

Consultation on standards and ratings for inspecting probation services

HM Inspectorate of Probation

08 November 2017



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Foreword

Earlier this year we consulted¹ on changes we want to make to the way we inspect. We want to do more to drive improvements in probation services, where they are needed. Briefly, we intend to inspect NPS divisions and CRCs separately, and more regularly. We will look at more cases, and we will underpin our inspections with published standards. We will provide ratings for each NPS division and CRC.

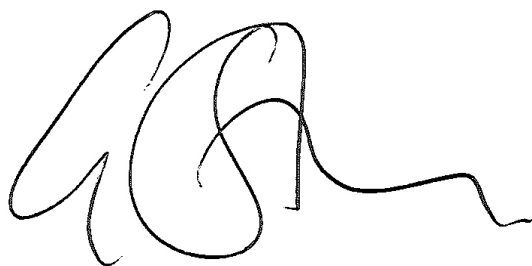
Our proposals were broadly welcomed² by those responding to our consultation, and the large majority favoured our plans for standards and for ratings. Since then we have been working with NPS and CRC staff and others to develop draft standards by consensus. I am heartened by the level of engagement from so many in recent months. Two hundred people attended the workshops we have held across England and Wales. They have helped refine our draft standards. Thank you, all those involved.

In this consultation we are asking your views on the way we intend to structure standards, and on the draft standards themselves. I hope you find that they are pitched at the right level, and focused on the things that make a difference to the quality of probation services. They reflect in large part the enduring aims of probation.

We have also been considering how best to rate probation services, and I am grateful to leaders at the Care Quality Commission, Ofsted and other inspectorates for their wise advice. We are suggesting a composite rating for each inspection and also sub-ratings, so that those inspected can see where they have done well and where they can improve, in order to improve the quality of the service they are delivering. We would now like to hear your views.

Probation leaders and staff may fear that the changes we are making increase pressure, and the burden of oversight. CRC contractual requirements have been to the fore in recent years. We hope that inspection standards will make plain that quality is important for all. The Ministry of Justice is reviewing the oversight arrangements for CRCs, and intends to reduce the burden for CRCs achieving higher order inspection ratings. We very much welcome that.

We would like to hear your views on the detail of our proposals, and I hope you will take the opportunity to respond.



Dame Glenys Stacey
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

¹ <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/05/HMI-Probation-statutory-consultation-30-March-2017.pdf>

² [http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/05/Our-response-to-statutory-consultation-22-June-17 .pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/05/Our-response-to-statutory-consultation-22-June-17.pdf)

1. Background

- 1.1 Youth offending and probation services can make a big difference to those receiving them and to wider society. More than a quarter of a million people are supervised by them each year, and numbers are rising. If all these services were delivered well, then the prison population would reduce. There would be less reoffending and fewer people being returned repeatedly to prison. There would also be fewer people living on the streets, and fewer confused and lonely children, with a smaller number taken into care. Men, women and children currently afraid of assault could lead happier, safer lives. These things matter to us all.
- 1.1. In 2014 the government implemented its *Transforming Rehabilitation* plans, and probation services were largely liberated from national practice standards. Since then, we have been reporting regularly on the quality of probation work³.
- 1.2. We generally find the National Probation Service ('NPS') performing to an acceptable level, although there are inconsistencies and areas for improvement. We find a more troubling picture in Community Rehabilitation Companies ('CRCs'), although there have been exceptions in some police force areas. We have decided to change the way we inspect, so as to do more to drive improvements where they are needed. Ministers have agreed to changes we at HMI Probation intend to make.
- 1.3. This consultation covers the detail of two particular aspects: the underpinning standards we want to use as we inspect, and the rating system we propose. We plan to start using both standards and ratings in the spring of 2018. The consultation period closes on 08/12/2017.
- 1.4. This consultation does not cover our proposals for changes to the way we inspect Youth Offending Services. We are consulting on our plans to develop our youth inspections separately.

Our role in overseeing probation services

- 1.5. Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service ('HMPPS') is responsible for the NPS, and agrees performance expectations and priorities for the service with government. It also sets performance targets and monitors NPS performance, publishing quarterly performance reports. CRCs deliver services under contract. HMPPS is responsible for CRC contract management, operational assurance, audit and performance monitoring. Again, quarterly performance reports are published.
- 1.6. Reoffending rates are the main strategic **outcome** measure for probation services. To incentivise CRCs, a portion of their income depends on the extent to which those they supervise go on to reoffend. The Ministry of Justice

³ <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/?probation-inspection-type=adult-transforming-rehabilitation-2014-2016&s>

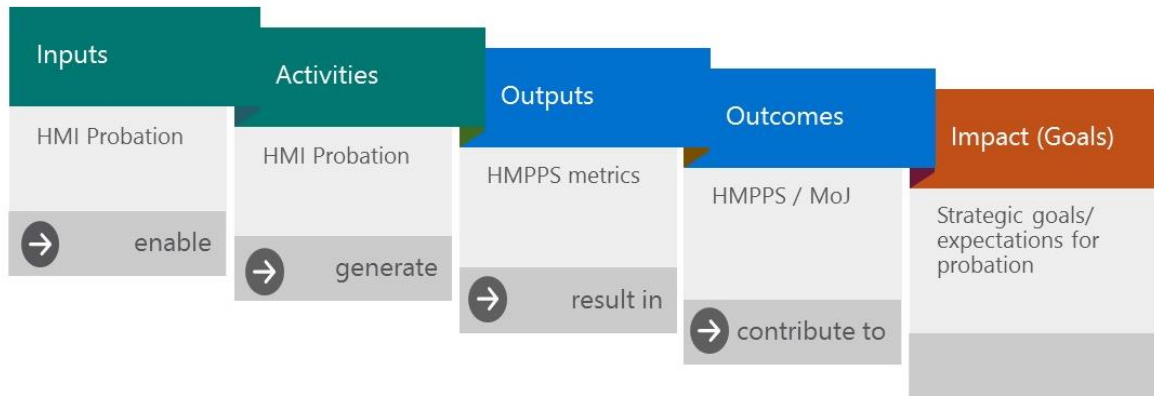
<http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/?probation-inspection-type=adult-quality-impact&s>

collects data and information nationally, to evaluate NPS and CRC outcomes and outputs, and the impact of probation services.

1.7. We at HMI Probation are focused on **inputs and activities**. Without good quality inputs (such as professional staff and comprehensive services) and activities (such as case assessment and individual supervision) the NPS and CRCs are less likely to meet the enduring aims of probation services.

1.8. The figure below sets out the respective oversight roles.

Figure one: the oversight model for probation services



What is changing?

1.9. We are not changing HMI Probation’s primary role or focus. Instead, we intend to change how we work. We currently inspect probation services provided by the NPS and CRC in each police force area, on a rolling programme of inspection. In spring 2018 we will move to annual, individual inspection of NPS divisions and each whole CRC, and increase our case sample size so as to enhance the validity of our findings. Our inspections will be underpinned by standards and we will rate organisations using a four point scale, when we inspect.

1.10. Annual HMI Probation inspections with bigger case samples will add to the total burden of oversight for the NPS and CRCs. We and the Ministry of Justice think that appropriate for now, for the NPS. Each division will be inspected annually, whereas at the moment, any one division can experience inspection several times a year, in any police force area within the division. Current oversight arrangements for the NPS are different and perhaps less onerous than those for CRCs, and annual inspections should provide the necessary independent element.

1.11. For CRCs, the Ministry of Justice is considering ways in which contract and performance monitoring can be reduced for those who achieve higher order HMI Probation ratings – so that CRCs are incentivised to aim for good ratings, and rewarded for achieving them.

