



To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Executive

Date: 25 March 2014

TRANSFORMING REHABILITATION AND BeNCH's OFFENDER STRATEGY

1. Purpose

1.1 This report seeks to update the Business Co-ordination Board on transforming Rehabilitation and the work of BeNCH.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Note the local engagement with the fast moving Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.

3. Transforming Rehabilitation

3.1 The Ministry of Justice has published "Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform" – the Government's response to the consultation document "Transforming Rehabilitation: a revolution in the way we manage offenders". The strategy set out the Government's plans to transform the way in which offenders are managed in the community in order to bring down reoffending rates. The key aspects of the reforms are as follows:

- A new public sector National Probation Service will be created, working to protect the public and building upon the expertise and professionalism which are already in place.
- For the first time in recent history, every offender released from custody will receive statutory supervision and rehabilitation in the community. Legislation is now in place to extend this statutory supervision and rehabilitation to all 50,000 of the most prolific group of offenders – those sentenced to less than 12 months in custody.
- A nationwide 'through the prison gate' resettlement service will be put in place, meaning most offenders are given continuous support by one provider from

custody into the community. This will be supported by ensuring that most offenders are held in a prison designated to their area for at least three months before release.

- The market will be opened up to a diverse range of new rehabilitation providers, in order to get the best out of the public, voluntary and private sectors, at the local as well as national level.
- New payment incentives for market providers to focus relentlessly on reforming offenders will be introduced, giving providers flexibility to do what works and freedom from bureaucracy, but only paying them in full for real reductions in reoffending.

3.2 Work is now moving quickly to implement this reform. The OJEU notice was issued on 19th September 2013. This set out that in the future Cambridgeshire will be served by a Community Rehabilitation Company covering Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire (BeNCH).

3.3 It should be noted that Peterborough has an existing social impact bond funded One Service. This service supports short sentenced male prisoners by offering early engagement, through and beyond the gate delivery and proactive, individualised support in the community to address needs and prevent re-offending. It is a yet unclear what impact Transforming Rehabilitation will have on this service.

4. Commissioner work across BeNCH

4.1 Commissioners across BeNCH have been worked together to understand how best to respond to Transforming Rehabilitation. They have worked together to ensure potential providers are aware of the local issues within each of their patches and also promoted the development of an offender strategy which sets out principles of working which they share.

4.2 The draft BeNCH three tiered offender strategy aims to ensure that all practice has a stronger focus on evidence; challenges the status-quo and strives to identify innovative solutions that work. The strategy also aims to drive investment in preventing offending; ensuring cohesive management and commissioning and structured evaluation.

4.3 The strategy's three tiers can be summarised as:

- High intensity interagency work with the most complex offenders;
- Ensuring every agency's contact with youth and adult offenders counts and makes an impact to drive "desistance"; and
- Preventing offending through a two pronged partnership approach with:
 - targeted work with the most vulnerable at risk population e.g. troubled families and
 - work with the general populations to shift attitudes of acceptability e.g. towards drugs, alcohol, violence including work with families, e.g. through parenting and schools programmes.

Partners in Cambridgeshire have been involved through the Criminal Justice Board Offender Group and the Countywide Community Safety Strategic Board.

- 4.4 The new emphasis on evidence should increase the scrutiny on which interventions are provided and whether they are effective, rather than a focus on which organisation provides them. The evidence base on what drives desistance is emerging and growing stronger. If the strategy is to be effective BeNCH will need to both draw from this evidence base and contribute to it for the future.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 A BeNCH Local Advisory Panel is now being established which will offer structured advice and input to the MoJ in relation to the TR competition process. Members of the group are expected to assist MoJ in understanding relevant local issues and arrangements in the BeNCH Contract Package Area (CPA) so that these can be taken into account during the competition. This group will include the Commissioners and senior representatives from Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire.
- 5.2 This group will also seek to drive the completion of the BeNCH offender strategy via a separate forum which will probably be held either side of the Local Advisory Panel meetings.
- 5.3 It should also be noted that Commissioner will also have the opportunity to meet potential bidders and remind them of the importance of the BeNCH strategy and linking effectively with existing local initiative.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 Note the local engagement with the fast moving Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document (s)	Contact Officer	Location
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