

Sir Bob Neill MP
Chair of the Justice Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

15 March 2021

Dear Bob,

PUBLICATION OF HMI PROBATION THEMATIC REPORT

I am writing to let you know that Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Probation (HMCIP) is publishing a thematic report on Race Equality in Probation: The experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic probation service users and staff tomorrow, 16 March. A copy of the report can be found at <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections>.

The report highlights a number of areas of concern, for example a lack of diversity in Probation Service management, a culture of dismissing discrimination complaints, and poor practice in addressing issues of culture, religion and ethnicity with offenders. It contains case studies detailing negative experiences from both offenders and staff.

The report also recognises the attention Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and the National Probation Service are currently paying to this issue. It notes that since last summer, senior probation leaders have listened to the perspectives of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and have launched HMPPS's Race Action Programme. Additional funding has also been made available to support the development of organisations providing specific support to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic offenders and work is about to start to improve the quality of pre-sentence reports for this group and remove potential bias.

I recognise that more needs to be done to improve the experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic offenders and probation staff and the findings outlined in this review are invaluable in helping us understand and respond to their needs. The findings of this report will be shared with leadership and management teams within MoJ and HMPPS, as well as with our partner agencies that deliver probation services, which will help inform further thinking to the Race Action Programme.

HMPPS will publish a full action plan responding to the recommendations made in the report in April 2021 on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely,



ALEX CHALK MP