1.12. We will continue to conduct thematic inspections and participate in joint inspections with other inspectorates.

2. Developing proposed standards

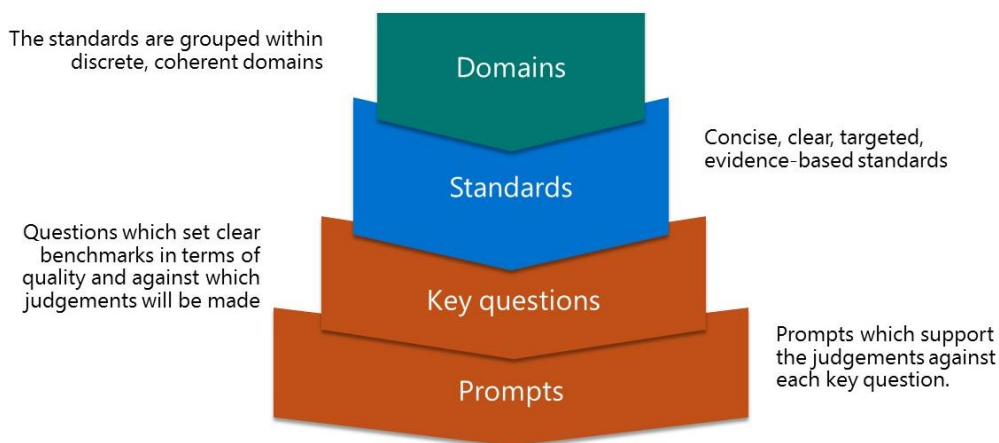
- 2.1. We started our work on standards with a set of principles that we think good standards should meet. They are set out in Annex A. We also worked with the Ministry of Justice to articulate a set of high-level expectations for probation service delivery, attached at Annex B. These stated expectations do not change the obligations of providers as set out in contracts or service level agreements, or alter the existing national standards but aim to reflect the main purposes of probation as set out in the Offender Management Act 2007.
- 2.2. We reviewed international and national probation standards, rules, CRC contractual provisions and our own standards and benchmarks, looking for approaches that best capture the essence of quality. We set out in Annex C the range of probation-related standards and rules we reviewed.
- 2.3. In developing draft organisational delivery standards, we studied a range of models and frameworks (e.g. EFQM, Galbraith Star, McKinsey 7S) and sought advice from an independent Organisational Design expert. We reflected on our past experience of inspecting operational arrangements and leadership. We considered our more recent experiences in our Full Joint Inspection Programme for youth, although the two spheres are different. We considered carefully the strengths and weakness we are finding in the NPS and CRCs, on inspection.
- 2.4. As we began to consider how best to structure standards, we spoke with academics in the field, and with other regulators and inspectorates that use standards and/or rating systems. We developed a proposed structure for our standards, and some early draft standards, keeping in mind the need for our standards to support our inspection judgements.
- 2.5. We then ran a national programme of workshops with people from the NPS and CRCs, and we worked with Clinks⁴ to run further workshops with the voluntary sector. Details of the workshops are set out in Annex D. We wanted to see the extent to which we could build a common view of the standards expected of probation services. We found a lot of common ground. With the help of those attending we have been able to fine tune our draft standards.
- 2.6. We are proposing case supervision standards based upon the well-established and recognised ASPIRE model for case supervision (Assessment, Sentence Planning, Implementation, Review and Evaluation). The bulk of the standards we suggest will apply to all probation providers, with differences only to reflect work done just by the NPS or just by CRCs.
- 2.7. Our proposed standards are based on established models and frameworks, and we believe they are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. A summary of this evidence and learning is set out in Annex E.
- 2.8. We set out overleaf the way we intend to structure the standards.

⁴ Clinks supports, represents and campaigns for the voluntary sector working with offenders (<https://www.clinks.org/>).

3. The standards framework

- 3.1. There is no one way to structure standards. The regulators and inspectorates we have looked at each do it differently, but they each tend to group standards together in a sensible way to reflect the industry they work with, and the key things they do. All have standards relating to the way organisations they inspect are run, and many have these in a separate group to the standards relating to the industry product or service. We are proposing such an approach.
- 3.2. Our draft standards are grouped into domains, with each standard underpinned by key questions and prompts. All the key questions and prompts have a binary yes or no response. The framework will be supported by inspection guidance materials, supporting reliable and valid judgements.

Figure two: the way we propose to structure standards

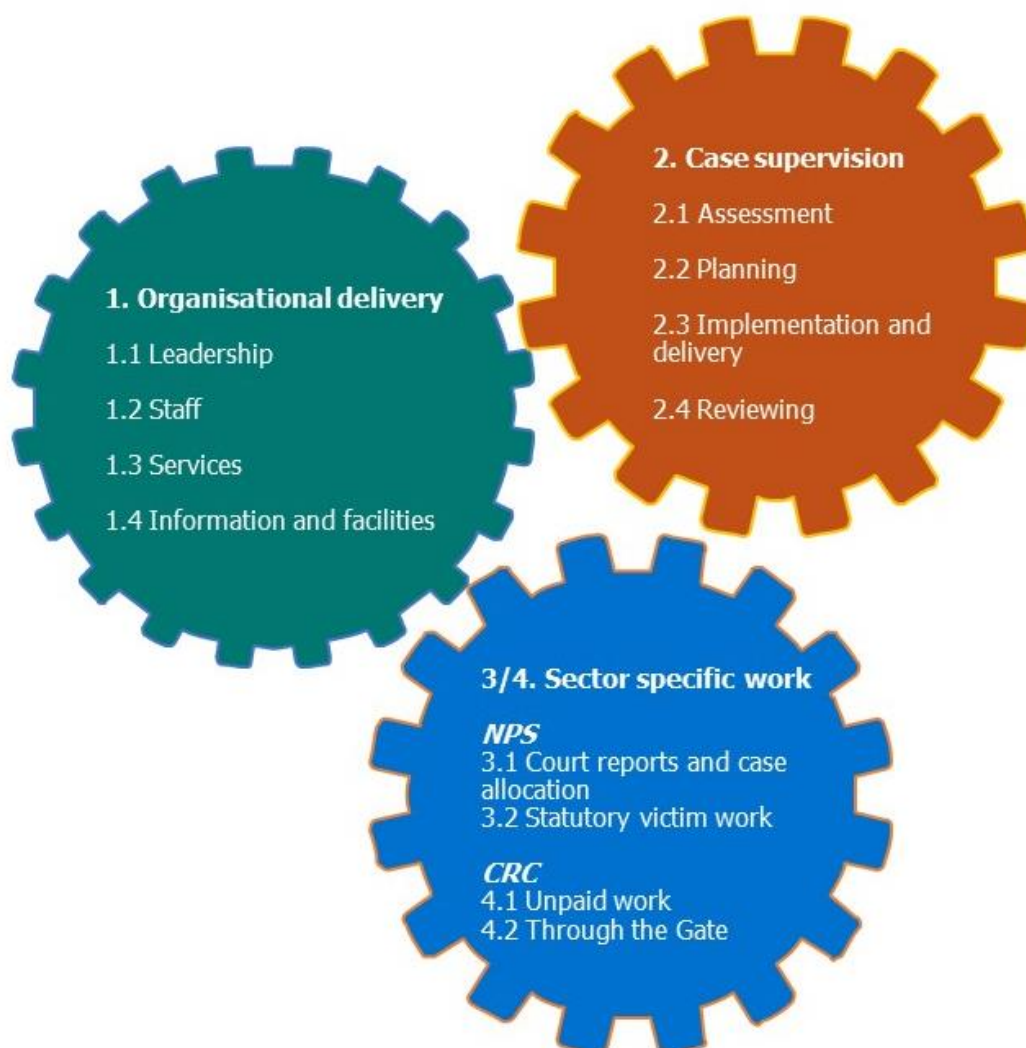


- 3.3. We are proposing three domains. The first two domains apply to all probation providers – CRCs and the NPS. Domain One covers how well the organisation is led, managed and set up. Domain Two covers the quality of work in individual cases, and how well individuals are being supervised. Domain Two is structured so that we will be able to report locally and (with consolidated data) nationally on the extent to which the enduring aims of probation are being met, as well as reporting against each standard.
- 3.4. Responsibility for some other areas of probation work (such as court work) rests just with the NPS or just with CRCs. We cover those areas in a third domain that is modular, and sector specific.

Will the framework or the standards change?

- 3.5. We will be keeping the framework and the standards under review, and we will evaluate how well they work as we inspect. We envisage that the standards framework will endure over time. We expect to always have standards that cover the way the organisations we inspect are run (Domain One) and standards that cover the longstanding aims of probation (Domain Two).
- 3.6. Domain Three standards reflect the current arrangements for delivering probation services and the differing responsibilities of the NPS and CRC. Should responsibilities change or develop, then we will if necessary make changes to reflect that.
- 3.7. We are likely to make changes to some individual prompts, or even the key questions - as we learn from applying them, on inspection. If and when we do that, we will publish the changes on our website. If we propose to make any significant changes to the standards themselves in any of the domains, we will consult before doing so.

Figure three: our proposed standards framework



Our proposed standards

3.8. The complete framework of standards, key questions and prompts that we propose is attached at Annex F.⁵ The framework is set out as follows:

1. Domain heading

1.1 Standard heading

Standard text

1.1.1 Key question

a) Prompts

3.9. We are proposing a new set of inspection standards that reflect the high-level expectations government and the public have of probation services. They will apply to both CRCs and the NPS. They will form the basis for transparent, evidence-based and independent inspection.

3.10. We know from experience that there is a close relationship between good strategic and operational management and leadership, and the quality of probation services. One leads to the other. Domain One standards will cover these pre-requisites, and Domain Two will cover enduring expectations of probation services: protecting the public, reducing reoffending and ensuring the sentence of the court is served.

3.11. The number of standards and key questions differ for each domain, as the content and substance differ. We explain how we will use the answers we find (on inspection) to the key questions and prompts later in this consultation document.

3.12. We want our standards, key questions and prompts to be coherent, sufficiently comprehensive and balanced. They must also be sufficiently discrete, one from another and they must be workable: they must support fair and transparent inspection judgements. The greater the number of prompts underpinning a key question, the more difficult it becomes to balance them into a single judgement, and we have taken the view that no key question should have more than ten prompts. Some have as few as two.

