills Programme, Drink Impaired Drivers Programme, Resolve (for anger management), Building Better Relationships (BBR) (to address domestic abuse) and Building Skills for Recovery (to deal with substance misuse). These are available

to all suitable and eligible cases in Staffordshire and Stoke. The groups take place across the county and are staffed by a well-resourced and experienced team. The programmes were recently audited by NOMS and received good feedback with only one area for development; concerning how best to manage small numbers on the groups when service users fail to attend.

RRP has developed a range of interventions appropriate for delivery within a rehabilitation activity requirement (RAR). These include:

**Table 4**

| <b>Intervention</b>                               | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Method of delivery</b>                               |
|---|---|---|
| Foundations of Rehabilitation                     | Building citizenship and health to stop offending             | Group-based: 6 to 18 sessions                           |
| Substance Misuse Brief Intervention               | Educational programme to raise awareness of harm              | Group or individual: 6 to 9 sessions                    |
| Anger Management                                  | Temper control  | Group-based: 6 sessions                                 |
| Engagement Toolkit                                | Breaking down barriers to involvement with supervision        | One-to-one: flexible number of sessions                 |
| Transition and Hope                               | Inspiring positive engagement with supervision                | Group-based: 1 session to be delivered by a peer mentor |
| Pathway to Independence                           | Supporting transition from adolescence to young adulthood     | Group-based: 6 sessions                                 |
| Getting a Home – Keeping a Home                   | Improve ability to secure stable housing                      | Group-based: 4 sessions                                 |
| Victim Awareness                                  | Developing understanding of the impact of behaviour on others | One-to-one or group-based: 8 to 16 sessions             |
| Addressing Benefit Fraud                          | Develop understanding of the cost and impact to the public    | One-to-one: flexible number of sessions                 |
| Structured Intervention to Address Domestic Abuse | Identifying the changes needed to stop abusive behaviour      | One-to-one or group-based: up to 21 sessions            |

*List of intervention programmes, to be delivered during rehabilitation activity requirement days, created by the owning company of the CRC. Source: Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC.*

The set of accredited and non-accredited interventions is promoted through the SWM CRC Probation Service Guide. This guide is made available to the NPS, courts and service users.

The CRC is also able to support the delivery of Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRRs) and Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATRs) provided by specialist services in the community, by providing case management support.

We were pleased to note that, as part of a women's strategy, the CRC has commissioned specific services for women service users. These include Core Change, Healthy Emotions, Healthy Relationships and Positive Parenting programmes which are available as part of a RAR or post-custodial licence. The contracted provider, Brighter Futures (a voluntary sector organisation), delivers the service throughout Staffordshire and Stoke either at their main centre in Stoke (Chepstow House) or at designated women-only reporting times at other CRC offices.

Ingeus provide a range of education, training and employment (ETE) services to the CRC. This includes one-to-one support, employability liaison, mock interviews and interview preparedness, specifically relating to group interview situations.

There is also some volunteer support available through a contracted arrangement with the voluntary sector organisation, Society Of Voluntary Associates (SOVA). This is to be augmented by the development of a peer mentoring scheme currently in the process of development.

While this range of activity is impressive, the experience of practitioners suggests these are not always widely used or, indeed, available. The new programmes were mentioned as part of supervision in no more than three cases in the sample inspected.

### Resettlement services

We saw little evidence of effective resettlement services. There were a small number of cases identified where a resettlement plan had been created but the plans were of a poor standard and did not result in any specific actions. This is in accord with the findings of our recently published first report on resettlement services nationwide<sup>13</sup>.

In contrast to the general picture of diminishing service provision outlined in our thematic report on women who offend<sup>14</sup>, the CRC has commissioned services to be delivered by a voluntary sector organisation, Changing Lives, to provide a short programme to women in custody as part of the Through the Gate provision. Furthermore, within the SOVA contract a 'meet at the gate' service has been commissioned for women being released from HM Prison Drake Hall, and HM Prison Foston Hall. A volunteer will meet the women at the gate and assist them in getting to their home, or probation appointment. These promising arrangements are yet to be operationalised.

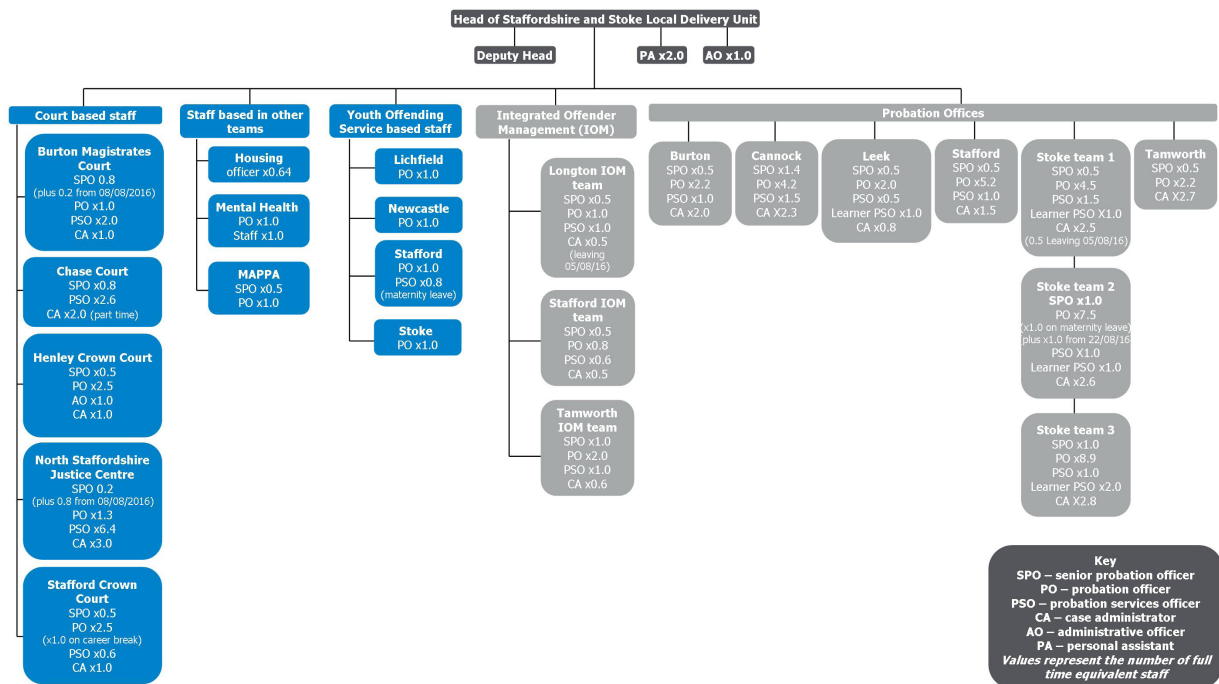
## The NPS

The NPS is a relatively new national, regionalised organisation. Operational services are delivered in-house save for those commissioned from the CRC. Staff are drawn predominantly from the former Probation Trusts.

<sup>13</sup> HMI Probation (2016) An inspection of Through the Gate Resettlement services for short-term prisoners.

<sup>14</sup> HMI Probation (2016) The provision and quality of services in the community for women who offend.

**Figure 1.2**



*Organogram of the deployment of staff within the NPS Staffordshire and Stoke local delivery unit as of 04 August 2016. Source: NPS Midlands division.*

The NPS is implementing a national change programme (E3)<sup>15</sup> designed to create a more consistent approach across England and Wales in six key areas of NPS work: community supervision; court services; custody; youth offending services; victim services; and approved premises. E3 is a programme of standardisation that includes aligning, where appropriate, job roles and staff numbers, terms and conditions.

While, to date, the organisational changes are not as extensive as those experienced by the CRC, there are nonetheless considerable challenges. The imperatives of *Transforming Summary Justice* and *Better Case Management* are driving NPS court work towards challenging targets, with 90% of reports expected to be short format reports.

### Available services

The NPS has maintained strong partnership links with providers of mental health services. It has retained access to the Community Justice Mental Health (CJMH) team and provides some resource for it (as can be seen in the following examples). The team is doing impressive work.

<sup>15</sup> NPS E3 Operating Model, 2016. Please see the glossary for additional information.

**Organisational strength:** *The CJMH teams are well established in Staffordshire and Stoke. They were set up to assess mental health needs, to offer an appointment and refer on, but often sustain contact throughout the progress of the service user.*

*The team caters for CRC and NPS service users, from police cell to the end of sentence. Their liaison and diversion project was the first in England and takes a growing proportion of their time. The team has a dedicated social care pathway worker and can access forensic psychiatric advice.*

*It is funded through the CJMH team, the health commissioning pot, and NHS England (for the liaison and diversion scheme). The NPS funds the PO post within both Staffordshire and Stoke teams.*

There is also a specialist partnership concerned with the delivery of services to individuals assessed as having a personality disorder:

**Organisational strength:** *The NPS Evolve project is a separate entity to the CJMH team. Evolve is staffed by a clinical psychologist and part-time PO who run monthly clinics (reflective practice groups) for responsible officers to provide advice on the best way to work with their offenders' individual personality disorders. The team complete pre-release assessments to identify personality disorders and individuals' needs for those in custody.*

In addition, through the divisional programmes unit service users are able to access the appropriate Sex Offender Treatment Programmes.

### Staffing and caseloads

The NPS staff group has remained relatively stable since the organisational split. Work locations have not changed either. There were contradictory perceptions of staff morale. The workload data (the national system of work estimation) showed responsible officers working at between 85% and 110% capacity and with an average workload of less than 100%. This did not suggest to us that workload was a problem, and no-one suggested that to us.

### Quality assurance

There was no clear approach evident to the management of the quality of cases. There were some legacy practices related to case audit but these did not seem to be systematically delivered. Recent national practice improvement tools in respect of pre-sentence reports (PSRs), parole reports and risk of harm have been introduced but, again, these do not appear to be deployed systematically as part of a cohesive and consistent approach to quality management.

# **3. An evaluation of the quality of probation services in Staffordshire and Stoke**

- Protecting the public
- Reducing reoffending
- Abiding by the sentence

# Protecting the public

## CRC effectiveness

Overall, the quality of work was insufficient. Assessments of the risk of harm service users posed were done consistently and to an acceptable standard, thereby providing a good grounding for future work, but those assessments were not followed through sufficiently well.

### Assessment and planning

In almost all of the cases in our sample, we considered the provision of information by the NPS to the CRC to be good.

