



HM Prison &  
Probation Service

# Introducing the Draft Target Operating Model

Probation Reform Programme

March 2020



# Introducing the Draft Target Operating Model

This model is the blueprint for a strengthened probation service – one that keeps the public safe through the effective supervision of offenders in the community, providing credible alternatives to custody for sentencers. It looks to help those subject to probation services by identifying the right rehabilitative support to address offending behaviour, whilst supporting victims to access high quality, timely and effective support to help them cope and, as far as possible, recover from the effects of crime and rebuild their lives. This Target Operating Model comes at a time when the Prime Minister has placed public protection and safer communities among the Government's top priorities.

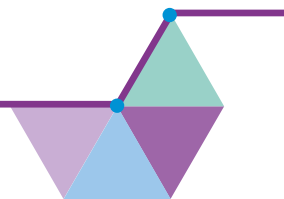
The model is built on two guiding principles. First, our people – probation practitioners in the NPS workforce – will be central to achieving this. By giving probation practitioners the right tools and support, we will help them to assess individuals' risk, protect the public and change the underlying behaviour of those they supervise to break the cycle of re-offending. Second, to achieve the outcomes we are seeking, we need leadership that is grounded in our local communities, orientated towards their needs and able to convene the local public, private and third sector partners.

A strengthened service will place probation as the catalyst for systemic improvement across the criminal justice system – our courts, our prisons and our communities – to:

- ▲ **Assess** those charged with a crime so our courts can be advised of the often-complex factors at play in an individual's circumstances. By getting this diagnosis right, probation can make sure the best interventions are being deployed that can divert the right people from prison by delivering safe and viable alternatives to custody.
- ▲ **Protect** the public and victims of crime by managing the ever-changing needs and risk profiles of individuals subject to probation services, working to ensure they fulfil the conditions of their sentence and that swift action is taken when they do not.
- ▲ **Change people's lives** by delivering the right interventions to support people and provide the rehabilitation required to prevent future crimes.

The Government is now putting reforms in place to reinvigorate the probation service and ensure it can reliably deliver its essential services, and continue to develop and innovate. Probation service staff will have their professional skills respected and developed, operations will be simplified, and the estate and technology will be modernised.

With a need to prepare for the insights our data-rich world offers, and the desire to better design and tailor public services to the end-user, the reforms will allow probation to forge partnerships or jointly commission services with local partners enabling us to draw upon the experience and innovation that sits in other sectors.





## What is changing?

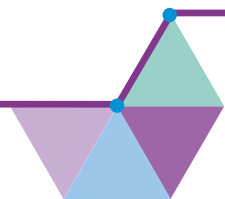
To learn lessons from the probation service's recent past, and to build on its historic strengths, each element of probation's work has been reviewed with potential changes consulted on with the delivery partners, external stakeholders, staff and professional leadership.

These changes fall into five main areas:

- ▲ **Unifying how sentences are managed so all individuals are case-managed within the same organisation, the National Probation Service (NPS).** This provides greater clarity on the responsibility for cases, and improves continuity for those under supervision. Probation practitioners managing the post-release licence, or sentence on behalf of the court, can focus on this and engage other interventions or sources of support.
- ▲ **Creating new regional probation leadership structures that enable greater local accountability and direction setting.** We are creating a new leadership role to lead 11 new probation regions in England as well as a Director in Wales. Our 12 Regional Probation Director roles have been created to give senior managers autonomy to commit resources alongside other local decision-makers and partners. These regional roles provide visible leadership, accountability at the right level, and responsiveness to scrutiny or challenge. They provide confidence that the service can also adapt and drive national change when required by shifting circumstances or events.
- ▲ **Enabling partnerships to deliver effective rehabilitation services.** We will commission and co-commission specialist services from other providers in the commercial, voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors, where their services offer greater capacity, better value, or specialism and innovation.

As devolution has pushed powers and decision making out of Whitehall – with PCCs, devolution in Wales and the emergence of influential Mayors – probation will be able to contribute to local problem-solving and respond to regional challenges. New regional leaders will focus on bringing together other parts of the justice system at a more local level under shared objectives. We have designed the competition and commissioning processes to create greater ability to co-commission services, and to give more direct opportunities for national and local voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to deliver services.

- ▲ **Modernising probation's estate and technology** so that it better supports the service's work by providing the right physical space for working with individuals or groups, a high-quality working environment for staff and, where possible, encouraging collaboration with those working with the same individuals through co-location. Technology will be upgraded to enable better recording and sharing of information, and better analysis of data to inform effective decisions and planning.
- ▲ **Enabling staff to be their best.** There is considerable evidence on reducing reoffending that confirms the importance of the quality of the face-to-face relationship that sits at the heart of sentence management. While working in probation is frequently seen as a vocation, the role still demands and deserves a clear framework for professional development. Our workforce strategy will be driven by the aim to retain and recruit the best people from diverse backgrounds, ensure our staff have the right support and skills they need, and provide them with professionally rewarding career paths.





## Next steps

The Draft Target Operating Model describes in more detail how we are shaping the service in its next evolution. We are approaching this reform eager to learn as we implement, iterating our approach to achieve the best design to keep the public safe.