3.13. Please read our proposed standards, key questions and prompts and let us have your views on the following questions:

Question 1	Does the standards framework cover the key areas that contribute to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If not, what is missing?
Question 2	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If so, which ones?
Question 3	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently precise? If so, which ones?

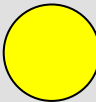
⁵ The Domain Three standards are numbered 3 and 4, due to the differing standards for the NPS and for CRCs.

Question 4 Are any of the proposed prompts unrealistic? If so, which ones?

Question 5 Are any of the proposed prompts difficult to address at the unit of inspection level (NPS division or CRC contract package area)? If so, which ones?

4. Rating probation providers

- 4.1. No one categorisation is used in the criminal justice sphere, and so there is no one established model for ratings. We propose a four-point ratings system (outstanding; good; requires improvement; inadequate). Similar systems are used by regulators and inspectorates such as CQC and Ofsted. The public is familiar with these categories and knows broadly what they mean.
- 4.2. We propose to have an overall (composite) provider rating, derived from individual ratings at the standard level. Composite ratings are common in other spheres and they are used in the criminal justice arena by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. We believe that an overall (composite) rating for each inspection will best drive improvements where needed. We have seen that approach work in other inspectorates. An overall rating will provide a prime measure of the quality of probation services, complementing any output and outcome measures established by government.
- 4.3. We also propose ratings at the standard level. They should enable probation providers to see clearly where they are performing well and where they can improve, and so improve the quality of service and any future overall rating.
- 4.4. A visual representation of mock ratings (for an NPS division) is set out below.

Overall rating for the NPS division		Good 
1	Organisational delivery	
1.1	Leadership	Good
1.2	Staff	Good
1.3	Services	Outstanding
1.4	Information and facilities	Requires improvement
2	Case supervision	
2.1	Assessment	Good
2.2	Planning	Good
2.3	Implementation and delivery	Good
2.4	Reviewing	Requires improvement
3	NPS specific work	
3.1	Court reports and case allocation	Good
3.2	Statutory victim work	Outstanding

- 4.5. When we inspect, we propose to determine the ratings for each standard using our inspection judgements in relation to the key questions, underpinned by the prompts. We know from studies across differing disciplines that judgements (such as rating judgements) are likely to be more reliable and valid if the way they are made is structured, and that is what we propose.

Domain Two and Three ratings

- 4.6. Domain Two and Three ratings will be driven by the results of our inspection of individual cases. We inspect cases by interrogating the full case records, and interviewing the relevant responsible officer, and we will continue to do that.
- 4.7. Yes/no judgements at the key question level will be made by inspectors in each case, informed by the prompts. Those judgements will not be individually rated. Ratings will be at the standard level, and will be based upon the consolidated results (at key question level) of all cases inspected in the relevant domain.
- 4.8. For the consolidated results, we are not proposing to change the four performance bandings we have used in past years:
- Minority: <50%
 - Too few: 50-64%
 - Reasonable majority: 65-79%
 - Large majority: 80%+
- 4.9. We believe there is value in keeping the performance bandings matched to that of previous years. In this way, we are not increasing or decreasing our expectations of the quality of probation services, but maintaining our long-established view.
- 4.10. For each standard, the rating will be aligned to the lowest banding at the key question level, recognising that each key question is an integral part of the standard.

Lowest banding (key question level)	Rating (standard)
Minority: <50%	Inadequate
Too few: 50-64%	Requires improvement
Reasonable majority: 65-79%	Good
Large majority: 80%+	Outstanding

- 4.11. For example, implementation and delivery will be rated as outstanding when there is a sufficient focus on all three key questions (engagement, desistance and keeping other people safe) across a 'large majority' (80%+) of the cases examined. But if the banding is a 'reasonable majority' (65-79%) in relation to one of the three key questions, then we will rate implementation and delivery as good rather than outstanding.
- 4.12. As from spring 2018, we will be looking at more cases on each inspection. That should give all great confidence in our findings, and indeed we aim for a Domain Two case sample for each inspection that will give us an 80% confidence level, in statistical terms. However, to be sure of our findings it is always important that inspectors form similar judgements in similar cases.

4.13. We conduct training and quality management exercises now, to check and if necessary refine our inspectors' consistency of judgement. In anticipation of the changes we are making, we are intensifying our focus on training, quality assurance and quality control. We are recruiting a Head of Methodology and Quality Management and a Head of Inspection Training, to give these matters continuing attention.

Domain One ratings

4.14. We propose that Domain One ratings for each inspection will not be driven by our findings in individual cases, although we will always check the correlation between domains and the need for further interrogation. Instead, the evidence we need for Domain One ratings will come from elsewhere: primarily from data, documents and evidence submitted by the organisation, and through interviews with leaders, managers, staff, individuals subject to probation supervision and other relevant stakeholders.

4.15. Domain One ratings will be proposed by the lead inspector in each case. It will be a single judgement, using all the relevant sources of evidence. The evidence obtained in advance of the fieldwork will be reviewed to make preliminary assessments against the prompts and key questions, as well as identifying gaps in the evidence and thus lines of enquiry for the fieldwork.

4.16. All regulators and inspectors find that in rating organisational delivery (Domain One here) it is important to have mechanisms for making sure that judgements are sufficiently consistent across all inspections. Each does this in a different way. These mechanisms are especially important in the early days of any new inspection regime, to make sure that the right benchmarks are set. We are proposing that provisional Domain One ratings are proposed by the lead inspector in each case, and that they are each reviewed in a timely way by a new HMI Probation Ratings Panel.

4.17. Following the fieldwork and review of all the evidence, an HMI Probation ratings panel will convene. The panel will be chaired by our Director of Operations. The lead inspector will propose ratings to the panel in a structured process, for verification. It will be the panel's job to ensure that ratings are evidence based and fully reflect the balance of evidence and issues, and that they are sufficiently consistent, across inspections.

Outstanding and Inadequate performance

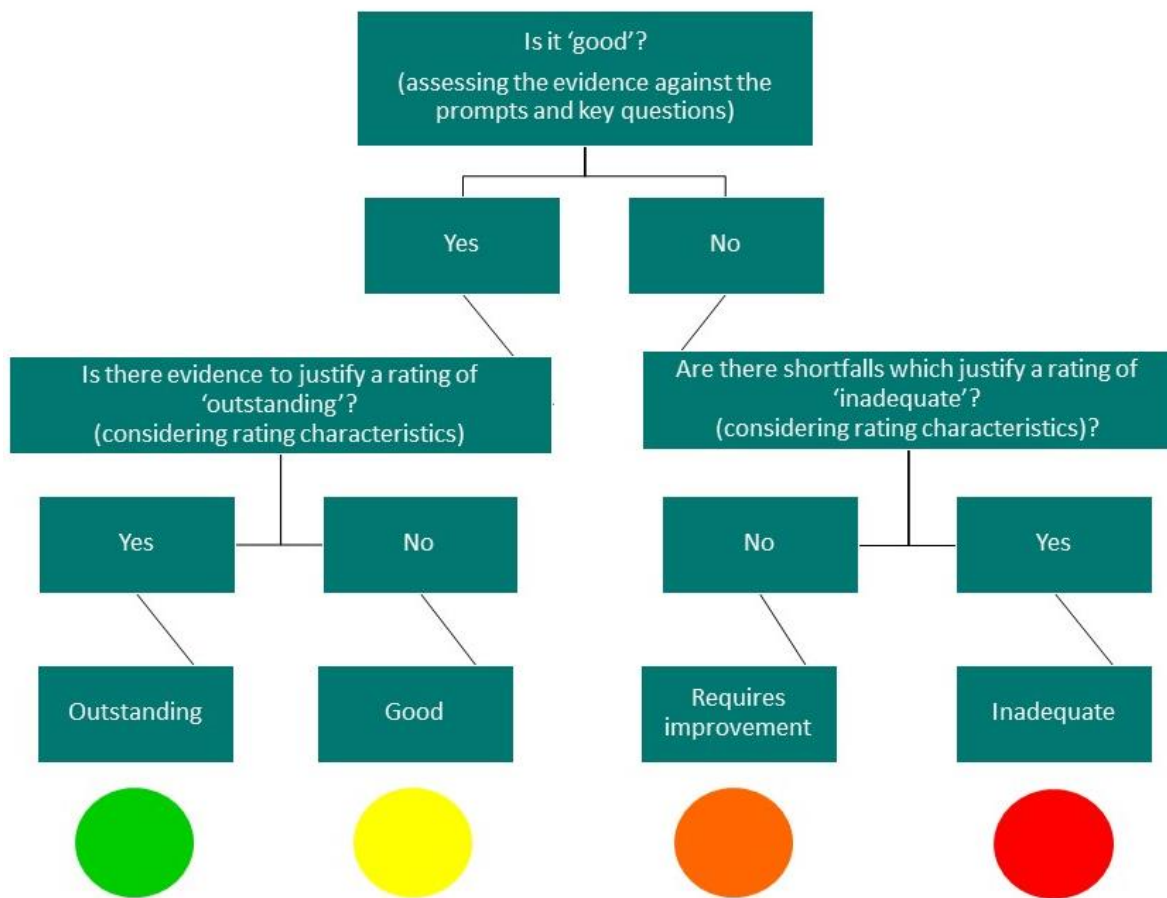
4.18. The way our proposed standards, key questions and prompts are worded indicates broadly what will result in a 'good' rating, for the three domains. For Domains Two and Three, the ratings will be determined by case assessment results and the percentage of positive answers to the key questions.