We found that the assessment of risk of harm recorded by the CRC was accurate. The assessment was generally considered to be appropriate and sufficient, as the following two examples<sup>16</sup> demonstrate:

***Good practice example:** Arthur is a 53 year old convicted of burglary of a non-dwelling. He has a 40 year history of offending, with many drug-related offences including burglary, theft, assault, fraud and arson. Arthur also has a history of non-compliance.*

*He received a 12 month Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 (ORA) community order with a DRR.*

*While there have been previous convictions related to violence and aggression, there had been none of late. In assessing his risk level, the responsible officer had made appropriate checks with the police about any propensity towards domestic abuse and had also developed good relationships with Arthur's family and partner so as to monitor his behaviour within the home, and again there were no concerns.*

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<sup>16</sup> Please note, all names in the practice examples have been amended to protect the individual's identity.



**Good practice example:** Oscar is a 33 year old convicted of several assaults and several counts of criminal damage against his ex-partner. He was known to have been violent in a number of previous relationships. His oldest child was in the care of the local authority and he was not allowed contact with him, or with two younger children living with their mother.

He was made subject to a community order with a condition that he attended BBR course, and complete five days of rehabilitation activity.

The NPS had completed a Layer 1 risk assessment as part of the fast delivery report process. That was clear and accurate and contained all necessary information about domestic abuse and child safeguarding. They had made the relevant checks with police and children's social care services.

In only one instance did we consider the assessment to have under-estimated the risk presented by the individual. In another case where we considered the assessment of risk of harm to be too high, there appeared to be confusion between the vulnerability of the service user and the risk of harm they presented, illustrated as follows:

**Poor practice example:** Josephine is a 23 year old convicted of theft from a store. She breached her previous order three times, until that order was eventually revoked and she was resentenced to the current suspended sentence order. Her offending was motivated by her drug use, and at the time of the offence, her involvement with a drug-using partner.

This was assessed as a medium risk case. There was one offence of theft for this case, in April 2015, and no prior convictions or further offending, and so the risk of harm should have been assessed as low.

The initial risk of serious harm assessment was deemed to be sufficient in the main, but only one-third of the cases included an adequate plan to protect people known to the service user and at most risk ('known adults'). This was most common in cases involving the risk of domestic abuse evident in half of the cases inspected. In the case cited in the following as an example, there was a good risk assessment but that was not translated into a good quality plan:

**Poor practice example:** *Kenneth is a 30 year old who committed an offence of harassment against his ex-partner from three years previously. This took the form of abusive texts.*

*He pleaded guilty at court and was sentenced to a two year ORA community order with a requirement to attend unpaid work and the BBR group.*

*The initial assessment was sufficient but the planning did not anticipate what would be needed should Kenneth become involved in a new relationship. Moreover it did not fully safeguard the current victim, who remained at risk. In addition, the plan made no reference to existing safeguards, such as the restraining order.*

Most responsible officers (including agency workers) indicated that the level of training provided within the CRC was not sufficient to equip them with the necessary skills to undertake required assessment and planning. This was particularly the case with those probation services officers (PSOs) required to manage medium risk of harm domestic abuse and Child Protection cases. The course materials made available to us show that the training provided is in the form of one-day workshops and all probation practitioner staff are required to update their training in a five-year cycle. Given the complexity of some of the cases it is unlikely, in our view that training of this duration and frequency would adequately equip a practitioner.

### Delivery

We would expect to see public protection concerns being prioritised in the work with individuals, even if a written plan did not fully capture this intention. There was insufficient focus on protecting those at risk from the service user in almost half of the cases where we deemed this necessary, as illustrated in the next example:

**Poor practice example:** Eric is a 45 year old subject to an ORA community order for an offence of possession of an offensive weapon. His previous convictions included battery against his ex-wife. The victim was a male known to Eric.

The direction of work was led by Eric and, as such, was not focused appropriately on the management of risk. The responsible officer failed to obtain official documentation about his offending to inform their assessment, planning and reviews, routinely available from the Crown Prosecution Service. Instead, they relied too heavily on self-reported information.

When Eric developed new relationships on two occasions, this did not prompt risk-focused home visits, as we would have liked to have seen. The responsible officer confirmed that home visits were carried out simply to aid compliance. There were no efforts to explore who Eric was in a relationship with, if there were any children involved, and why the first relationship had ended when a new one was formed. The case had not been flagged as one involving domestic abuse and there were no victim details recorded, despite some information being available from a restraining order. Overall, the responsible officer had failed to take the initiative to influence the level of risk Eric posed to others.

During the course of supervision, Eric was sentenced for a new violent offence against another female, with whom he denied he was in a relationship.

On the other hand, there were examples of positive, constructive work being undertaken to manage or reduce the risk of harm, as exemplified here:

**Good practice example:** Stuart is a 21 year old who committed an offence of breach of a non-molestation order against his ex-partner. He has a long history of offending, covering a range of offences, many of which were substance misuse-related and demonstrated poor coping skills. There are concerns that he has an attachment disorder and a personality disorder, but there has been no formal diagnosis.

Stuart was assessed as posing a medium risk of harm to others, mainly to his ex-partner and her child (should the child witness any domestic abuse). We considered this to be accurate.

This risk had been appropriately managed, with regular liaison with children's social care services.

### Reviewing progress

We found that less than one-third of the cases had been formally reviewed by the responsible officer for risk of harm. We would expect to see cases reviewed at times of significant change or in the light of noteworthy events, and there is no doubt that

the circumstances of the following case presented below would meet any test of significance:

**Poor practice example:** Andrew was attending the BBR programme for domestic abuse perpetrators. Following our review of the case, we alerted the responsible officer to the fact that Andrew was in a new relationship with the victim’s sister, yet no new checks or assessments had been made to ascertain any risk to her or any children.

In this case the responsible officer had reduced contact to telephone calls as part of the adoption of the step down approach to workload management. This was incompatible with the level of risk associated with the service user.

In another case we required immediate action be taken by the responsible officer in the light of well-documented information indicating an escalating risk of serious harm which had not been acted upon.

### Impact and potential impact

In almost half of the cases inspected we considered not enough had been done to keep to a minimum the service user’s risk of harm to others. A combination of increasing workloads, organisational change and other business priorities meant that insufficient attention had been given to managing public protection.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the CRC contributing to public protection:

**Table 5**

| Enablers |   | Barriers |  |
|----------|---|----------|--|
| 1.       | The CRC has retained a core of skilled and experienced practitioners.   | 1.       | The pace and extent of organisational change has left some staff struggling to manage greatly increased workloads. |
| 2.       | There are strong working relationships with the police and local authority children’s social care services, both vital to underpinning effective risk management. | 2.       | Staff appear to have lost a sense of the primacy of public protection in delivering probation services.            |
| 3.       | The CRC is developing a comprehensive Public Protection Framework, which should support an increased focus on this important aspect of their work.                | 3.       | A focus on organisational change has adversely impacted capacity to support and direct public protection work.     |

*List of enablers and barriers for the CRC relating to the inspection domain of protecting the public.*

## NPS effectiveness

The quality of work was acceptable overall, but with some notable exceptions, and room for improvement.

### Assessment and planning

In almost all of the cases inspected, the level of risk of harm identified by the responsible officer was correct throughout the sentence. In only one case was the risk level deemed to be too low. One case was classified as very high risk of serious harm, nine as high risk and eleven as medium. We found planning satisfactory in most cases.

The following two examples of good practice were typical of many of the cases inspected:

***Good practice examples:** Ariadne, a woman in her forties, received a prison sentence for arson, with no intent to endanger life. We found that the risk to her adult children was assessed correctly. Her risk was linked to intimate relationships and this was reflected in the assessment and plans.*

*Robert is 72 years old and has a long offending history. He was classed as posing a very high risk of serious harm and released from prison to an approved premises. Robert's case was assessed using the Active Risk Management System tool and was being managed through MAPPA Level 2. There was good input by relevant agencies to keep children safe, monitor Robert's whereabouts and make sure that he complied with his licence conditions.*

There were, however, cases where assessment and planning was unsatisfactory, calling into question the level of management oversight or quality management arrangements. We raised quality management oversight of cases with middle managers who considered that this remained part of their role. They indicated, however, that:

*“there is no consistency around roles and responsibilities relating to quality assurance. In some offices the responsible officers peer review and in others responsible officers feel this is the duty of the senior probation officers”.*

One responsible officer commented that she:

*“received peer support on a daily basis within the pod [semi-formal group of peers]. More support from peers than from managers”.*

Another said:

*“my SPO has too much to do ... juggling the role, but I worry about mistakes being made”.*

**Poor practice example:** *In one case managed via Level 1 of MAPPA, the responsible officer paid scant attention to the risk of harm Frederick posed to others. Instead, they took at face value that he had learned from the courses attended and would not reoffend. They gave no consideration to the fact that he had overnight contact with his daughter in his home and that she was potentially at risk from both him and from his co-defendant’s family (who had made threats towards the family). There was no contact with children’s social care services to assess or plan how to protect the daughter, despite her already being known to them as a Child in Need.*

*The risk management plan lacked any detail. It did not specify how children or the victims would be kept safe. There was a licence condition not to contact the victim but no detail about how this would be monitored and enforced. Overall, the quality of risk management was poor in this case.*

### Delivery

In almost all cases inspected, the MAPPA level was viewed as being appropriate to the risks associated with the case and in most cases the work undertaken was sufficiently focused on public protection outcomes.

There were examples of analytical and tenacious practice:

**Good practice example:** *Mitchell was given a long sentence (87 months) for kidnap. He was still in his twenties when released. Pre-release work made sure that his needs had been assessed before he left custody and he had an approved premises place awaiting him. Mitchell had a narcissistic personality disorder.*

*The responsible officer’s approach was to consider every aspect of Mitchell’s life, including his business and personal relationships, his family, and the need to safeguard his partner’s children and other family members. The responsible officer addressed each issue analytically, exploring all aspects of the case until satisfied that she understood the context and the potential for harm to be caused.*

*Mitchell appeared determined to be honest and not to reoffend.*

We saw good evidence of partnership working by skilled and experienced practitioners to maintain the safe management of cases, as in the following example:

**Good practice example:** *Despite this being a MAPPa Level 1 case, without a sexual harm prevention order in place, the police and responsible officer routinely visited Heston's home to check his internet history. He was fully compliant with checks being undertaken and engaged well with the pre-programme work.*

*The responsible officer had a good understanding of sexual offending and her thorough records indicated that she was delivering ongoing structured work to keep Heston motivated and engaged during the wait for his programme.*

### Reviewing progress and impact

Where a review was required or appropriate, this was undertaken in most cases and the plan of work was revised in the light of the review. A service user observed:

*"I can't fault her [the responsible officer]. We made a good plan at the start and I've had great advice and courses. My probation officer has helped me to turn my life around".*

**Good practice example:** *In respect of a complex, high risk case presenting failing health, an entrenched pattern of offending and some indications of active risk, we noted:*

*The responsible officer was able to review and respond to new circumstances through MAPPa and frequent, timely dialogue with the police and other agencies.*

*There was good multi-agency working through MAPPa and through continuous engagement and perseverance. This involved extended use of approved premises in order to pursue an outcome in relation to increasingly complex accommodation needs.*

There were, however, one-third of cases in which reviews were not undertaken and it was concerning to see examples where the risk of serious harm appeared to be escalating.

