

## **COMMUNITY JUSTICE FILES 32**

*Edited by Nick Flynn, De Montfort University*

### **Joint inspection of Integrated Offender Management**

A new joint report by HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary on the Integrated Offender Management approach to reducing reoffending has found that of the six areas and 108 cases inspected, “not all areas had embraced Integrated Offender Management in an effective way” (9). Given Integrated Offender Management is premised on local partner organisations working closely together to reduce crime committed by high risk offenders, the report raises key concerns about “differing degrees of commitment to the approach among the relevant agencies”. In those areas in particular where probation trusts had not committed sufficient resources, the police had been left to deliver both control and rehabilitative functions when “their principal role should be gathering and disseminating intelligence and enforcement”. As a consequence, “the characteristics of the approach, and the nature of the offenders managed under it, vary significantly from place to place” (9).

Another critical issue raised was the lack of a structured and systematic approach to evaluation. While most areas had attempted to measure outcomes and assess overall effectiveness of Integrated Offender Management “all had used different methodologies and none were statistically sophisticated” (9). Despite these criticisms, the report did identify some achievements of the Integrated Offender Management approach. The right offenders were being targeted, and Improvements had been made to their lives on such issues as substance abuse. Moreover, although reoffending rates were disappointingly high (60% of the sample of offenders included in the inspection had been breached or reconvicted) this was considered “symptomatic of the entrenched pattern of offending among the Integrated Management cohort, rather than as a failure of the approach itself”. Nevertheless, the overall effectiveness of Integrated Offender Management remains unproven. In the forward to the report, the Chief Inspectors of Probation and Constabulary conclude that:

*...the absence of clear evidence of effectiveness in terms of both crime reduction and reducing reoffending inhibits understanding of its impact and value. If the evidence showed that Integrated Offender Management was successful in reducing crime and reoffending, there would be a strong case*

*for further investment. If not, a rethink would be needed. We think that the Integrated Offender Management approach has real potential; however, the in absence of robust evidence to support this, we cannot make a firm recommendation either way”.*

A Joint Inspection of the Integrated Offender Management Approach, A Joint Inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (March 2014), HM Inspectorate of Probation can be found at:

<https://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/publications/inspectorate-reports/hmiprobation/integrated-offender-management-report.pdf>

## **Criminal Justice and Courts Bill**

On 5 February 2014, the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill was presented to Parliament. According to the Justice Secretary, Chris Grayling, the reforms are intended to:

*“deliver a tough package of sentencing measures to make sure offenders are punished properly and consistently, so that the law-abiding majority know that we’re making the changes needed to keep them and their families safe. I also want to make sure we reduce the burden on hardworking taxpayers of the costs of running the courts.”*

*Inter alia*, the reforms include:

- A new sentence of up to two years for offenders who are recalled to custody while serving the non-custodial element of their sentence but do not surrender to custody;
- The ending of Automatic Early Release for certain offenders including those on Extended Determinant Sentences;
- A reduction in the number of cautions for Serious and Repeat Offenders, and the removal of second cautions for less serious offenders who commit the same, or similar, offences within a two year period;
- The charging of all adult offenders for court costs at the point of their conviction;
- The introduction of ‘secure colleges’ into the young offenders prison estate. This follows the announcement of a pathfinder secure college to be opened in 2017.

The Criminal Justice and Courts Bill completed its committee stage on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. It can be found at:

[http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2013-2014/0192/cbill\\_2013-20140192\\_en\\_1.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2013-2014/0192/cbill_2013-20140192_en_1.htm)

## **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act**

On 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014, a new system of offence disclosure introduced by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 came into effect. The changes entail a reduction in the amount of time some offenders will be required to disclose details of low level convictions. Whereas previously rehabilitation periods were calculated from the

date of conviction they will now comprise the period of sentence plus an addition 'buffer' period. For example, it has been calculated that rehabilitation periods for offenders sentenced to between six and thirty months custody will be reduced by six years. Offenders who serve over four years custody will continue to be required to declare their convictions for the rest of their lives.

A Ministry of Justice press release announcing the changes to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/reforms-to-help-reduce-reoffending-come-into-force>

### **Independent Review into Deaths in Custody of Young Adults**

On 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014, the Ministry of Justice announced an independent review into the self-inflicted deaths of 18-24 year olds in custody. The review is to be led by the chairman of the Independent Advisory Council on Deaths in Custody, the Labour peer Lord Harris of Haringey. The announcement follows the self-inflicted deaths of 44 young people since 2011, as well as repeated calls by pressure groups such as Inquest and the Prison Reform Trust for the Ministry of Justice to address systemic failings in the way young people in prison are dealt with. It is proposed the review will focus on the following:

- The management of the risk of self-harm or suicide, mental health and learning disability;
- Information sharing from and between health, education and social care agencies and the transfer of information within the criminal justice system;
- Safety, including Violence reduction, the built environment and emergency responses;
- Staff/prisoner relationships;
- Family contact;
- Staff training.

Although it is intended the review will identify learning that will benefit any age group, concerns have been expressed that the review does not include young people under the age of 18 given the high levels of vulnerability demonstrated by this age group and the systemic failures that have been revealed in the past with regard to ensuring their care and safety.

The full terms of reference for the Independent Review into Deaths in Custody of Young Adults (aged 18-24) can be found at of can be found at:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/about/yjb/deaths-custody-terms-reference.pdf>

### **More adult prison places created**

HMP Littlehey, a category C prison in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire housing both adult and young prisoners, and HMP Lancaster Farms, the sole young offender institution covering

the north west of England, are to be re-roled to become solely adult male prisons. As part of a commitment by Justice Secretary, Chris Grayling to increase the number of prison places across the estate by the end of this parliament, the two prisons have changed function in order to meet a growing demand for adult male places. The extra places are in addition to 1,260 places now being created through the building of new house blocks at four others prisons, as well as 2,100 places at a new prison in Wrexham currently under construction. Announcing the decision, Prisons Minister Jeremy Wright, said: "We have a clear duty to accommodate and rehabilitate prisoners in the most efficient way to maximise value for hardworking taxpayers".