4.19. We think probation providers will want to know broadly what will characterise an 'outstanding' and 'inadequate' judgement at Domain One level, where the approach is inevitably different. We propose publishing characteristics to show what we think should guide a lead inspector to recommend an outstanding or inadequate rating for each of the four Domain One standards.

4.20. An example of such characteristics for the leadership standard is set out in Annex G. We would like your views on the level of detail we are suggesting, and the broad level we are proposing for the outstanding or inadequate rating. Importantly, these characteristics provide a framework to support the lead inspector's recommendation rather than being a checklist; we would not expect every characteristic to be present for the corresponding rating to be given.

4.21. We envisage the decision-making process as shown in figure four below.

Figure four: coming to an outstanding or inadequate rating for the Domain One standards



Question 6	Does the example of rating characteristics include the right amount of detail and appropriately describe 'outstanding' and 'inadequate'? Why/why not?
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Overall provider rating

4.22. Straightforward scoring rules will be used to generate the overall provider rating. Each of the ten NPS or CRC standards will be scored on a 0 – 3 scale in which 'inadequate' = 0, 'requires improvement' = 1, 'good' = 2 and

'outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score from 0-30, which will be banded to produce the overall rating as follows:

- 0-5 = Inadequate
- 6-15 = Requires improvement
- 16-25 = Good
- 26-30 = Outstanding

4.23. These bandings are aligned to the tipping points between the ratings at the standard level, e.g. an overall rating of 'good' is produced through six standard ratings of 'good' and four standard ratings of 'requires improvement'.

4.24. To account for all potential nuances, we will allow for some professional judgement to depart from the scoring rules when necessary (e.g. when the standard ratings are close to the rating boundaries or very diverse). And such departure will be agreed through the HMI Probation ratings panel, with the reasons being clearly set out, aiding transparency and full understanding.

4.25. We are not currently intending to include any weightings in the scoring rules. The rationale is that all parts of the standards framework are strongly linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, and we have restricted ourselves to those that are most essential. Our view is that providers need to focus across all of the standards, and we do not want to distort behaviours in any undesirable ways. Furthermore, the underpinning evidence is stronger in terms of the inclusion of the standards/key questions rather than their relative weightings.

4.26. We will, however, keep this approach under review and consider the need for any weightings in future years, reflecting upon our inspection findings.

Question 7	Should any parts of the standards framework be weighted more heavily within the ratings system? If so, which parts?
Question 8	Is there anything in our proposed standards or the way we suggest we will rate probation services that you think could lead to undesirable behaviours, outputs or outcomes? If so, please tell us.

5. Impact assessment

Regulatory

- 5.1. Annual HMI Probation inspections with larger case samples will add to the total burden of oversight for probation providers. We and the Ministry of Justice think that this is appropriate at the current time. The quality of probation delivery is important for all, and we believe that our proposals will help to drive improvements where they are needed.
- 5.2. There is a clear need for a set of standards exemplifying what good probation delivery looks like, helping to focus attention.
- 5.3. We have seen in other areas how an overall (composite) rating for a provider can drive improvements. The ratings at the standard level will enable probation providers to see clearly where they are performing well and where they can improve, and so improve the quality of service and future overall ratings.
- 5.4. Alongside our move to annual inspections, the Ministry of Justice is reviewing the oversight arrangements for CRCs, and considering ways in which contract and performance monitoring can be reduced for those who achieve higher order HMI Probation ratings. We very much welcome this development in terms of the overall burden upon CRCs and so that they are incentivised to aim for good ratings, and rewarded for achieving them.
- 5.5. Current oversight arrangements for the NPS are different and perhaps less onerous than those for CRCs. Our annual inspections will provide the necessary independent oversight and will be a move away from the current approach in which any one division can experience inspection several times a year, in differing police force areas within the division.

Equalities

- 5.6. The standards highlight the need for a personalised and responsive approach in each case, whilst a number of the underlying prompts require providers to consider diversity factors and personal circumstances.
- 5.7. It is clear within the standards framework that organisations must have a good understanding of each individual they supervise, recognising their diversity and their different needs and expectations. The need to pay attention to issues of disproportionality is also highlighted.
- 5.8. The framework will be supported by inspection guidance documents, which will include material relating to specific sub-groups, e.g. women.
- 5.9. We will collect data on protected characteristics during our inspections, enabling us to periodically report in an aggregated way on the delivery for differing sub-groups. We will also use this data to inform the consideration of thematic inspection options.

6. How to respond

The full list of consultation questions is set out below:

Question 1	Does the standards framework cover the key areas that contribute to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If not, what is missing?
Question 2	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If so, which ones?
Question 3	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently precise? If so, which ones?
Question 4	Are any of the proposed prompts unrealistic? If so, which ones?
Question 5	Are any of the proposed prompts difficult to address at the unit of inspection level (NPS division or CRC contract package area)? If so, which ones?
Question 6	Does the example of rating characteristics include the right amount of detail and appropriately describe 'outstanding' and 'inadequate'? Why/why not?
Question 7	Should any parts of the standards framework be weighted more heavily within the ratings system? If so, which parts?
Question 8	Is there anything in our proposed standards or the way we suggest we will rate probation services that you think could lead to undesirable behaviours, outputs or outcomes? If so, please tell us.
Question 9	Please do provide any further comments on the standards and ratings proposed.

The deadline for responses is Friday 8th December.

Responses can be submitted online here:

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

Alternatively, responses can be sent to:

Claire Fallows
Data Officer
HM Inspectorate of Probation
1st Floor
Manchester Civil Justice Centre
1 Bridge Street West
Manchester
M3 3FX
Email: claire.fallows@hmiprobation.gov.uk

As part of your response, please ensure that:

- You state clearly who the submission is from, i.e. whether from yourself in a personal capacity or sent on behalf of an organisation.
- You include a brief description of yourself/your organisation.
- You state clearly if you wish your submission to be confidential and/or you do not want to be contacted with follow-up enquiries (see confidentiality statement below).

Confidentiality statement

The information you send HM Inspectorate of Probation may be published in full or in a summary of responses.

All information in responses, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want your response to remain confidential, you should explain why confidentiality is necessary and your request will be acceded to only if it is appropriate in the circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding.

7. Next steps

A paper summarising the responses to this consultation will be published in due course. Our consultation on our standards and ratings for inspecting youth offending services is running in parallel and we will consider all responses together, paying attention to those areas in which the probation and youth offending standards/ratings should be aligned and where they should differ.

Our standards, inspection methods and ratings will be further developed through transitional inspections, tests and simulations in late 2017 and early 2018 before we go live with the new inspection programme in 2018/19.

Once the programme has launched, we will continue to work with providers and others to keep the inspection standards relevant, comprehensive and up-to-date.

Annex A: Guiding principles

The principles set out below have guided the structure, format and content of the standards, highlighting our desire to drive improvements, whilst at the same time meeting requirements of relevance, robustness and timeliness.

Driving improvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. drive the right behaviours and improvements in outcomes, enabling providers to focus their attention.2. capture those key research findings and evidence based principles on what contributes to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, exemplifying what good probation work looks like.3. be achievable, but challenging where necessary.
Relevance	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. be clear, unambiguous, easily understood by providers and seen as relevant to current delivery models and practice.5. be restricted to those standards that are most essential, ensuring that they are not unduly restrictive and leave scope for innovation.6. be sufficiently broad, covering organisational, workforce, inter-agency and practice elements.7. make use of existing national and international standards (including previous inspection criteria) where possible and desirable.8. be provider-neutral and likely to endure over time (while also being easily adjustable).
Robustness	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. be balanced across domains which are sufficiently discrete and coherent.10. be concise and sufficiently precise for their intended purpose, supporting evaluation and legitimate claims of compliance and conformity.11. support objective, consistent judgments by inspectors and between inspections.
Timeliness	<ol style="list-style-type: none">12. support regular, cost-effective inspections.13. support continual cycles of inspection.

Annex B: High-level expectations for probation service delivery

The following statements represent high-level expectations for probation service delivery. They reflect the main purposes of probation as set out in the Offender Management Act 2007. They are not intended to change the obligations of CRCs under the current contracts nor the obligations of NPS under the Service Level Agreements. They were drawn up with the Ministry of Justice to inform the development of our inspection standards framework.

1. Provide advice to Courts

Probation services will provide Courts with timely, accurate, evidence-based and high-quality advice to support decisions on sentencing.

2. Protect the public from reoffending and from serious harm

Probation services will;

- assess offenders' risk of serious harm they pose to society.
- develop proportionate, tailored plans to manage each offender's risk in collaboration with other relevant agencies.
- proactively manage the risks of each offender throughout their order.

