



UNISON working for members
in the Probation Service

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NEWS

UNISON

Northern Region

Northern Probation News

No.1— Feb 2013

Consultation on 'Transforming Rehabilitation' - Ministry of Justice Plans to Privatisise Probation

As you know the Probation Service is under huge threat and there are proposals to transfer the bulk of probation services to the private sector.

UNISON Branches and Regional Staff have been asked by UNISON's National Officers' for Probation to seek the views of our members on the issues set out in the consultation paper '**Transforming Rehabilitation - a revolution in the way we manage offenders**' – a copy of the consultation paper can be found on: <https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/transforming-rehabilitation>

The consultation paper contains proposals from the Ministry of Justice to break up the existing Probation Service by privatising 70% of its interventions and offender management work.

UNISON members are invited to send in their views on the issues set out in the consultation paper to help inform UNISON's response to the proposals. **Please send in your views by no later than Friday, 15 February 2013.**

The proposals would, if implemented, lead to the following changes to the way Probation is run in England and Wales:

- **Offender management and rehabilitation to be extended to short term prisoners.**
- **The majority of offender**

management and interventions work to be put out to competition with the private sector and voluntary sector.

- **Outsourcing/privatisation will be the tool to drive down cost.**
- **Future providers of probation services to be paid by results, i.e. in relation to the number of offenders that re-offend.**
- **Outsourced offender management and interventions to be commissioned by NOMS centrally, with contracts bundled up in large geographical areas.**
- **Contracts to run probation services to be let in conjunction with local authorities and Police and Crime Commissioners.**
- **The Public Probation Service to directly supervise only the most high risk offenders and produce court reports and risk assessments, shrinking in the process to a small, specialist service.**

UNISON remains totally and utterly opposed to the plans to privatise and break up the Probation Service. We agree with the Government's aims to

extend probation services to low risk offenders, but believe that this can be done by utilising the skills and expertise of the wider public sector, rather than assuming that only the private sector can deliver.

We favour public-public partnerships between Probation Trusts, local authorities and police forces to deliver the extended supervision and rehabilitation that the Government wants.

The proposed payment by results model also seems to be deliberately designed to prevent public sector bodies from bidding for the proposed regional contracts, because unlike the private sector, Probation Trusts are not able to take on the financial risk that this model requires.

However, it is important to remember that the Government proposals are not a done deal.

UNISON and others will be campaigning hard to defend the public Probation Service and defend its local links and strengths. We have many allies to work with and the Government must overcome many hurdles to realise its plans.

UNISON will be running a 'Keep Probation Public / Keep Probation Local' campaign and will need the support of branches, activists and members to help us.

Consultation on 'Transforming Rehabilitation' - Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Plans to Privatise Probation (continued from Page 1)

UNISON will be working with MPs and other stakeholders, including the Local Government Information Unit with which we have been working on the 'Primary Justice' concept of public-public partnerships for Probation work.

The full MoJ consultation paper was

sent direct to members (See pages 29-32), along with a UNISON Consultation Questionnaire. We are consulting members on these questions and other issues. UNISON will not be limiting its response to the Government's questions and you are free to comment on any aspect

of the Government's plans.

Please send any comments, views or ideas direct to the UNISON Regional Office to: northern@unison.co.uk or ring the Area Team 2 Helpline on: 0191-2450870 and ask to speak with Lynne Nelson or Dawn Nicholson for more information.

What else can you do?

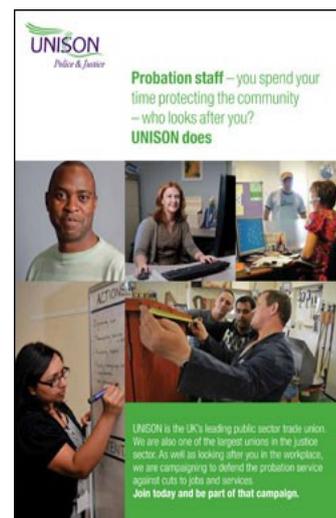
- **Contact your MP and ask them if they have signed Early Day Motion 622 (EDM622): Probation Services in England and Wales. If they haven't signed it already ask them to sign up and support the campaign to keep Probation Services Public.**

What is an Early Day Motion?

Early Day Motions (EDMs) are formal motions submitted for debate in the House of Commons. However, very few are actually debated. EDMs allow MPs to draw attention to an event or cause. MPs register their support by signing individual motions.

The EDM database contains up-to-date information on the latest EDMs and signatures added to existing EDMs. The database can be searched by EDM number, by Member (MP), by date and by topic: Click on: <http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2012-13/622>

- **Support NAPO's Statement and add your name in support: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/44403> .**
- **Get involved in UNISON's 'Keep Probation Public / Keep Probation Local' campaign**
- **Become a UNISON Rep for Northumbria Probation—we need as many reps as possible in every part of the Probation Service (full training and mentoring will be given). Contact the Area Team 2 Helpline on 0191-2450870 for more details.**
- **Encourage colleagues who aren't in a trade union to join UNISON.**
- **Get involved with the Northern Public Services Alliance—Northern TUC campaign group which includes all public sector trade unions (including UNISON and NAPO), community groups, service users etc**
- **'Like' our new UNISON Probation Staff Facebook Page www.facebook.com/pages/Unison-Probation-Staff/452521978142446**



UNISON Probation Staff Facebook Page

UNISON have launched a new Probation Staff Facebook page and hope that probation staff members who use social media will find the new page of interest.

We intend to 'grow' the page if it proves popular and hope to be able to link with Police and Justice Magazine, and the new UNISON website, to

bring news and views to members, activists and branches more quickly than before. We also want the page to reflect what is going on in probation across England and Wales.

The page is read only at this stage but are looking to open the pages to interaction once we have feedback from members, branches and regions.

In the meantime, if you would like to post stories, pictures or opinion on the page, or comment on this initiative, please contact: Helen Raymond at: h.raymond@unison.co.uk

www.facebook.com/pages/Unison-Probation-Staff/452521978142446

Fig. 1 Proposed allocation of functions for different offender groups

	Market	Public Sector
Low / Medium Risk Offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid by results to rehabilitate offenders Methods likely to include 'through the gate' mentoring, and supporting access to accommodation / employment / training / substance misuse treatment, in addition to delivery of sentence / licence requirements • Inform public sector probation service of available and suitable interventions to inform advice to court on sentencing options / licence conditions • Ensure that escalating risk of serious harm is identified and managed in conjunction with the public sector probation service • Notify the public sector probation service or court of breaches of community orders, suspended sentence requirements and licence conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for public protection • Initial risk assessment of offenders • Advice to court and Parole Board on sentencing / licence conditions • Advice on return to court and recall to custody in cases of breach of order or licence conditions • Engage with providers, advising on managing risk and responding to escalating risk of serious harm
High Risk Offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver community order requirements and rehabilitative interventions where commissioned to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable for public protection • Initial risk assessment and advice to court and Parole Board as above • Direct offender management, working with MAPPA and other partners