**Poor practice example:** In one case, no review was undertaken despite there being a number of significant events that should have prompted one, including information from the police that Jeremy was doing voluntary work for his landlord (the landlord rents to vulnerable people). The case was not reviewed even after he was abusive and aggressive to staff on a home visit.

Nevertheless, in two-thirds of the cases we inspected we found that responsible officers had taken all reasonable action to keep the risk of harm to others to a minimum. We also found that the risk of harm to the public, known adults and children had been positively influenced by the responsible officer in most cases.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the NPS contributing to public protection:

**Table 6**

| Enablers |  | Barriers |  |
|----------|--|----------|--|
| 1.       | There was a high degree of continuity of responsible officer in the cases inspected.           | 1.       | Case oversight and quality assurance was not happening as it should. |
| 2.       | Responsible officers valued the support offered by peers in reviewing the management of cases. |          |  |
| 3.       | There were strong, enduring partnership arrangements, particularly in relation to MAPPAs.      |          |  |

*List of enablers and barriers for the NPS relating to the inspection domain of protecting the public.*

## The CRC and NPS working together

We found that for almost all cases in the sample the NPS was providing a good level of information and undertaking appropriate domestic abuse and Child Protection checks.

There are strong working relationships between the two organisations at senior and middle management levels. They helped to resolve initial, common problems associated with *Transforming Rehabilitation* implementation: information provision, allocation, and the processes for breaches of community orders and recall of prisoners.

Court staff were often unaware of the services the CRC had available. For instance, we found examples where NPS court staff were proposing requirements to attend the attendance centre in Lichfield, not realising that it was no longer there. This



demonstrated confused perceptions in relation to access to CRC interventions, particularly in relation to RARs.

As part of our inspection we interviewed a number of sentencers, including magistrates, a District Judge and Resident Judge. They expressed some concern that the CRC was slow in providing relevant information in respect of breach proceedings or where there was conviction for a further offence while subject to supervision. We did not find, however, any corroborative evidence in relation to this perception in our case sample.

### Risk escalation

In the sample we inspected there was only one instance of risk escalation from the CRC to the NPS and this was managed appropriately.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the CRC and NPS working together effectively to achieve positive public protection outcomes:

**Table 7**

| Enablers |   | Barriers |   |
|----------|---|----------|---|
| 1.       | There was a good flow of information at the start of the order for the purposes of case allocation.                   | 1.       | NPS staff lacked a thorough understanding about the available services on offer from the CRC. |
| 2.       | A strong commitment to collaborative working existed at both senior and middle manager levels within the CRC and NPS. | 2        | Sentencers did not have up to date information in respect of CRC services.                    |

*List of enablers and barriers for the CRC and NPS working together, relating to the inspection domain of protecting the public.*

## Reducing reoffending

### CRC effectiveness

The CRC was insufficiently effective in delivering interventions to reduce reoffending. It was not delivering consistently enough. The operating model, however, is proving effective in cases of substance misuse, with some promising work delivered.

#### Assessment and planning

In almost all cases inspected the NPS had provided a sufficient assessment of the risk of reoffending.

A sufficient plan had been prepared within a reasonable timescale in two-thirds of the cases in our sample. Consequently, we saw examples of good practice in relation to assessment and planning in two-thirds of the cases.

**Good practice example:** Brenda is a 23 year old who committed an offence of theft from a store.

A full sentence plan was completed ten days after sentence. This covered the key areas in relation to the risk of further offending, and safeguarding concerns, which were a crucial aspect of this case. Subsequent planning covered substance misuse, accommodation issues and victim awareness work. These were key factors in managing Brenda's risk of reoffending.

Brenda had complied with supervision and refrained from further offending.

Among cases with insufficient plans, there were examples of poor practice indicating the responsible officer's lack of knowledge of the case:

**Poor practice example:** Veronica, a 28 year old was sentenced to a 12 month SSO for an offence of theft (shoplifting) and failure to provide a sample for drug testing on the concurrent community order with a DRR requirement. Since 2014 Veronica has been a prolific shoplifter, which is linked to her class A drug use.

The initial assessment and plans offered some analysis and picked out some of the key issues at least to a basic level. Given the complexities of the case, however, a more detailed analysis and more specific planning of interventions and risk management were required. Key aspects, including mental health and accommodation, were absent from the assessments, plans and objectives. It was not clear who was doing what, and when.

Since starting the SSO she has been arrested for shoplifting on a number of occasions and is currently in custody for new offences and a failure to comply with the SSO.

## Delivery

We inspected the cases of individuals sentenced to community or SSOs, or who had been released on licence for approximately nine months. We looked to see what progress had been made in delivering the required interventions. We assessed progress as sufficient in less than half of cases, and clearly insufficient in one-third of them. In the remainder, despite the reasonable actions of the responsible officer, the lack of service user engagement had inhibited progress.

From our case inspections and subsequent observations of work designed to reduce reoffending, a mixed picture emerged. The most prevalent areas of need identified were: thinking and behaviour; drug misuse; relationships; alcohol misuse; emotional well-being; and attitudes to offending. In cases where the need had been identified, the provision was seen to be sufficient to the following extent:

**Table 8**

| Area of assessed need  | % of cases with sufficient intervention |
|------------------------|---|
| Thinking and behaviour | 54%                                     |
| Drug misuse            | 81%                                     |
| Relationships          | 40%                                     |
| Alcohol misuse         | 67%                                     |
| Emotional well-being   | 60%                                     |
| Attitudes to offending | 40%                                     |

*Sufficiency scores from the inspection findings relating to the most prevalent assessed needs of cases in the CRC inspection sample, listed in priority order.*

We discussed the Thinking Skills accredited programme (to develop problem-solving skills) with a group of participating service users. One said that:

*“staff have conducted themselves well. Sometimes they make you feel under pressure with their questions, but it’s generally a good course. A lot of it is stuff that you already know. But it’s [the course] like a driving test, everyone should take one every ten years or so”.*

This reflected a generally positive sense of engagement with both the course tutors and responsible officers.

We also saw examples of the CRC’s workbooks being utilised and the responsible officer being able to deliver good quality work:

**Good practice example:** *Geoffrey is a 54 year old man subject to an ORA licence following a two month custodial sentence for assault and battery. He is a senior member of a family in which many are involved in crime.*

*In this case a high quality PSR was followed by a timely and considered plan. The responsible officer was able to secure compliance with instructions to report and engaged Geoffrey in workbook exercises designed to challenge his attitudes to offending.*

Conversely, there were staff members who felt under extreme pressure. They articulated a sense of isolation in managing their workload, with limited support from the wider network of service provision. One responsible officer, for example, stated:

*“there is often talk of things being available but nothing ever is started. I have never heard of ‘Pathways to Independence’ or ‘Getting a Home - Keeping a Home’. Most of our work is done on a one-to-one basis. There are now fewer services available than there used to be”.*

In relation to substance misuse, there were good examples of work being delivered as part of an ATR, DRR or licence requirement. It was evident that the CRC enjoyed seemingly good and helpful access to substance misuse services. We did not, however, always note the responsible officer being entirely supportive, as in the following example:

**Poor practice example:** *Cameron is a 31 year old subject to an ORA community order with a DRR and 10 days RAR. He offends to fund his drug use.*

*The responsible officer had not taken sufficient steps to gather information on progress made on the DRR. The requirement had been terminated and the only evidence available indicated an increase in the level of methadone being prescribed, with no record of the work being undertaken between Cameron and the service provider.*

Relationship issues were being addressed through the BBR programme, which the CRC has maintained and resourced appropriately. There were examples, however, of this intervention being the sole contact with the CRC; in one instance we noted:

*“BBR were doing good overall work but the responsible officer did nothing alongside this to identify or protect potential victims. He did not see the service user to check whether he was in a new relationship”.*

In other cases the non-accredited domestic abuse programme, Structured Intervention to Address Domestic Abuse, was appropriately intended to be delivered within a RAR. In those instances we found little progress had been made.

We found a number of cases where links with mental health professionals were apparent and some evidence that these working relationships had an impact. While mental health professionals were available at the Hanley office once a week, there was no systematic approach to accessing appropriate mental health services other than in the IOM unit.

During the fieldwork we observed the delivery of ETE work provided by a staff member from Ingeus. This was delivered in the open-plan office in which the worker and colleagues from the CRC delivered most of the contact with service users. We observed constructive and detailed work being undertaken which did not seem to be in the least inhibited by the physical location and the lack of privacy.

We also observed ETE work being delivered in a group setting and designed to prepare job-ready service users for interview. We viewed this as a very good resource. The employability worker had good links with local employers who would contact him when they were recruiting. The training company have actively worked with companies who had signed up for the 'Ban the Box' initiative (aimed at removing the requirement for routine disclosure of previous offending), and were working with other companies to get them to engage with this worthy initiative.

### Integrated Offender Management

The CRC has retained an active role in the delivery of IOM and key features of the scheme included:

**Table 9**

|  |
|--|
| Co-location of police and probation services, including NPS staff  |
| Co-location of substance misuse services                           |
| Daily intelligence checks on all IOM identified cases              |
| Information sharing on IOM cases subject to statutory intervention |
| Involvement of SOVA volunteers                                     |
| Input from mental health practitioners                             |

*List of CRC inputs into the delivery of the Intergrated Offender Management scheme at the time of inspection.*

The priority cases for inclusion in the IOM scheme are determined within the area of the Staffordshire Constabulary. It identifies those who have committed serious acquisitive offending, but other cases can be considered for inclusion, based on a scoring system of conviction and charges over the preceding five years. All cases are co-managed by CRC/NPS staff and IOM police officers. Each offender is informed that they are an IOM case and told what this means. They are subject to increased police intelligence checks, regular home visits by the police field officer, referrals to relevant community resources and appointments at the police station. There are nine field police officers, based in the community, and they regularly link with the IOM team.

It is evident that the scheme provides an enhanced service and that the CRC has sustained a strong commitment to this method of service delivery. The scheme's impact in the Staffordshire and Stoke area has not been formally evaluated, but the scheme received positive feedback from service users, as here:

*“Whose idea was IOM? It’s one of the best things going! It is much more helpful and supportive than general probation”.*

## Rehabilitation activity requirements

As we have found elsewhere (such as in our recent inspections in Kent<sup>17</sup> and Derbyshire<sup>18</sup>), there was widespread confusion in Staffordshire and Stoke about RAR days and how they should be used. This chimes with emerging findings from our recent, as yet unpublished, thematic inspection of RARs.