3. Rehabilitate and resettle offenders in order to reduce reoffending

Probation services will work to support the rehabilitation of individuals subject to community sentences.

In collaboration with prisons and other relevant partners, probation services will work to prepare individuals in custody for life after release and to resettle and rehabilitate them in the community.

4. Deliver and enforce the order of the court

Probation services will manage community and custodial sentences to deliver effective, appropriately tailored, rehabilitation and meaningful punishment in line with the order of the court, enabling people who have offended to reform and to repair the harm they have caused.

Probation services will engage and seek to motivate offenders to comply and engage positively with the requirements of their sentence or licence and will take appropriate enforcement action where this is not the case.

5. Engage with victims

Probation services will provide victims of crime with appropriate information and support and will ensure that the victim's views are taken into consideration in decisions relating to the sentencing and management of the offender.

Probation services will ensure that offenders are aware of the impact of their offending on victims.

6. Respect and promote diversity, equality and inclusion

Probation services will ensure that advice to Courts and the supervision of people who have offended promotes diversity, equality and inclusion by addressing the characteristics and circumstances of the individuals appropriately.

7. Partnership working

Probation services will work collaboratively with each other, with partners across the criminal justice system and with organisations in other sectors (including but not limited to accommodation, employment, healthcare, family relationships, education and training, and financial advice) who can contribute to delivering positive public protection and rehabilitation outcomes.

Annex C: Reviewing national and international standards

One of the guiding principles set out in Annex B is to make use of existing national and international standards where possible. A key part of the developmental work has thus been a review of the 'standards' landscape, including rules, contractual provisions etc. As well as reviewing our own standards and criteria, we have reviewed the following:

England and Wales

- HMPPS National Standards and Practice Framework – both current and previous
- HMPPS Service Specifications
- CRC contractual provisions
- CRC and National NPS performance measures
- The NPS Quality Assurance Framework and underpinning tools

International

- Council of Europe Probation Rules and commentary
- United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for non-custodial measures ('The Tokyo Rules')
- United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial measures for Women Offenders ('The Bangkok Rules')

We have also reviewed the standards and ratings frameworks adopted by other Inspectorates and Regulators, including HMI Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (PEEL assessments), HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (Area Assurance Programme), HMI Prisons (Expectations), the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Ofsted and Ofqual.

Annex D: Building a consensus

In developing the standards, we have worked constructively with providers and others to build a common view of high quality probation services and what should be expected. The high-level domains and standards were presented to CRC Chief Executives and NPS Directors.

Seven workshops were then conducted with CRC and NPS representatives, one in each of the English regions and one in Wales. Over 150 people attended, and key points from the workshops were communicated to senior NPS and CRC leaders. With the assistance of Clinks, a further four workshops were conducted with the voluntary and community sector. These workshops were held in London, Cardiff, Newcastle and Manchester and attended by a total of 40 individuals.

The findings from all these workshops have been collated and used to refine wording (e.g. strengthening links to desistance theory; highlighting service user involvement) and to identify those prompts deemed to be most essential.

A series of meetings have been held with commissioners, senior contract managers, policy leads and operational delivery leads across the MoJ and HMPPS. A Probation Oversight Working Group has been established, through which it has been recognised that our standards will differ from CRC's detailed contractual provisions and may in some instances appear to be in tension with them.

Any tension is not in itself unhealthy – quite the opposite. For transparency and to be clear for providers, we will **map** our standards against CRC contractual expectations, but we will not **align** our standards with them in all senses. As an independent inspectorate, we wish to set standards that will support valid inspection and ratings, and that are focused on the quality of probation services.

Annex E: Underpinning evidence and learning

Organisational delivery

Leadership

Organisational design models and frameworks, informed by reviews of the evidence and the latest learning and practical experience, consistently highlight the importance of leadership to high levels of employee engagement and performance.

Leaders must set out a clear vision and strategy which is compelling and authentic. They should be empowering and visible, with regular two-way communication between leaders and employees at all levels. The importance of employee voice should be recognised, with people encouraged to come up with new ideas and to challenge the status quo to improve the organisation's performance. The experiences and views of service users should also be monitored and reviewed. Progress against the strategy must then be proactively and regularly reviewed, with leaders continually striving to deliver and develop the strategy.

The operating model must allow for personalised delivery for service users – the evidence is clear that one-size-fits-all processes and interventions will not work. Research findings have further emphasised the importance of continuity of contact, helping to build the trusting personal relationships which can be a powerful vehicle for change. To ensure that the service user receives integrated support, and to maximise the use of resources, there must be clear divisions of responsibility and accountability, so that it is clear who is doing what and at which point, and how roles enable people to collaborate and work together effectively. Effective engagement with external stakeholders and suppliers is also key – enabling all to know what is expected of each other and to maximise the benefits for service users through the appropriate sharing of expertise, resources and knowledge.

Leaders must be aware of current and future challenges for the organisation, both short and long term, and be proactive in assessing risks and acting to prevent them. Appropriate mitigations should be in place, which are adjusted as necessary over time. There should be adequate employee consultation on changes, with opportunities provided for employees to influence proposals. Once again, communication is key, with leaders providing employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for change.

Staff

The highest performing organisations ensure that its staff are engaged and have the necessary resources, competencies and support to do their jobs well and deliver a quality service.

Excessive pressure at work can have a significant adverse effect on employee health and wellbeing, and staff under unreasonable levels of stress work less effectively and make less effective decisions. An adequate staff complement is thus essential to an organisation's effectiveness and efficiency, with workloads needing to be assessed in a holistic way through an assessment of the demands of individual cases. Only if workloads are reasonable can individual members of staff achieve their best practice.

Management must devise strategies to manage demand and to assign a reasonable and equitable workload to its staff, with people's skills and abilities matched to the demands of the specific roles. Where this cannot be achieved because of pressure on resources, managers should be actively involved in advising staff about which tasks must take priority over others.

Staff can only perform to the expected standards when appropriately supported and where the organisation is well-ordered and well-managed. Line managers need to invest time in regular supervisions and managing performance, having open and honest conversations with their staff. Employees should receive regular and constructive feedback, and be actively supported in striving for high performance at all times. In addition to reviewing individual performance, managers must assess whether staff are adequately resourced and supported in undertaking their work. Managers must also promote positive behaviours, with systems in place to enable and encourage them to deal with unacceptable behaviour.

Evaluations have identified the positive impact of staff training (e.g. interpersonal skills training for responsible officers) upon effective practice and outcomes for service users. Learning and development opportunities must be provided to enable employees to achieve their full potential, considering their differing tasks and responsibilities, and their stages of career development. In the highest performing organisations, employees are encouraged to develop and utilise their skills. They must know what support is available and how and when to access it, and be given opportunities to learn from identified good practices.

Strong organisations also recognise the achievements of their staff. There should be a culture of appreciation where people feel valued and are recognised for their efforts and performance. At the same time, the organisation must support staff in what can be extremely demanding and complex work. This should include encouragement, motivation, professional development and responsiveness to staff concerns. There is an increasing body of evidence demonstrating the benefits of employee engagement – engaged employees with high wellbeing are more attached to their organisation than those with lower wellbeing, and higher employee engagement has been found to correlate with greater productivity.

Services

To provide the range of services required, organisations must have a clear understanding of their service users, recognising their diversity and their different needs and expectations. Service users' risks and needs must be the paramount consideration in deciding on the appropriateness of differing services, which, in combination, should provide a holistic package. As highlighted in the desistance literature, services should also build upon service users' personal strengths and skills.

A comprehensive range of services requires a diverse range of professional skills and expertise, some of which are provided by other providers and agencies. There is evidence highlighting the potential benefits from joint working at a local level, involving, for instance, the police, the voluntary sector, health services and local authorities. Notably, some service users pose significant risks to the public and these risks are most effectively managed by agencies using their skills and knowledge in a complementary way.

Multi-agency working can also play an important part in addressing the complex needs of offenders, supporting desistance. Social inclusion facilitates long term desistance and is a key component of social justice. The organisation should thus encourage and support community agencies to undertake their responsibilities to probation service users as members of society. Where necessary, advice should be provided to help other agencies make sure that their services are relevant and readily accessible.

Effective liaison with other providers and agencies requires clear and sound inter-agency protocols, including, for example, referral processes. Information exchange is particularly important – in relation to specific cases and in general, helping to influence policies and practice.

It is well established that the likelihood of achieving successful outcomes is impacted by quality of delivery, and that putting procedures in place to monitor quality will improve outcomes. Monitoring 'treatment integrity' is essential, ensuring that all services are delivered as intended, with remedial actions taken when necessary.

Information and facilities

The highest performing organisations ensure that its people have the necessary tools do their jobs well and deliver a quality service. People should have access to the necessary knowledge and information, facilitated through the organisation's ICT systems, with clear policies and procedures in place to support them in making the decisions required in their specific roles.

