

Written evidence from Napo the Professional Association and Trade Union for Probation and Family Court Staff

Question 2 - The new model aims to strengthen integration between prisons and probation by integrating through the gate roles, processes and products with sentence management. What is your view on this and do you anticipate any gaps?

Responses:

- Through the gate has not worked in the past - a lot more work needs to be carried out to make it effective.
- I think it is a good idea and will offer more opportunities for staff.

Question 3 - How can the NPS ensure that it maintains the innovation and best practice achieved during Transforming Rehabilitation reforms?

Responses:

- Hand the cases in prison back to probation officers in the community as they were before so that work is done for release by trained professionals who complete the work and don't lock it off to simply tick a box with nothing in it.
- Keep the partnership working achieved by CRCs in place.
- By having productive dialogue regarding what works. MTC has, to be fair, worked hard to raise standards.

Question 4 - CRC and NPS staff are being brought back together under the new model. In your view how is this transition being managed?

Responses:

Lots of unknowns at the moment so it is hard to comment. I think CRCs are more in the dark than NPS colleagues, as all communications regarding the transition are coming from the NPS and many of the links on the documents the CRC staff can't access as we are not on the system.

Poorly so far. Despite less than a year to go information is not being shared so staff know what to expect. Lack of confidence in transition plans.

Question 5 - What support is being offered to you by your current organisation?

Responses:

Emails from Napo.

Question 6 - How are probation clients being supported through transition by your current organisation?

Responses:

- I don't believe they are being supported as yet. Staff don't really know what's going on with the transition so it's difficult to support the Clients

- They aren't being told anything and staff have no information to share as we are in the dark.

Question 7 - In your view what is the most significant impact of Covid-19 on probation?

Responses:

- The immediate impact and the anticipated long- term impact. The most significant impact is that the service has seen that they can trust their staff to work effectively from home. This trust was lacking before. It has also reduced the stress of travel and improved work life balance and for me, it has resulted in me being happier.
- With regards to service users, they have been more open during contact and we are all aware of our own vulnerabilities. In the longer term it is hoped that remote working will continue as it has been beneficial to the service and service users.
- Working more from home - not being able to have face to face with service users – Covid-19 within NPS has been all about ticking boxes - dotting the Is and crossing the Ts.
- Proven ability that staff can work from home more often. However, there is a significant impact in the courts in terms of adjournments for breaches. Unpaid Work and Programmes also have a significant backlog which will further impact the court when Offender Managers have to apply for extensions of orders.

16 September 2020