Here, the delivery of RAR days was inconsistently recorded, despite guidance being issued to staff. Confusion manifested itself in the delivery of work with service users:

***Poor practice example:** In a 24 month suspended sentence order with 60 RAR days, while the pace of the order was inevitably slow, the one-to-one sessions – which were indistinguishable from supervision sessions – were turning into mere check-in sessions.*

## Meeting the needs of service users

The service users we spoke with generally had a positive view of their experience of probation. They seemed to understand the purpose of supervision and it was evident that they felt their individual circumstances were taken into account. One said:

*“I go to the appointments after work. I know I need to go to them, so I make sure I can. I am working locally at the moment, so it’s not a problem”.*

For some, the experience of supervision had a marked effect on their thinking and lifestyle. One said:

*“I said I wasn’t responsible at the start but now that I’m into it, it has made me realise that the way of life I was living just wasn’t good and needed to change drastically. I start work tomorrow and I haven’t had any drugs for two months. Overall [it’s been] a very good experience”.*

Where new services were being developed, it appeared that they were either not being fully utilised or were not yet available. For example, we found that none of the women service users in our case sample were accessing the provision delivered by Brighter Futures. The CRC is developing an approach to the use of volunteers (through the SOVA contract) and a specific arrangement for the inclusion of a peer mentor approach. We saw no evidence of volunteer involvement in the cases we inspected and the peer mentoring scheme is at an embryonic point in its development in the Staffordshire and Stoke area.

<sup>17</sup> HMI Probation (2016) Quality & Impact inspection: the effectiveness of probation work in Kent.

<sup>18</sup> HMI Probation (2016) Quality & Impact inspection: the effectiveness of probation work in Derbyshire.

## Reviewing progress and impact

We found reviews had been undertaken in less than one-third of cases where this would be reasonably expected. That is not sufficient, in our view. Consequently, plans had been adjusted in accordance with a review in only 6 of the 25 relevant CRC cases inspected.

Most service users in our case sample had not reoffended. We assessed that the greatest impact on potential reoffending was related to work undertaken to address substance misuse.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the CRC to reduce reoffending:

**Table 10**

| Enablers |   | Barriers |   |
|----------|---|----------|---|
| 1.       | The CRC has commissioned bespoke services for women service users (albeit we saw limited use of these in our case sample).                  | 1.       | The new service for women has been in existence since April 2016 and, at the time of the inspection; only five women have participated in the course. |
| 2.       | The accredited programmes delivery team is experienced and stable.  | 2.       | Very few NPS cases access accredited programmes.  |
| 3.       | The CRC has developed a useful suite of non-accredited interventions.   | 3.       | The delivery of non-accredited interventions is perceived as being the responsibility of the responsible officer and they seem to be rarely used.     |
| 4.       | There is a well-established and effectively functioning multi-agency approach to IOM, and to the delivery of DRRs and ATRs.                 | 4.       | The responsible officer is not always monitoring service user progress to the level required to demonstrate effectiveness.                            |
| 5.       | The CRC is developing access to volunteers and peer mentors.  | 5.       | There is some confusion among the staff group concerning the access to volunteer support.   |
| 6.       | The CRC had issued guidance to staff concerning practice and recording of RAR days, so as to improve understanding of the new arrangements. | 6.       | As elsewhere, there was a degree of confusion about the role of RARs.   |

*List of enablers and barriers for the CRC relating to the inspection domain of reducing reoffending.*

The quality of work was generally acceptable, but let down by shortcomings in translating plans into action. Notably, the NPS were not generally using substance misuse and other services available from the CRC.

### Court reporting

In almost all cases inspected, the NPS had produced a PSR which contained a satisfactory analysis of factors relevant to offending.

During our inspection we gathered perspectives from some sentencers, including magistrates, a District Judge and a Resident Judge. During the course of our observations in court, the magistrates commented that oral reports were delivered well and had sound proposals that matched the issues in the cases and were commensurate to the level of seriousness. They felt able to follow most proposals. The Resident Judge indicated that the NPS provided an effective service to court and that the location of an established team in the court house contributed to this.

In observing the preparation of oral reports, one inspector noted:

*“there was good engagement with each of the service users, and care was taken over explaining the court processes and subsequent events. Service users were treated with respect and NPS staff engaged in a courteous and respectful way”.*

### Allocating cases

There were no evident problems with allocation either within the NPS or from the NPS to the CRC. In the sample inspected there were no misallocations apparent. The overall assessment at the point of allocation was deemed sufficient in almost all cases.

### Assessment and planning

There was a mixed picture when the initial work was translated into assessment and planning within the NPS. Planning was found to support relevant protective factors, such as accommodation or employment, in most cases, albeit the plan was deemed sufficient overall in slightly fewer cases. In some instances the practice inspected was of a good standard, as in the following example:



**Good practice example:** In one case, the PSR writer demonstrated a full understanding of the context, thinking and behaviour linked to offending. She considered the risk of harm to relevant children, made a referral to children's social care services, discussed the case with the public protection unit and made sound proposals based on what work had already been completed, what else could work, and the service user's vulnerability.

The OASys assessment was thorough and provided enough information to support effective planning. The sentence plan provided overall direction and set out objectives. Additional specialist assessments were completed and used to aid planning.

There was evidence of carefully reflective work being undertaken:

**Good practice example:** Time had been taken by the PO and the PSO who were co-working the case to understand what had triggered the offence. As a result, the plans were tailored to meet the needs of this female service user. The plan included work to address her response to problems in relationships.

In a smaller number of cases, the assessment and plan was insufficient for the purposes of reducing reoffending, for example:

**Poor practice example:** The OASys assessment was reviewed with one-line updates. It did not reflect the responsible officer's true understanding of issues and it was hard to unpick what the current situation was.

The sentence plan was also pulled through with relevant but very high level objectives - probably too many in this case, as the offender had learning difficulties and found it hard to comply. The responsible officer had identified the need for an objective relating to compliance but had failed to provide enough detail about how to achieve this to make it useful.

## Delivery

We found that sufficient progress had been made in delivering required interventions in only half of the cases sampled.

We assessed that the priority areas for reducing reoffending were: thinking and behaviour; lifestyles and associates; relationships; emotional well-being; drugs; and alcohol. The extent to which these factors were dealt with sufficiently is presented in Table 11.

**Table 11**

| Area of assessed need     | % of cases with sufficient intervention |
|---------------------------|---|
| Thinking and behaviour    | 67%                                     |
| Lifestyles and associates | 67%                                     |
| Relationships             | 36%                                     |
| Emotional well-being      | 50%                                     |
| Drugs                     | 40%                                     |
| Alcohol                   | 80%                                     |

*Sufficiency scores from the inspection findings relating to the most prevalent assessed needs of cases in the NPS inspection sample, listed in priority order.*

We found evidence that service users were accessing the relevant accredited programme in relation to sexual offending, but with delays of up to nine months from the start of supervision due to a waiting list. Where these were being undertaken, or had been completed, the impact was assessed by the inspectors to be generally positive. In some cases the need to adopt offence prevention rather than rehabilitative work was appropriately to the fore.

The predominant method of intervention was one-to-one work with the responsible officer. There were a number of cases in which this approach was seen to be effective, with tangible outcomes associated with the work undertaken, as in the following example:

***Good practice example:*** *In the years leading up to his incarceration, Roderick had been estranged from his family and was sofa-surfing at the homes of his peer group. They operated as a group, consumed excessive amounts of drugs and alcohol, and were increasingly becoming involved in violent offences against members of the public. Roderick had not been in employment and had little positive structure to his life.*

*The responsible officer quickly helped Roderick to understand the boundaries, expectations and potential benefits of supervision. He responded well. He moved away from his old area and found accommodation with his father. The influence of family and the responsible officer helped him to make decisions about his goals for the future and the steps to be taken to realise those goals. He responded well to positive feedback on the progress he made.*

*As he approached the end of the period of supervision, he had found settled accommodation and employment, and had ceased problematic drug and alcohol misuse. He was in a supportive relationship and had not reoffended. He was optimistic about not returning to his previous lifestyle.*

Clear progress was also made in the case of an indeterminate sentence prisoner being managed on a life licence:

**Good practice example:** *Benson has a degenerative terminal illness and a history of violence, linked to alcohol and drugs misuse.*

*The responsible officer planned an engagement approach which put him at the centre of the process. She and her colleagues also focused on the positive things he was doing. This approach worked, and he changed from being reluctant to engage with staff to participating fully in supervision.*

*He re-established himself in the community and found employment. At the time of the inspection, he was living with his partner and his attitudes and behaviour had improved significantly. He had not reoffended.*

Where emotional well-being issues were evident, there was good use of a partnership approach with the CJMH team whose services were available at all points of the criminal justice process. In respect of personality disordered service users, there was a well-developed approach through partnership with the NHS:

**Good practice example:** *The responsible officer worked well with the CJMH team, co-working the case to continually assess issues and whether her approach was an effective one, and to adapt to the needs of the case. She used a strategic, long-term, constructive approach but challenged firmly where appropriate, investing a considerable amount of time in intense sessions with the service user.*

Where substance misuse issues were identified and interventions delivered, this was dealt with by individual work with the responsible officer. There was no evidence of a structured approach to the delivery of alcohol-related interventions, and limited evidence of referral to specialist substance misuse agencies.

In our case sample we did not find evidence of any work being delivered to an NPS service user by the CRC, other than unpaid work requirements. This was of concern, and particularly worrying in relation to the BBR programme for those convicted of domestic abuse. From CRC performance information we were able to identify small numbers of NPS service users undertaking and completing the BBR programme. It was evident that the CRC was seeking to deliver a number of interventions which would have relevance to the areas of need identified.

### Rehabilitation activity requirements

Court staff did not appear to be confident about the services provided by the CRCs, especially via RAR. While this is reflected nationally, we found little or no use of RARs in the sample inspected. The only clear explanation of this came from a court team who indicated that PSR authors were more likely to recommend accredited programmes rather than confuse themselves and the courts by suggesting RARs in court reports.

## Meeting the needs of service users

During the process of inspection we were only able to contact seven NPS service users. The response to working with the NPS was, nonetheless, invariably positive; for example one service user said:

*“My PO is very reliable. We always fix times that I can make. She is flexible if I need to swap things, due to my job”.*

While we generally assessed the work as responsive to individual needs, in one case we were disappointed to find the particular needs of a young person with Special Educational Needs were not taken into account.