The importance of physical environment must also be recognised. Well-designed safe and decent physical environments can support a rehabilitative culture through encouraging positive and open interactions, and can have a positive effect on staff morale, reducing stress and maintaining safety and security.

Strong organisations have in place: (i) efficient and robust quality assurance processes through which they can evidence the ongoing quality of the service; and (ii) a meaningful mix of performance measures, enabling efficiency and effectiveness (including whether the service is having the intended impact) to be monitored and reviewed. Performance trends should be analysed to understand current and potential capabilities and capacities and identify where development is needed to achieve the strategic goals.

Evidence must be used to learn and adapt, with the relevant learning translated across the organisation. Transparency is important, with the effectiveness of service delivery being evaluated, and successes and failures being openly communicated. The offender's experience of the value of the service received should be an important part of the organisation's learning, with attention being given to general themes that indicate both strengths and ways in which the quality of the service could be improved.

Case supervision

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of case supervision, with theoretical models and research findings consistently highlighting the importance of understanding the specific characteristics of the individual service user. As part of the assessment process, the risk of further offending and the risk of harm posed to the public must be analysed.

Needs or factors linked to offending ('criminogenic needs') must be understood, as should those needs which are less directly related to offending but are important to the service user's chances of desistance. The desistance literature also emphasises the need for assessment to pay attention to the individual's legitimate aspirations and to identify and develop personal strengths and skills.

Assessment also needs to consider the service user's attitude towards change. Motivation to change is pivotal to desistance and can be assessed using frameworks such as the well-established 'cycle of change' model (Prochaska and Di Clemente). Determining the service user's position on the cycle of change helps the practitioner to use the right skills and identify the right interventions to enable the individual service user to move forward.

The process of assessment – *how* it is undertaken – is as important as the outcome. A diverse range of sources of information should be utilised, including court reports, previous records and, in appropriate cases, information gained from other agencies or people who know the service user. This helps to build a rounded view of the individual, capturing the full range of risks and needs. It is important to ensure that the information is not merely presented but a sufficiently comprehensive analysis of the different factors affecting the service user's life is conducted.

Wherever possible, the service user should be meaningfully involved in their assessment and enabled to identify issues themselves, working out who they want to be and what they want to achieve. The concepts of self-efficacy and self-determination – the individual taking charge of their own life – recognises the service user's responsibilities and the need for them to determine their own future behaviour and find their own solutions. Engaging the service user in the process of assessment helps to build the one-to-one trusting personal relationships which can be a powerful vehicle for change. Giving service users a voice, treating them with respect and generating trust are all important ingredients of procedural justice.

Planning

Supervision should be put into effect in a planned way. There must be a strong and natural connection between assessment and planning, with the planning process setting out what is to be done about the needs identified. The well-established principle of responsiveness requires that interventions and activities are delivered so that they are accessible to the service user and optimise their ability to engage in change, encouraging full participation. One-size-fits-all processes and interventions will not work. Research further demonstrates the importance of services and interventions being multi-modal, holistic and sequenced. Motivational factors should be targeted where possible. Key practitioners working across different agencies should also be involved where necessary, making appropriate links to other work which may be ongoing within these agencies.

Objectives should be specific and measurable (so that progress can be monitored). They must also be achievable and realistic, setting out clear timescales. Where necessary, the plan should be broken down into a smaller number of 'steps' with realistic, short-term objectives. The service user may have multiple complex problems that cannot sensibly be tackled all at once and they may disengage if the work plan is over-ambitious.

As with assessment, a plan that the service user does not sufficiently understand or agree with is unlikely to be implemented. Overall, studies report more benefits in cases where practitioners: (i) respect and foster the service user's personal agency; (ii) focus on strengths as well as criminogenic needs and risks; and (iii) draw up an action plan in consultation with the service user. Practitioners should thus make efforts to engage the service user as an active participant and help them to set goals towards desistance. Research evidence suggests that when the service user feels engaged in their sentence, and the plan is drawn up collaboratively, they will be more likely to have a direct investment in achieving its outcomes. Where the service user has misgivings about some of the plans proposed, this should be acknowledged and considered.

In some cases, plans need to include interventions designed to minimise the risk of harm that the service user may present to other people. Ideally the individual should be aware of the plans and should be actively involved in monitoring and managing their own risk. However, in some situations, aspects of the plan cannot appropriately be shared with the service user, or the individual may deny the risk they present, or may not wish to engage. In these circumstances, there should still be a proportionate, defensible and recorded plan to manage the risk.

Implementation and delivery

The service user should experience an integrated approach during their sentence, with relationships, interventions, and services combining holistically to address their individual risks and needs. Sufficient emphasis should be placed on helping the service user overcome practical obstacles to desistance. If a service user receives consistent and integrated support, particularly at critical times, with sufficient continuity and consolidation of learning, desistance from crime is more likely.

The desistance literature promotes the importance of respectful, participatory and flexible "working alliances" between service users and practitioners. Wherever possible, practitioners should: (i) 'model' behaviours and attitudes that are anti-criminal, reinforcing desired behaviour and disapproval of undesirable behaviour; and (ii) use natural opportunities to demonstrate and teach thinking and behavioural skills relating, for example, to communication skills, conflict resolution, emotional management and problem solving. Responsivity needs to be maintained so that trusting relationships continue to build and delivery remains tailored to the individual.

As part of the exercising of legitimate authority, the consequences of non-compliance should be explained to the service user. At the same time, attention must be given to promoting compliance, including: (i) helping the service user to recognise the positive changes and benefits from desistance; and (ii) taking full account of personal circumstances that might make compliance more difficult and working with the service user to overcome such difficulties. For example, so far as possible, a service user should not be required to attend appointments that may conflict with their responsibilities as carers (including, but not only, parents of young children) or as employees.

Instances of non-compliance and relapse should be dealt with in a proportionate, fair and transparent manner – procedural justice suggests that the perceived fairness of processes affects how people view the system and respond to it. Effective enforcement is also essential in ensuring sentencer and public confidence. On occasion,

enforcement or recall is necessary to protect the public from the risk of harm that an individual may present.

After enforcement action, the individual may continue to be supervised, either because the sentence continues or a new sentence is imposed. On some occasions the individual may be recalled to prison, but may subsequently be released on supervision. Re-engaging constructively with the individual is vital to avoid a negative cycle of repeated failure to comply.

Reviewing

Reviewing progress is another integral part of case supervision, recognising that a service user's risks, needs, protective factors and circumstances can change over time. The reviewing process should be used to: (i) analyse new information (including information from other practitioners and agencies) that builds on existing assessments; (ii) verify changes in a service user's behaviour; (iii) adapt or change actions that are completed or no longer appropriate; and (iv) explore the full range of available resources. It is also a critical opportunity to recognise and record progress. Reviews should be summarised, recorded and retained.

Changes in the level and nature of risk should be emphasised. Practitioners also need to be alert to the possibility of changes in the service user's life that could impact upon their engagement and their progress towards desistance. Work plans must be adapted to any change in the assessment. Any obstacles to compliance and engagement should be identified and discussed, with strategies developed to enable the service user to do what is required.

As with planning, efforts should be made to engage the service user as an active participant in the reviewing process, helping them to recognise and celebrate their achievements, to review and refresh their goals towards desistance and to take further charge of their own lives.

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Annex F: Proposed standards framework

1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Leadership

The leadership of the organisation supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all service users.

- 1.1.1 Is there a clear vision and strategy to deliver a high-quality service for all service users?
 - a) Does the vision and strategy prioritise the quality of service?
 - b) Have leaders effectively communicated the vision and strategy to staff?
 - c) Does the organisation's culture promote openness, constructive challenge and ideas?
 - d) Is there an effective governance framework and clear delivery plans that ensure the vision and strategy are translated into practice?
 - e) Is progress against the strategy monitored and is the strategy regularly reviewed?
 - f) Does the leadership team engage effectively with partners, suppliers and other stakeholders to support the delivery of the vision and strategy?

- 1.1.2 Are potential risks to service delivery anticipated and planned for in advance?
 - a) Are risks to the service sufficiently understood, with appropriate mitigations and controls in place?
 - b) Are appropriate arrangements in place to ensure business continuity in the event of major incidents?
 - c) Is the impact on safety and security assessed when carrying out changes to systems, processes or staffing?

- 1.1.3 Does the current operating model support effective service delivery, meeting the needs of all service users?
 - a) Does the operating model support meaningful contact and continuity of contact with service users?
 - b) Does the operating model allow for personalised approaches with service users, taking account of diversity factors?
 - c) Do staff understand the operating model, how the service should be delivered and what they are accountable for?
 - d) Is there alignment between the operating model and local plans?
 - e) Where there are significant planned changes to the operating model, are these communicated and implemented effectively?

1.2 Staff

Staff within the organisation are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all service users.

- 1.2.1 Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality service for all service users?
 - a) Are staffing levels planned and reviewed to meet the changing demands and profiles of service users?
 - b) Do practitioners have manageable workloads, given the profile of the cases and the range of work undertaken?
 - c) Do middle managers have manageable workloads?
 - d) Do administrative staff have manageable workloads?
 - e) Are workloads actively managed, with resources being redeployed, when necessary, in response to local pressures?