## Reviewing progress

We found that two-thirds of the cases had been appropriately reviewed, yet the sentence plan was adjusted in order that outcomes could be achieved in only half of those cases. The following demonstrates the benefits of reviewing well:

*Good practice example: A review was needed - and undertaken - when Gloria entered into a new relationship and again when the police were called out to the address due to a domestic dispute. The review was used to discuss the incident and then put new plans in place to help her deal with problems.*

## Impact and potential impact

Most service users in the sample had not gone on to commit further offences and in our assessment the greatest impact on likelihood of reoffending was in relation to alcohol misuse, thinking and behaviour, lifestyles and associates, and relationships.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the NPS to reduce reoffending.

**Table 12**

| Enablers |   | Barriers |   |
|----------|---|----------|---|
| 1.       | There was a high degree of continuity of supervising officer.                       | 1.       | Access arrangements to CRC interventions were poorly understood.                            |
| 2.       | Almost all cases had the benefit of a good initial assessment in the form of a PSR. | 2.       | There was limited use of partner agencies in addressing identified needs.                   |
| 3.       | The NPS had the confidence of sentencers.   | 3.       | Court staff were not confident about the services provided by the CRCs, especially via RAR. |

*List of enablers and barriers for the NPS relating to the inspection domain of reducing reoffending.*

## The CRC and NPS working together

Working relationships between the CRC and NPS were positive.

At a senior management level there is continued investment of time in the range of partnership activities required of those delivering probation services. The senior manager for the CRC, for example, chairs an Offender Management and Resettlement sub-group of a commissioning group led by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

We were pleased to see that the CRC and NPS had been able to influence the commissioning of substance misuse interventions in order that both DRR and ATR services were available to service users subject to community orders. There was good evidence of access to treatment services on a non-statutory basis where this was required. In our experience, such arrangements are rare in the post-*Transforming Rehabilitation* era.

It is also pleasing to note that the CRC and NPS have both maintained a resource commitment to the delivery of IOM, both organisations having staff based in the co-located police facility, or at least maintaining active links with IOM team processes.

It was of concern, however, that the NPS's active collaboration with the CJMH team to address mental health issues with service users was not evident in the CRC.

The following table identifies the key enablers to the work of the CRC and NPS working together to reduce reoffending. There were no identified barriers to this work.

**Table 13**

| Enablers |   |
|----------|---|
| 1.       | There was good evidence of partnership working between both organisations and with the police and local authorities through the Offender Management, Resettlement and Rehabilitation sub-group that feeds into the Police and Crime Commissioner-led Offender Management Commissioning and Development Board. |
| 2.       | Both the CRC and NPS had maintained a commitment to IOM.  |
| 3.       | The maintenance of access to DRR and ATR interventions commissioned by Public Health was both unusual and positive.   |

*List of enablers for the CRC and NPS working together relating to the inspection domain of reducing reoffending.*

# Abiding by the sentence

## CRC effectiveness

Overall, the quality of work was good. Most CRC service users abided by the conditions of their sentence, or where they did not, appropriate enforcement action was taken.

### Delivery

Information about the individual service user provided by the NPS to the CRC at the point of allocation was sufficient in almost all cases inspected. In relation to assessment, planning and the delivery of interventions we found that the service user's individual circumstances were appropriately taken into account in most cases. In those cases in which reviews were required and undertaken, there was evidence of good understanding of the diverse needs of the service user.

In many circumstances, the responsible officer demonstrated flexibility and retained a good sense of purpose concerning the delivery of the sentence of the court, as in the following example:

***Good practice example:** Tarquin has health needs and had also suffered a number of family bereavements. The responsible officer accommodated these appropriately by offering further appointments to make sure the requirements of the order are met.*

This is further illustrated in the flexible use of home visits:

***Good practice example:** One barrier in June's case was her lack of funds and so home visits were undertaken to engage her. This included joint visits with partner agencies.*

There were, however, a small number of cases in which supervision was disrupted, as the following case illustrates:

***Poor practice example:** At the start of the order there was reasonable work attempted to address Wayne's offending issues. This included reporting Wayne as a victim of hate crime, and liaison with the local police. The responsible officer then began a lengthy period of absence due to sickness.*

*There was a delay in reallocating the case. In practice, this meant Wayne was not seen from March until mid July, with no active interventions delivered for six months.*

*The new responsible officer had picked up the case and had re-engaged with Wayne. Given that Wayne had mental health problems, this had been difficult, and he continued to present very real vulnerabilities associated with his mental health.*

In most cases we judged that sufficient progress had been made in delivering the sentence of the court and that contact levels were sufficient for the needs of the case. Similarly, we found that absences or non-compliance were appropriately dealt with through enforcement processes, including breach or revocation of licence where necessary and appropriate.

There were examples of significant effort being made to support compliance with the sentence:

**Good practice example:** Francis, aged 51 years old, has a 40 year history of offending with offences including burglary, theft, drug-related offending, assault, fraud and arson. Francis also has a history of non-compliance and significant health problems.

While there have been several failures to attend, these have been responded to appropriately by the responsible officer. A range of methods have been employed including the use of warnings, offering catch-up appointments and home visits.

The responsible officer has secured remarkable compliance, with Francis participating in additional appointments when necessary and engaging well with rehabilitative programmes such as DRR. This compliance is reinforced with regular court reviews in respect of the DRR.

## Unpaid work

The CRC maintains a good standard of unpaid work provision and, indeed, the vision expressed within *Our Plan to Change Lives* seeks to place ETE at the heart of the scheme. Through this approach the CRC is seeking to make the best use of the time spent undertaking this sentence of the court.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the CRC gaining compliance of individuals with their sentence:

**Table 14**

| Enablers |  | Barriers |   |
|----------|--|----------|---|
| 1.       | Responsible officers generally demonstrated a good understanding of the diverse needs of service users.  | 1.       | The extent of organisational change has disrupted some aspects of service delivery. Staff departures and sickness absence have led to poor reporting arrangements for some of the cases in the inspection sample. |
| 2.       | The team of experienced unpaid work staff were able to maintain a flexible approach to delivering unpaid work with a range of placements able meet the diverse needs of service users. | 2.       | Many of the plans to improve services in areas such as unpaid work, non-accredited programmes, and involvement of volunteers or peer mentors are not consistently embedded into practice.                         |

List of enablers and barriers for the CRC relating to the inspection domain of abiding by the sentence.

## NPS effectiveness

Overall, the quality of work was good. Most service users abided by the conditions of their sentence, or where they did not, appropriate enforcement action was taken.

We found that individuals' diverse needs were taken into account in most cases leading to a good level of responsivity in relation to planning, supervision and interventions. There were examples of determined work being undertaken by the responsible officer which aided compliance, as in the following example:

**Good practice example:** *The responsible officer saw Benson (mentioned earlier) for regular, long supervision sessions. She struck the right balance between support and managing the risk of harm and the likelihood of Benson reoffending. She was patient and showed an interest in him, and was not deterred by his continued challenges and frustrated aspirations.*

## Delivery

In most cases inspected, the service user abided by the sentence, with enforcement action used to secure compliance when this was appropriate. Where compliance could not be secured we found that breach and recall were used appropriately.



We also found that in most cases the number of contacts offered was sufficient for the needs of the case; that most failures to comply were dealt with appropriately and that sufficient progress had mostly been made in delivering the requirements of the order or licence.

The following table identifies the key enablers to the NPS gaining the compliance of individuals with their sentence. There were no identified barriers to this work.

**Table 15**

| Enablers |  |
|----------|--|
| 1.       | Positive working relationships were evident between NPS staff and court personnel.   |
| 2.       | Staff understood and consistently responded to service user diversity of need.   |
| 3.       | The involvement of partner agencies in managing risk of harm cases through MAPPA was generally a support to maintaining engagement and compliance. |

*List of enablers for the NPS relating to the inspection domain of abiding by the sentence.*

## The CRC and NPS working together

As organisational changes have occurred in the CRC, there has been some disruption of service. While efforts have been made to communicate the planned changes, this has not always permitted staff to operate effectively, as illustrated by the following example in relation to the recent introduction (in September 2016) of the CSC:

***Poor practice example:** NPS staff have problems in communicating with CRC staff. They have to go through a call centre (the CSC), but often staff at the CSC do not know who does what in the CRC. In a recent example, a member of the NPS court team was put on hold for 15 minutes, only to be told (eventually) that the person they needed to speak to was not at their desk. This call concerned programme availability for sentencing and the court staff could not give the court the information they wanted.*

## Enforcement

The only concerns raised in relation to enforcement practice came from magistrates who offered the view that:

*“while breach arrangements seem to be working well, magistrates have noticed that, in some CRC cases, the number of acceptable absences seen in cases seem to be growing”.*

In our inspection sample we found that in most of the cases the levels of contact and the management of both acceptable and unacceptable absences was appropriate.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the CRC and NPS working together to gain compliance of individuals with their sentence:

**Table 16**

| Enablers |   | Barriers |  |
|----------|---|----------|--|
| 1.       | There were effective channels of communication between CRC and NPS staff at a management level. | 1.       | New business practices, such as the introduction of the CSC, may prove disruptive to key business processes within the NPS, particularly at court. |
|          |   | 2.       | There were limited opportunities for the CRC to inform sentencers concerning the work it delivers.   |

*List of enablers for the CRC and NPS working together relating to the inspection domain of abiding by the sentence.*

# Appendices

- 1: Inspection methodology
- 2: Background data
- 3: Data analysis from inspected cases
- 4: Glossary
- 5: Acknowledgements

## Appendix 1: Inspection methodology

HMI Probation's Quality & Impact programme commenced in April 2016, and has been designed to examine probation work in discrete geographical areas, equivalent to a police/Police and Crime Commissioner area, regardless of who delivers the work. We are interested in the work of both the CRC and the NPS, together with the contribution of any partners working with these organisations.

An inspection team visited the area for two full weeks. In the first week, we inspected a pre-determined number of cases (community orders, suspended sentence orders, and licences) of individuals sentenced or released from prison about nine months previously. These cases may not have been fully representative of all the eligible cases, but so far as possible we made sure that the proportions matched in terms of (i) gender, (ii) ethnicity, (iii) sentence type and (iv) office location – with minimum numbers set for (i) and (ii). Cases were also selected from the full range of risk of serious harm and likelihood of reoffending levels, and from as many responsible officers as possible. In Staffordshire and Stoke, the sample consisted of 61 cases, 40 of which were CRC cases and 21 of which were NPS cases.

The team then returned three weeks later to follow up issues that had emerged in the first week, and spoke with over 60 key staff, 23 managers, 3 magistrates, 2 Judges and staff from 6 different partnerships. We attempted to speak with those service users who provided their consent to being contacted. In this inspection, we spoke with 29 service users, 22 from the CRC and 7 from the NPS whose cases we inspected or who were attending specific interventions.

The inspection focused on assessing how the quality of practice contributed to achieving positive outcomes for service users, and evaluating what encouraging impact had been achieved. Inspectors were mindful that current impact could provide evidence of progress towards long-term desistance. In particular, we were seeking to report on whether the work undertaken was likely to lead to reduced reoffending, the public were protected from harm and individuals had abided by their sentence.

Information on the Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice can be found on our website:

<http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-hmi-probation/>

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

HM Chief Inspector of Probation  
1st Floor, Manchester Civil Justice Centre  
1 Bridge Street West  
Manchester, M3 3FX

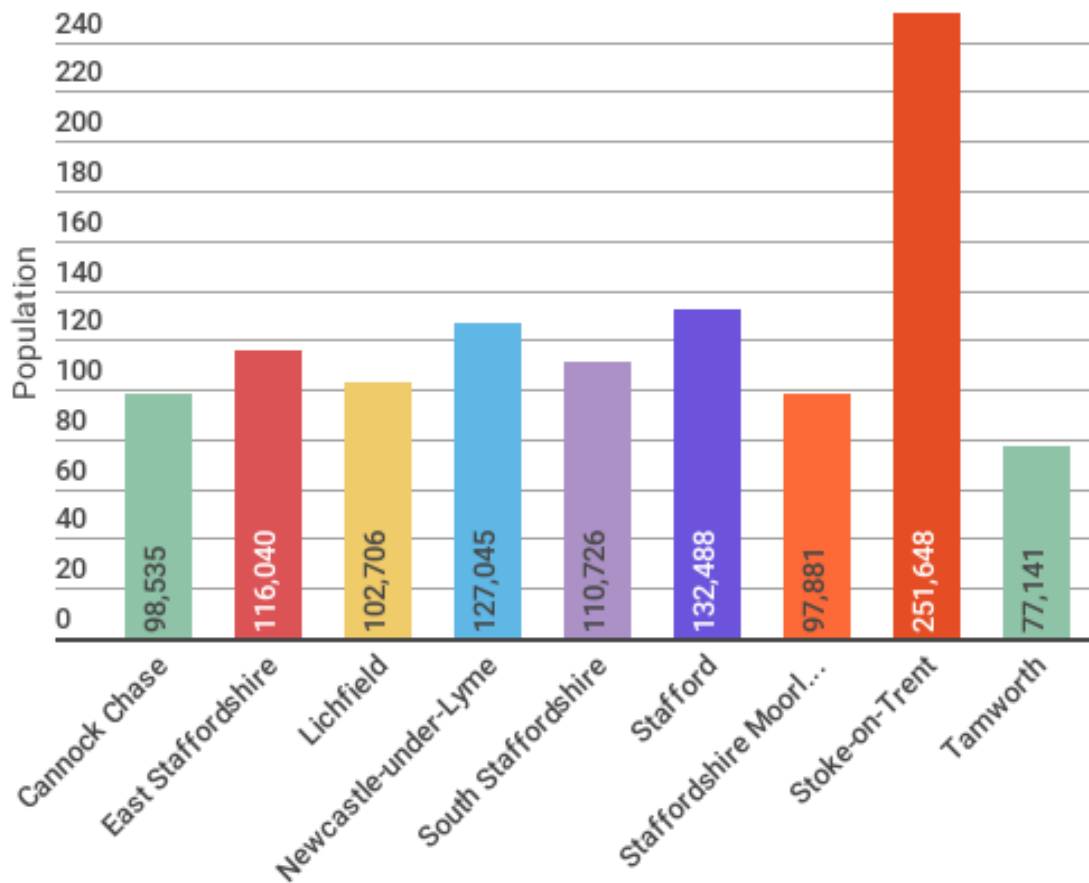
## Appendix 2: Background data

This inspection covers Staffordshire County Council comprising the eight districts of Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, South Staffordshire, Stafford, Staffordshire Moorlands, and Tamworth plus the unitary authority of Stoke-on-Trent.

### Population demographics

The population of Staffordshire (including Stoke-on-Trent) was estimated at 1,114,210 in 2015.

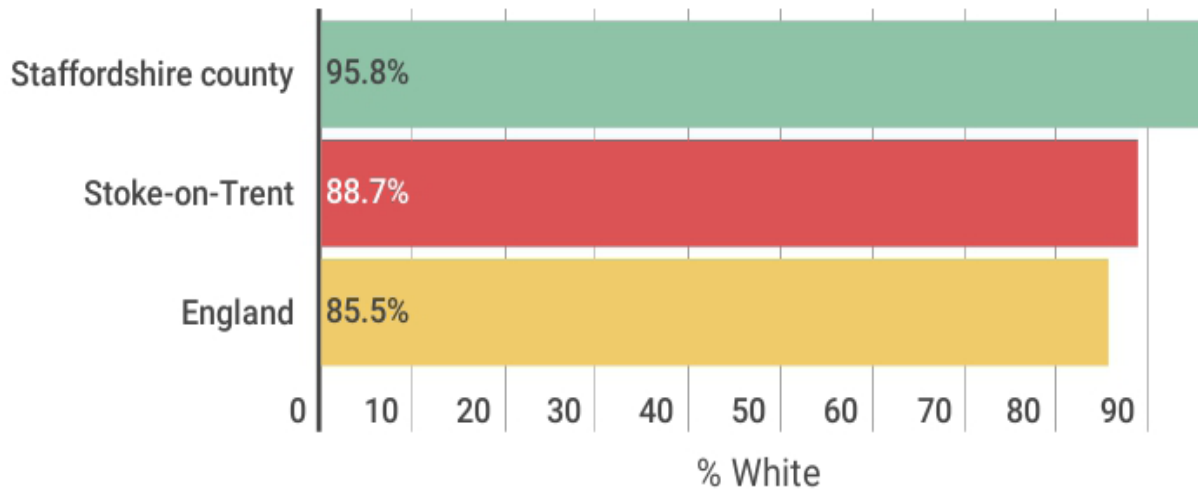
**Figure 2.1: Population estimate, mid-2015**



Source: Office for National Statistics, June 2015

4% of Staffordshire residents are of Black and Minority Ethnic heritage compared to the England average of 14%. Stoke-on-Trent is more diverse with 11% of residents from BME communities.

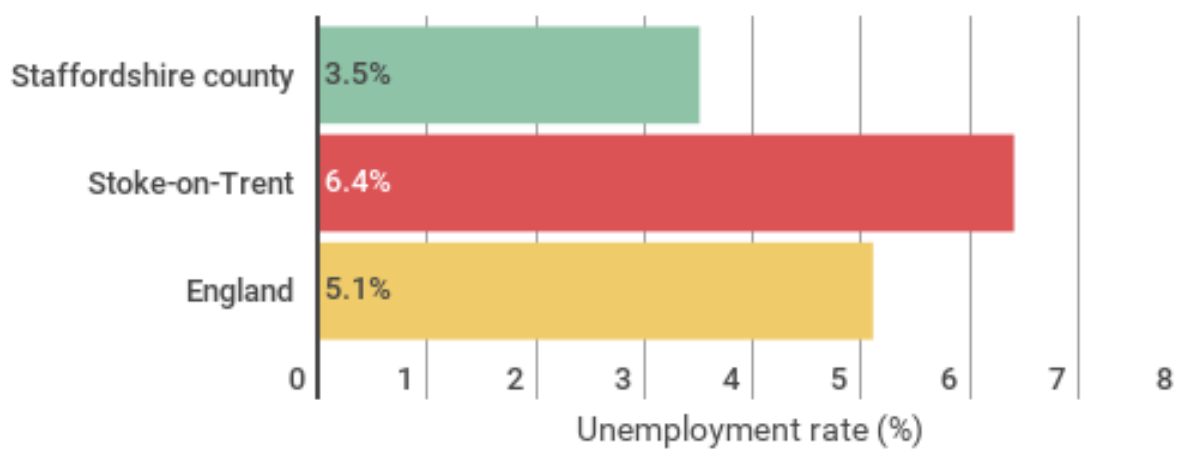
**Figure 2.2: Ethnicity in Staffordshire, 2011 census**



### Levels of deprivation and crime

As shown by Figure 2.3, unemployment in Staffordshire is lower than the England average, while Stoke-on-Trent experiences higher than average unemployment levels.

**Figure 2.3: Unemployment in Staffordshire, April 2015–March 2016**

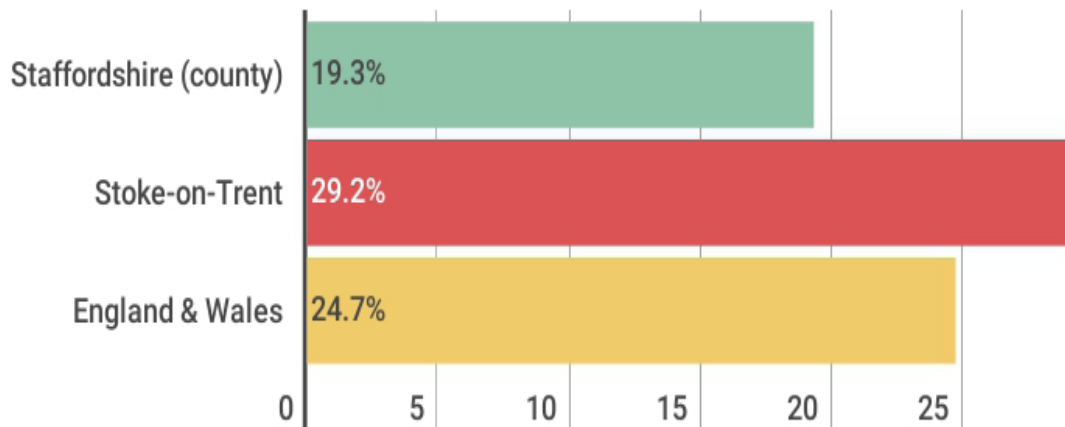


Source: Office for National Statistics, July 2016

## Levels of reoffending

Reoffending rates for Staffordshire are set out in Figure 2.4, based upon adult offenders who were released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court or received a caution in the period October 2013 to September 2014 (i.e. not just those who were released from custody).