- 1.2.2 Do the skills and profile of staff support the delivery of a high-quality service for all service users?
 - a) Do the skills and diversity of the workforce meet the changing demands and caseload profiles?
 - b) Are high and medium risk of harm cases allocated to staff who are appropriately qualified and/or experienced?
 - c) Where volunteers and mentors are used, are they appropriately selected and supported to fulfil clearly-defined roles?
 - d) Do administrative staff have clearly-defined roles which support the delivery of a high-quality service?
 - e) Is there a strategy in place to identify and develop the potential of individual staff to support succession planning?

- 1.2.3 Does oversight by managers support high-quality work and professional development?
 - a) Do managers provide effective supervision of staff to enhance and sustain the quality of work with service users?
 - b) Is the appraisal process used effectively to ensure that staff are competent to deliver a quality service?
 - c) Is sufficient attention paid to identifying and addressing poor performance?

- 1.2.4 Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?
 - a) Does the organisation identify and address the learning needs of all staff?
 - b) Does the organisation provide sufficient access to pre-qualifying training routes to support the delivery of a quality service?
 - c) Does the organisation provide sufficient access to in-service training to support the delivery of a quality service?
 - d) Does the organisation promote and value a culture of learning and continuous improvement?

- 1.2.5 Do managers pay sufficient attention to staff engagement?
 - a) Are staff motivated to contribute to the delivery of a quality service?
 - b) Is appropriate attention paid to monitoring and improving staff engagement levels?

- c) Do managers recognise and reward exceptional work to encourage improvement and development and retention of staff?
- d) Is appropriate attention paid to staff safety and wellbeing?
- e) Are reasonable adjustments made for staff in accordance with statutory requirements and protected characteristics?

1.3 Services

A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, supporting a tailored and responsive service for all service users.

- 1.3.1 Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up to date analysis of the profile of service users, to ensure that the organisation can deliver well targeted services?
 - a) Does the analysis capture sufficiently the desistance and offending-related factors presented by service users?
 - b) Does the analysis capture sufficiently the risk of harm profile of service users?
 - c) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to diversity factors and to issues of disproportionality?
 - d) Is there sufficient analysis of local patterns of offending and sentencing?

- 1.3.2 Does the organisation provide the volume, range and quality of services to meet the needs of service users?
 - a) Are appropriate services provided, either in-house or through other agencies, to meet the identified needs and risks?
 - b) Is sufficient attention paid to building on strengths and enhancing protective factors?
 - c) Are diversity factors and issues of disproportionality considered in the range of services provided?
 - d) Are services available to service users in appropriate locations?
 - e) Is the quality of services monitored and remedial action taken where required?

- 1.3.3 Are relationships with providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services to service users?
 - a) Are there effective relationships with other agencies to support desistance through access to mainstream services both during and after the sentence?
 - b) Are there effective relationships with other agencies to manage the risk of harm to others?
 - c) Are courts made sufficiently aware of the services available to support sentencing options?

1.4 Information and facilities

Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all service users.

- 1.4.1 Are the necessary policies and guidance in place to enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all service users?
 - a) Are policies and guidance communicated effectively?
 - b) Is there a clear policy about case recording that supports defensible decision-making and effective communication?
 - c) Is there clear guidance about the full range of services available, their suitability for individual service users and referral processes?
 - d) Are policies in place to support an effective interface between NPS and CRC?

- 1.4.2 Do the premises and offices enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all service users?
 - a) Are the premises and offices sufficiently accessible to service users?
 - b) Do the premises and offices support the delivery of appropriate personalised work and the effective engagement of service users?
 - c) Do the premises and offices provide a safe environment for working with service users?

- 1.4.3 Do the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all service users?
 - a) Do the ICT systems enable staff to plan, deliver and record their work in a timely way, and to access information as required?
 - b) Are arrangements in place to ensure that the necessary information is exchanged with other agencies?
 - c) Do the ICT systems support remote working where required?
 - d) Do the ICT systems support the production of the necessary management information?

- 1.4.4 Is analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?
 - a) Are comprehensive assurance systems and performance measures in place and used to drive improvement?
 - b) Is there a sufficient understanding of performance across the organisation and at all levels?
 - c) Are service improvement plans supported through monitoring and development of the underlying evidence base?
 - d) Are processes in place to ensure that learning is communicated effectively?
 - e) Are processes in place to ensure that the organisation learns from things that go wrong?
 - f) Are the views of service users sought, analysed and used to review and improve the effectiveness of services?
 - g) Where necessary, is action taken promptly and appropriately in response to performance monitoring, audit or inspection?

2. Case supervision

2.1 Assessment

Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the service user.

- 2.1.1 Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the service user?
 - a) Does assessment analyse the service user's motivation and readiness to engage and comply with service delivery?
 - b) Does assessment analyse the service user's diversity and personal circumstances, and consider the impact these have on their ability to comply and engage with service delivery?
 - c) Is the service user meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?

- 2.1.2 Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?
 - a) Does assessment identify and analyse desistance and offending-related factors?
 - b) Does assessment identify the service user's strengths and protective factors?
 - c) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information?

- 2.1.3 Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
 - a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?
 - b) Does assessment analyse any specific concerns and risks related to identifiable actual and potential victims?
 - c) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve partner agencies where appropriate?

2.2 Planning

Planning is driven by the assessment, holistic and personalised, actively involving the service user.

- 2.2.1 Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the service user?
 - a) Is the service user meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?
 - b) Does planning take sufficient account of the service user's diversity, readiness and motivation to change, and personal circumstances which may affect engagement and compliance?
 - c) Does planning set out how all the requirements of the sentence or licence/post-sentence supervision will be delivered?
 - d) Does planning set a level, pattern and type of contact sufficient to engage the service user and to support the effectiveness of specific interventions?

- 2.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting the service user's desistance?

- a) Does planning sufficiently reflect the assessment of desistance and offending-related factors?
- b) Does planning build on the service user's strengths and protective factors?
- c) Does planning set out the services, activities and interventions most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?

2.2.3 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

- a) Does planning address factors identified in the risk of harm assessment?
- b) Does planning set out the necessary constructive and/or restrictive interventions to manage the risk of harm?
- c) Does planning make appropriate links to the work of other agencies involved with the service user and any multi-agency plans?
- d) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?

2.3 Implementation and delivery

High-quality well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging the service user.

2.3.1 Is the sentence/post-custody period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the service user?

- a) Do the requirements of the sentence start promptly, or at an appropriate time?
- b) Is sufficient focus given to maintaining an effective working relationship with the service user?
- c) Are sufficient efforts made to enable the service user to complete the sentence, including flexibility to take appropriate account of their personal circumstances?
- d) *Post-custody cases only:* Was there a proportionate level of contact with the prisoner before release?
- e) Are professional judgements sufficiently recorded in relation to decisions about missed appointments?
- f) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?
- g) Are sufficient efforts made to re-engage the service user after enforcement actions or recall?

2.3.2 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the service user's desistance?

- a) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered those most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?
- b) Wherever possible, do services, activities and interventions build upon the service user's strengths and enhance protective factors?
- c) Is the involvement of other organisations in the delivery of services, activities and interventions sufficiently well coordinated?
- d) Is the level and nature of contact sufficient to reduce reoffending and support desistance?
- e) Are local services engaged to support and sustain desistance during the sentence and beyond?

- 2.3.3 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?
- a) Is the level and nature of contact offered sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?
 - b) Is sufficient attention given to protecting victims and potential victims?
 - c) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing and minimising the risk of harm sufficiently well coordinated?
 - d) Are home visits undertaken where necessary to support the effective management of risk of harm?

2.4 Reviewing

Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the service user.

- 2.4.1 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the service user's compliance and engagement?
- a) Does reviewing consider compliance and engagement levels and any relevant barriers, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?
 - b) Is the service user encouraged to contribute to reviewing their progress and engagement?
 - c) Are written reviews completed as appropriate as a formal record of actions to implement the sentence?
- 2.4.2 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the service user's desistance?
- a) Does reviewing identify and address changes in factors linked to desistance and offending, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?
 - b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the service user's strengths and enhancing protective factors?
 - c) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies working with the service user?
 - d) Are written reviews completed as appropriate as a formal record of the progress towards desistance?
- 2.4.3 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does reviewing identify and address changes in factors related to risk of harm, with the necessary adjustments being made to the ongoing plan of work?
 - b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the service user's risk of harm?
 - c) Is the service user encouraged to contribute to reviewing their risk of harm?
 - d) Are written reviews completed as appropriate as a formal record of the management of the service user's risk of harm?

3. NPS specific work

3.1 Court reports and case allocation

The pre-sentence advice provided to court supports its decision-making, with cases being allocated appropriately following sentencing.