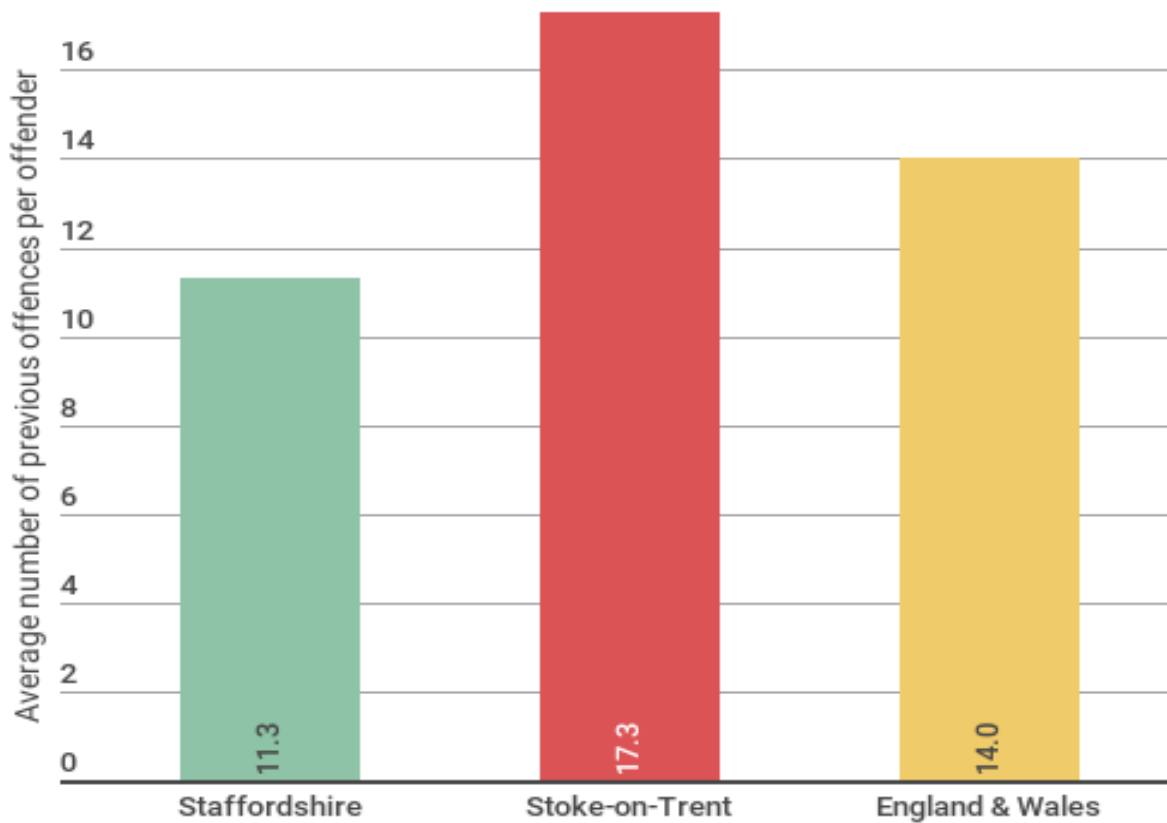
**Figure 2.4: Reoffending rate in Staffordshire, October 2013-September 2014**



*Source: Ministry of Justice, July 2016*

There were 11 previous offences on average for the Staffordshire offender cohort and 17 for the Stoke-on-Trent cohort. The England & Wales average was 14 (see Figure 2.5).

**Figure 2.5: Offending histories in Staffordshire, October 2013-September 2014**



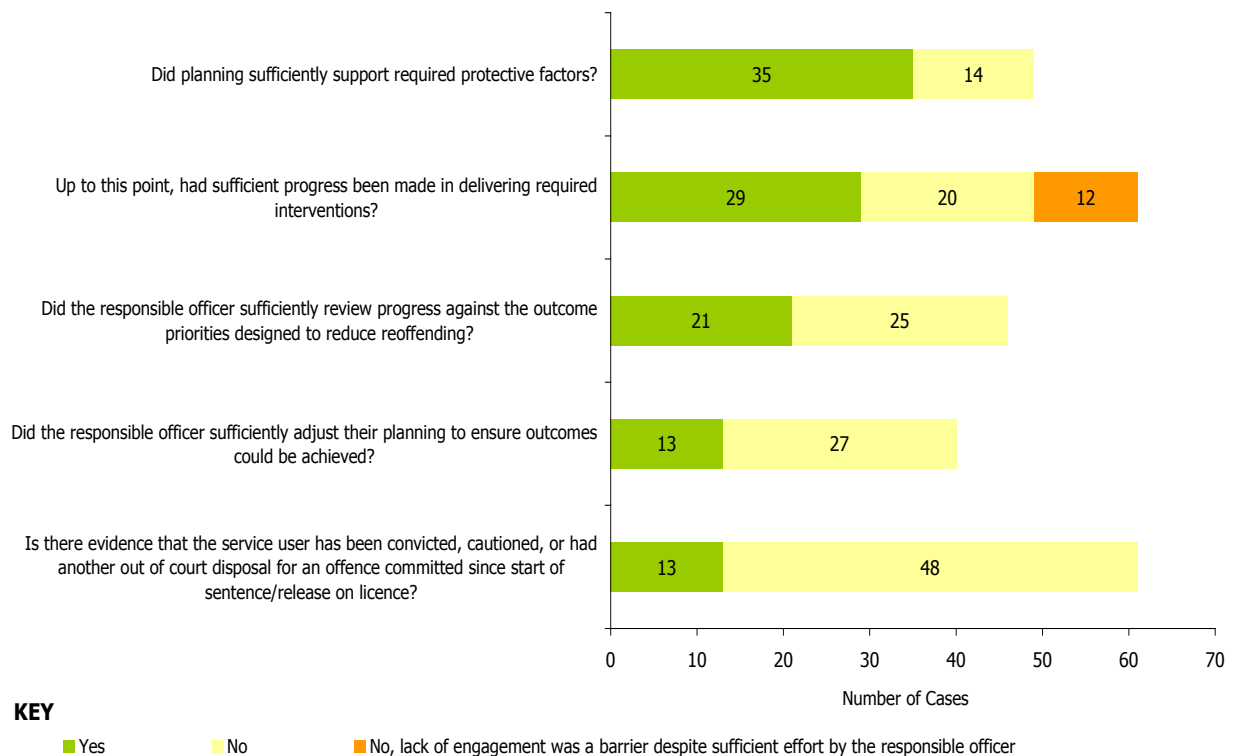
*Source: Ministry of Justice, July 2016*



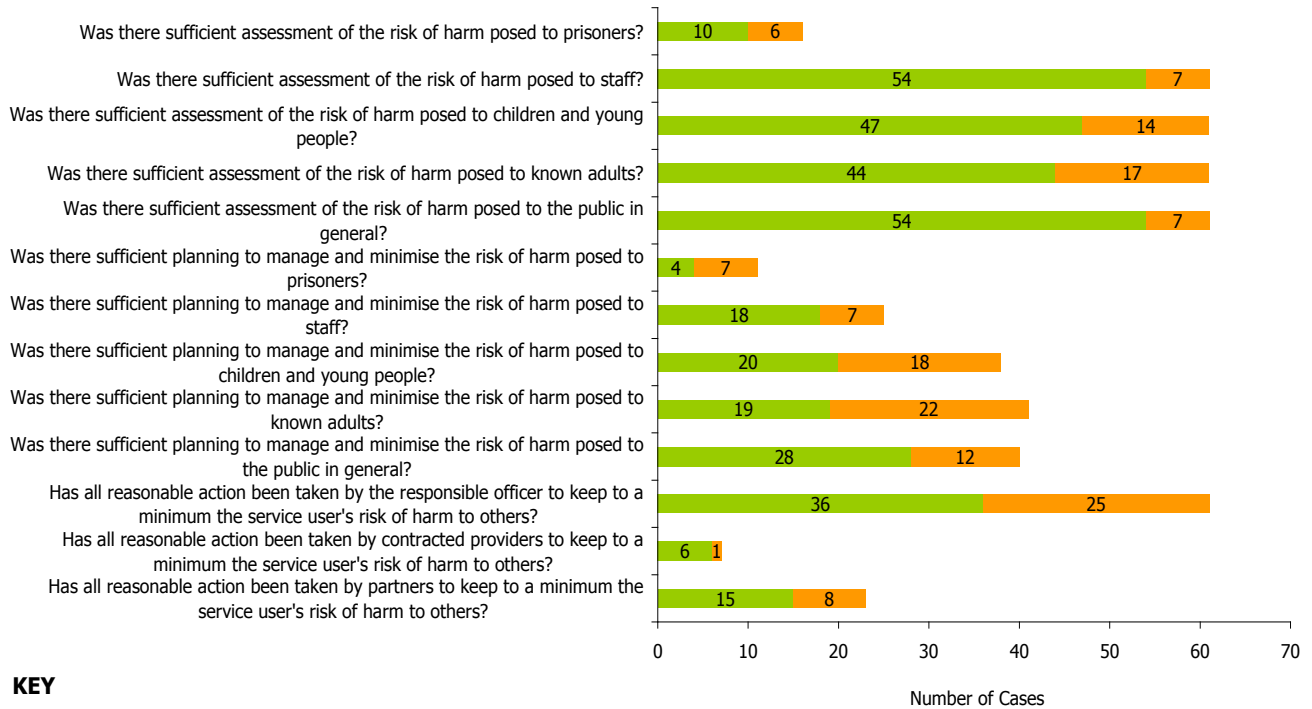
## Appendix 3: Data analysis from inspected cases

These charts illustrate key findings from relevant practice inspection cases. These are combined figures for the area as a whole (not separate CRC and NPS figures) due to the small numbers involved. These charts show absolute numbers rather than percentages. The size of the bar chart segments provides an idea of proportion, while the number gives an idea of how large the sample was.

**Figure 3.1: Reducing Reoffending**



**Figure 3.2: Public Protection**

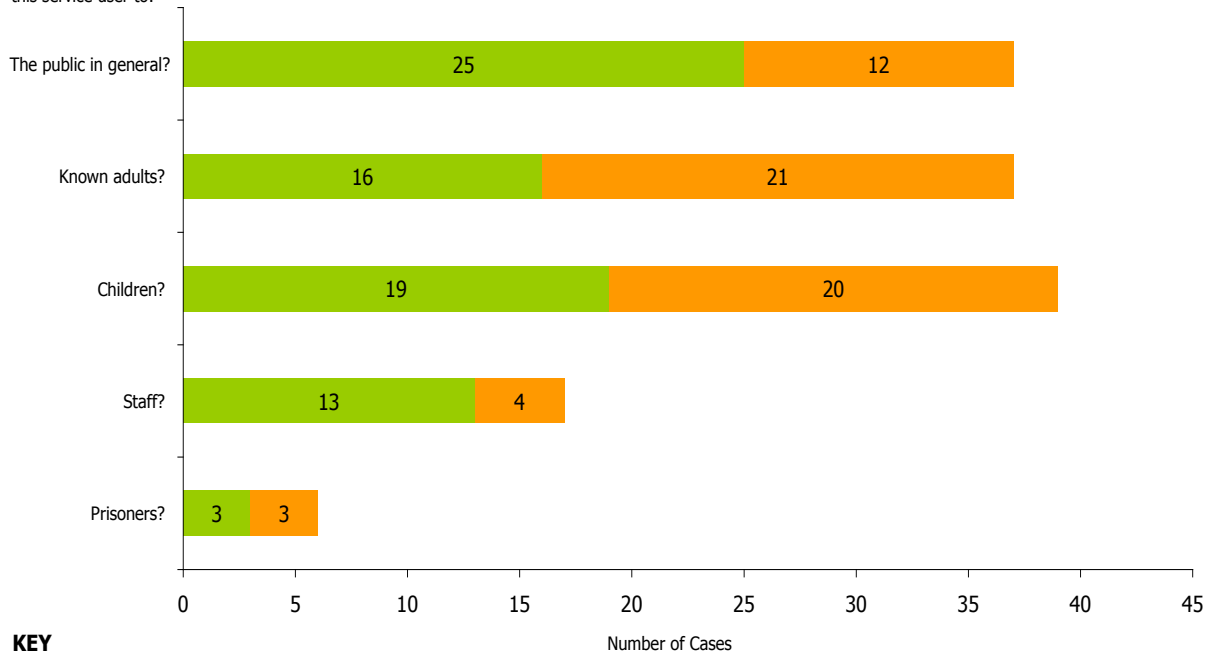


**KEY**

■ Yes    ■ No

**Figure 3.3: Public Protection**

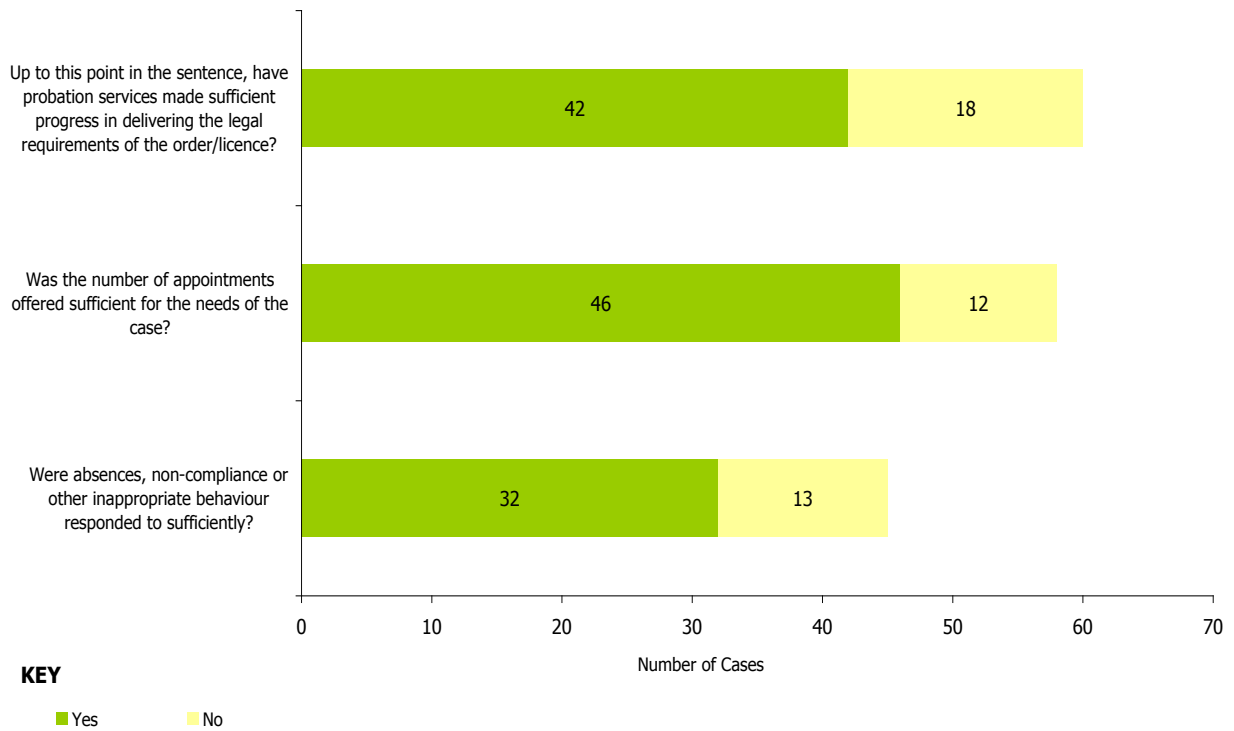
Up to this point in the order/licence, has the responsible officer made sufficient progress in influencing the risk of harm posed by this service user to:



**KEY**

■ Yes    ■ No

**Figure 3.4: Abiding by the Sentence**



## Appendix 4: Glossary

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ATR                              | Alcohol Treatment Requirement: a requirement that a court may attach to a community order or a suspended sentence order aimed at tackling alcohol abuse   |
| Allocation                       | The process by which a decision is made about whether an offender will be supervised by a CRC or the NPS  |
| Active Risk Management System    | Provides a framework for working with all male sexual offenders who are subject to statutory supervision. It aids the assessment of dynamic risk and protective factors (see Probation Instruction 15/2015 for more information)  |
| BBR                              | Building Better Relationships: a nationally accredited groupwork programme designed to reduce reoffending by adult male perpetrators of intimate partner violence   |
| CRC                              | Community Rehabilitation Company: 21 such companies were set up in June 2014, to manage most offenders who present a low or medium risk of serious harm   |
| Desistance                       | The cessation of offending or other antisocial behaviour  |
| Drink Impaired Drivers Programme | A nationally accredited programme which aims to confront offenders with issues related to drinking and driving  |
| DRR                              | Drug Rehabilitation Requirement: a requirement that a court may attach to a community order or a suspended sentence order aimed at tackling drugs misuse  |
| E3                               | E3 stands for 'Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Excellence'. The E3 programme was created following the <i>Transforming Rehabilitation</i> programme in June 2014. The basic principle is to standardise NPS delivery, redesigning the NPS structure with six key areas of focus, including: community supervision; court services; custody; youth offending services; victim services; and approved premises |
| ETE                              | Education, training and employment: work to improve an individual's learning, and to increase their employment prospects  |
| IOM                              | Integrated Offender Management: brings a cross-agency response to the crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together   |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| MAPPA     | Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where probation, police, prison and other agencies work together locally to manage offenders who pose a higher risk of harm to others. Level 1 is ordinary agency management where the risks posed by the offender can be managed by the agency responsible for the supervision or case management of the offender. This compares with Levels 2 and 3, which require active multi-agency management |
| MoJ       | Ministry of Justice  |
| nDelius   | National Delius: the approved case management system used by the NPS and CRCs in England and Wales   |
| NOMS      | National Offender Management Service: the single agency responsible for both prisons and probation services  |
| NPS       | National Probation Service: a single national service which came into being in June 2014. Its role is to deliver services to courts and to manage specific groups of offenders, including those presenting a high or very high risk of serious harm and those subject to MAPPA   |
| OASys     | Offender assessment system currently used in England and Wales by the NPS and CRCs to measure the risks and needs of offenders under supervision   |
| ORA       | <i>Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014</i> : implemented in February 2015, applying to offences committed on or after that date, the <i>Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014</i> is the Act of Parliament that accompanied the <i>Transforming Rehabilitation</i> programme   |
| Partners  | Partners include statutory and non-statutory organisations, working with the offender, often through a partnership agreement with the NPS or CRC   |
| Providers | Providers deliver a service or input commissioned by and provided under contract to the NPS or CRC. This includes the staff and services provided under the contract, even when they are integrated or located within the NPS or CRC   |
| PSR       | Pre-sentence report: This refers to any report prepared for a court, whether delivered orally or in a written format   |
| PO        | Probation officer: this is the term for a qualified responsible officer who has undertaken a higher education-based course for two years. The name of the qualification and content of the training varies depending on when it was undertaken. They manage more complex cases   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| PSO   | Probation services officer: this is the term for a responsible officer who was originally recruited with no probation qualification. They may access locally determined training to qualify as a probation services officer or to build on this to qualify as a probation officer. They may manage all but the most complex cases depending on their level of training and experience. Some PSOs work within the court setting, where their duties include the writing of pre-sentence reports  |
| Rate card   | Offending behaviour services offered by the CRC for use by the NPS with their service users, for example, accredited programmes   |
| RAR   | Rehabilitation Activity Requirement: From February 2015, when the <i>Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014</i> was implemented, courts can specify a number of RAR days within an order; it is for probation services to decide on the precise work to be done during the RAR days awarded   |
| Responsible officer                               | The term used for the officer (previously entitled 'offender manager') who holds lead responsibility for managing a case  |
| Sexual harm prevention order                      | Replaced sexual offence prevention orders through an amendment to the <i>Sexual Offences Act 2003</i> by the <i>Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014</i> . It is a civil measure available to the court when it convicts a person of a sexual offence, or on the application of the police in respect of a person who has previously been dealt with for such an offence. The order places restrictions on the person subject to the order and triggers notification requirements |
| SFO   | Serious Further Offence: where a service user subject to (or recently subject to) probation commits one of a number of serious offences (such as murder, manslaughter, rape etc.). The NPS must notify NOMS of any such individual charged with one of these offences. A review is then conducted with a view to identifying lessons learned  |
| Structured Intervention to Address Domestic Abuse | A non-accredited programme to tackle this type of offending   |
| SSO   | Suspended sentence Order: A custodial sentence that is suspended and carried out in the community   |
| Thinking Skills Programme                         | An accredited group programme designed to develop an offender's thinking skills to help them stay out of trouble  |

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Third sector                       | The third sector includes voluntary and community organisations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives |
| Through the Gate                   | Through the Gate services are designed to help those sentenced to more than one day in prison to settle back into the community upon release and receive rehabilitation support so they can turn their lives around            |
| <i>Transforming Rehabilitation</i> | The government's programme for how offenders are managed in England and Wales from June 2014   |

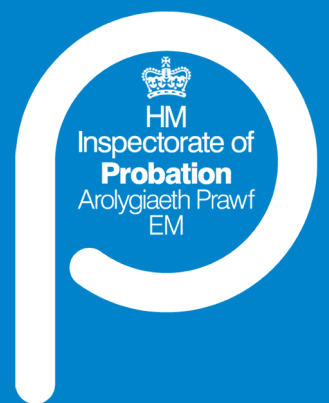
## Appendix 5: Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all those who took part in this inspection; without their cooperation, the inspection would not have been possible.

We would like, in particular, to thank the senior managers and their personal/executive assistants for facilitating the inspection and making the necessary arrangements for the fieldwork weeks.

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ISBN: 978-1-84099-771-2