- 3.1.1 Is the pre-sentence advice sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the service user, supporting the court's decision-making?
- a) Does the advice to court draw sufficiently on available sources of information?
 - b) Is the service user meaningfully involved in the preparation of the report, and are their views taken into account?
 - c) Does the advice to court consider factors related to the likelihood of reoffending?
 - d) Does the advice to court consider factors related to risk of harm?
 - e) Does the advice to court consider the service user's motivation and readiness to change?
 - f) Does the advice to the court consider the service user's diversity and personal circumstances?
 - g) Does the advice consider the impact of the offence on known/identifiable victims?
 - h) Is an appropriate proposal made to court?
 - i) Is there a sufficient record of the advice given to court, and the reasons for it?
- 3.1.2 Is the allocation of the case prompt, accurate, and based on sufficient information?
- a) Is there a sufficient record of the assessment and advice to the court, for the purposes of allocation and the communication of relevant information to the organisation responsible for supervision?
 - b) Is the case allocated promptly to the correct agency?
 - c) Where necessary, has a full and accurate risk of serious harm assessment been completed prior to allocation?

3.2 Statutory victim work

Relevant and timely information is provided to the victim/s of a serious offence, and they are given the opportunity to contribute their views at key points in the sentence

- 3.2.1 Does the initial contact with the victim/s encourage engagement with the victim contact scheme?
 - a) Is initial contact made soon after sentence, with appropriate consideration given to the timing of such contact?
 - b) Are the initial letters appropriately personalised, taking into account the nature of the experience of the victim/s and/or any diversity considerations?
 - c) Do the initial letters include sufficient information to enable the victim/s to make an informed choice as to whether to participate in the scheme?

- 3.2.2 Is the personal contact with the victim/s timely and supportive, providing appropriate information about the criminal justice process?
 - a) Is clear information given to the victim/s about what they can expect at different points in the sentence?
 - b) Are the victim/s referred to other agencies, or given advice about available sources of help and support?
 - c) Is a written record kept of the initial meeting and shared with the victim/s?

- 3.2.3 Does pre-release contact with the victim/s allow them to make appropriate contributions to the conditions of release?
 - a) Is contact made with the victim/s at an appropriate point in the sentence?
 - b) Are the victim/s given the opportunity to express any concerns about the service user's release?
 - c) Are the concerns of the victim/s addressed and is attention paid to their safety in planning for release?

- 3.2.4 Is there good communication between offender management and victim liaison to support the safety of victim/s?
 - a) Are victim liaison staff kept appropriately informed about relevant issues regarding the management of the service user?
 - b) Are victim liaison staff involved in MAPPAs where appropriate?

4. CRC specific work

4.1 Unpaid work

Unpaid work is delivered safely and effectively, engaging the service user in line with the expectations of the court.

- 4.1.1 Does assessment focus on the key issues relevant to unpaid work?
 - a) Does assessment consider the service user's motivation and willingness to comply with unpaid work?
 - b) Does assessment consider the service user's diversity and personal circumstances, and the impact these have on their ability to comply and engage with unpaid work?
 - c) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information?
 - d) Does assessment consider issues relating to the health and safety or potential vulnerability of the service user?
 - e) Does assessment consider risk of harm to other service users, staff or the public?

- 4.1.2 Do arrangements for unpaid work focus sufficiently on supporting the service user's engagement and compliance with the sentence?
 - a) Is the allocated work suitable, taking appropriate account of the service user's diversity and personal circumstances?
 - b) Do arrangements for unpaid work encourage the service user's engagement and compliance with the order?
 - c) Do arrangements for unpaid work take account of risk of harm?

- 4.1.3 Do arrangements for unpaid work maximise the opportunity for the service user's personal development?
 - a) Wherever possible, does unpaid work build upon the service user's strengths and enhance their protective factors?
 - b) Does the nature of unpaid work support desistance by providing opportunities for reparation and rehabilitation?
 - c) Where the responsible officer is engaged in other activity/work with the service user, is regular feedback provided to them about the progress on unpaid work?

- 4.1.4 Is the sentence of the court implemented appropriately?
 - a) Does unpaid work commence promptly?
 - b) Are professional judgements recorded in relation to decisions about missed appointments?
 - c) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?
 - d) Is the level of compliance and engagement reviewed periodically, analysing any barriers and, where appropriate, amending work arrangements?

4.2 Through the Gate

Through the Gate services are personalised and coordinated, addressing the service user's resettlement needs.

- 4.2.1 Does resettlement planning focus sufficiently on the service user's resettlement needs and on factors linked to offending and desistance?
- a) Is there a clear and timely plan for how the service user's resettlement needs will be addressed?
 - b) Does the plan draw sufficiently on the screening or assessment, and other available sources of information?
 - c) Is the service user meaningfully involved in planning their resettlement, and are their views taken into account?
 - d) Does the resettlement plan identify the service user's strengths and protective factors, and consider ways to build upon these?
 - e) Does the plan take sufficient account of the service user's diversity and personal circumstances?
 - f) Does the resettlement plan take account of factors related to risk of harm?
- 4.2.2 Does resettlement activity focus sufficiently on supporting the service user's resettlement?
- a) Are resettlement services delivered in line with the resettlement plan?
 - b) Wherever possible, do services, activities and interventions build upon the service user's strengths and enhance their protective factors?
 - c) Does resettlement activity take sufficient account of the service user's diversity and personal circumstances?
 - d) Is the level and nature of contact with the service user sufficient to support resettlement?
 - e) Does resettlement activity take sufficient account of any factors related to risk of harm?
- 4.2.3 Is there effective coordination of resettlement activity?
- a) Is there effective coordination of resettlement activity with other services being delivered in the prison?
 - b) Is there effective communication with the responsible officer in the community, prior to and at the point of release?
 - c) Do resettlement services support effective handover to local services in the community?

Annex G: Example of rating characteristics

1.1 Leadership

The leadership of the organisation supports and promotes the delivery of a high quality, personalised and responsive service for all service users.

Outstanding

- Leaders set and communicate a clear direction and strategic focus, inspiring staff and uniting them to deliver the organisation's goals. The vision and strategy is stretching, challenging and innovative, focused upon the quality of delivery for service users, while remaining achievable.
- Leaders create a culture of involvement, ownership, empowerment and improvement. Safe innovation is celebrated, with staff feeling empowered to identify ways to improve how they do their job, and leaders consistently listening and explaining their decisions. A diverse range of views are encouraged.
- A collaborative and outward-looking approach is taken to working with other organisations, maximising the benefits for service users through the appropriate sharing of expertise, resources and knowledge. The provider is represented on all relevant strategic groups, representation is consistent and those attending demonstrate appropriate decision-making authority.
- Staff at all levels are actively encouraged to raise concerns and those who do are supported. There is clear and regular two-way communication, with leaders having a strong track record of listening to staff concerns and acting on them in a timely, responsive manner.
- It is clear how staff are to work together to deliver the operating model, with strong collaboration and support, clear lines of accountability and the avoidance of duplication. There is a common focus on improving the quality of delivery for service users.
- Where changes are required, they are communicated in a timely and transparent way across the organisation, with a clear proactive approach to embedding and monitoring new ways of working.

Inadequate

- The vision and strategy is unclear, out-of-date or insufficiently focused on quality. Staff are not aware of or do not understand the vision and strategy.
- The culture is top-down and directive. It is not one of fairness, openness, transparency, honesty and challenge. Staff do not feel valued, supported and appreciated. Their views are not sought and decisions are not explained, resulting in a lack of alignment between the issues described by staff and those understood by leaders. When staff do raise concerns, they are not treated with respect. The culture is defensive.
- There are no detailed or realistic plans to deliver the vision and strategy, progress is not being reviewed and leaders are out of touch with what is happening during day-to-day services. There is minimal evidence of learning, reflective practice or innovation. Where changes are made, the impact on staff and the quality of delivery for service users is not recognised.

- The provider is represented on few strategic groups, and/or representation is sporadic or at an inappropriate decision-making level. There is evidence of blaming others.
- There is no effective system for identifying, capturing and managing issues and risks. Any mitigating actions or improvements that leaders have sought to make have been inadequate. Consequently, leaders are not doing enough to tackle poor delivery, significantly impairing the progress of service users.
- There is poor collaboration or cooperation between teams and high levels of division and conflict. Staff do not understand the fit between their roles and the operating model, and there is a lack of clarity about the authority to make decisions.
- The leadership is insufficiently focused upon safety and security, giving serious cause for concern.

Annex H: About HMI Probation

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We provide assurance on the effectiveness of work with adults and children who have offended to implement orders of the court, reduce reoffending, protect the public and safeguard the vulnerable. We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice, and use our data and information to encourage good quality services. We are independent of government, and speak independently.

Our values:

Integrity - being honest, open, professional, fair and polite, and doing the right thing.

Accountability - being reliable, standing by the evidenced conclusions and accounting fully for our actions.

Effectiveness - setting quality standards by consensus and driving improvement through valid inspection and published reports.

Inclusion - promoting attention to diversity in all aspects of our work, and making sure that the needs of potential and actual victims and service users are taken into full account by youth offending and probation services.