



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Action Plan Submitted: 29 August 2023

**A Response to the HM Inspectorate of Probation Inspection
Recommendations:**

North West region - Blackburn with Darwen PDU, Cheshire West PDU,
Cumbria PDU, Knowsley and St Helens PDU and Liverpool North PDU

Letter to Regional Probation Director published: 27 July 2023

INTRODUCTION

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. It reports on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children.

In response to the report, HMPPS/MoJ are required to draft a robust and timely action plan to address the recommendations. The action plan confirms whether recommendations are agreed, partly agreed or not agreed (see categorisations below). Where a recommendation is agreed or partly agreed, the action plan provides specific steps and actions to address these. Actions are clear, measurable, achievable and relevant with the owner and timescale of each step clearly identified. Action plans are published on the HMPPS website.

Term	Definition	Additional comment
Agreed	All of the recommendation is agreed with, can be achieved and is affordable.	The response should clearly explain how the recommendation will be achieved along with timescales. Actions should be as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) as possible. Actions should be specific enough to be tracked for progress.
Partly Agreed	Only part of the recommendation is agreed with, is achievable, affordable and will be implemented. This might be because we cannot implement the whole recommendation because of commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.	The response must state clearly which part of the recommendation will be implemented along with SMART actions and tracked for progress. There must be an explanation of why we cannot fully agree the recommendation - this must state clearly whether this is due to commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.
Not Agreed	The recommendation is not agreed and will not be implemented. This might be because of commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.	The response must clearly state the reasons why we have chosen this option. There must be an explanation of why we cannot agree the recommendation - this must state clearly whether this is due to commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.

ACTION PLAN: PROBATION SERVICE – North West Region

1. Rec No	2. Recommendation	3. Agreed/ Partly Agreed/ Not Agreed	4. Response Action Taken/Planned	5. Responsible Owner (Including named individuals and their functional role or department)	6. Target Date
Cheshire West PDU should:					
1	Ensure new and inexperienced staff are provided with robust management oversight to improve the quality of their work to keep people safe.	Agreed	<p>A dedicated manager will be identified to support new and inexperienced staff, they will complete a monthly dip sample of their management oversight aimed at assessing the quality of this work in relation to keeping people safe.</p> <p>Quarterly workshops on management oversight and assessment quality will be initiated regionally which all PDU Senior Probation Officers (SPOs) will attend. Following this they will be required to undertake a minimum of one detailed assessment assurance per practitioner per year followed by a session to discuss findings in line with Reflective Practice Supervision Standards (RPSS).</p>	<p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of PDU Head of Performance and Quality</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p>
2	Follow up on domestic abuse and child safeguarding checks and use the information provided by the police and children's social care to inform risk assessments, plans and work with people on probation.	Agreed	<p>A robust regional report will be designed and implemented which identifies missed checks for domestic abuse and child safeguarding and build in follow up activity.</p> <p>A review of the resourcing required to ensure completion of all required checks and timely responses will be completed.</p> <p>A review of all existing domestic abuse and child safeguarding guidance will be undertaken and developed into user friendly information.</p> <p>This information will be delivered via monthly professional development sessions to enhance practice in relation to</p>	<p>Head of PDU Head of Public Protection</p> <p>Head of Public Protection</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p>

			<p>applying information from domestic abuse and safeguarding checks.</p> <p>SPOs will utilise the revised guidance and learning in oversight activity including OASys countersigning, management oversight, reflective case discussions and the sharing of Regional Case Audit Tool (RCAT) feedback. Monthly Management Oversight workshops to support this will start in September 2023.</p> <p>A domestic abuse and child safeguarding specific audit will be carried out in January 2024 to assess the impact of the practice development activity. The findings will be shared to identify further activity needed and any follow up actions relevant to the Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) to take forward to embed practice.</p>	<p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality</p>	<p>December 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p>
3	Increase their use of commissioned rehabilitative services (CRS) to support the desistance of people on probation.	Agreed	<p>All practitioners will attend the good sentence management workshop offered by the regional Quality Development Team and this will be followed up in the planned sentence planning PDU practice development day.</p> <p>Analysis of monthly RCAT results is being undertaken to identify trends and assess the extent to which this development activity is supporting practice improvements. In accordance with the regional strategy this is shared directly with SPOs each month to support reflective case discussions.</p> <p>Two regional CRS training sessions will be delivered to capture all new practitioners and provide a refresh for staff who attended the session delivered in March 2023.</p>	<p>Head of PDU Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of PDU Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of Community Integration</p>	<p>October 2023</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>December 2023</p>
4	Take greater account of the views of people on probation to inform the provision of services.	Agreed	The PDU will implement an Engaging People on Probation (EPOP) action plan, and this will be subject to quarterly review with the support of the regional EPOP lead. The first step in the plan is to establish EPOP single point of contact forums in September 2023, with representation from each office, to ensure the views and needs of those with protected characteristics are met.	Head of PDU	June 2024
5	Ensure staff have sufficient knowledge, skills and resources to work effectively with people on probation from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.	Agreed	Awareness and use of the race engagement toolkit will be increased by relaunching it to the staff group via a local briefing session.	Head of PDU Regional Equality Lead	October 2023

			<p>Management information will be developed to identify cases from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and implement a schedule to share this with practitioners and SPOs to help identify relevant cases.</p> <p>A Racial Inclusion and Striving for Equality (RISE) cultural awareness workshop will be delivered to all PDU staff.</p>	<p>Head of PDU Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Regional Equality Lead</p>	<p>October 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p>
6	Improve the consistency and quality of recording in relation to Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) records.	Agreed	Ringfenced time will be introduced for ViSOR single points of contact to update the system and commence monthly reporting and oversight to improve quality.	Head of PDU Head of Public Protection	September 2023
Blackburn with Darwen PDU should:					
7	Improve the quality of court reports to inform sentencing.	Agreed	<p>Court reports are now gatekept in accordance with national requirements, this is assured via a monthly report.</p> <p>A robust regional report will be designed and implemented which identifies missed checks for domestic abuse and child safeguarding and build in follow up activity.</p> <p>A review of the resourcing required to ensure completion of all required checks and timely responses will be completed.</p> <p>An audit on the current quality of court reports will be undertaken, a training and development plan will subsequently be completed to address gaps and commence training and development work with staff to improve quality and inform sentencing.</p> <p>A review of all existing domestic abuse and child safeguarding guidance will be undertaken and developed into user friendly information with a specific emphasis on court.</p> <p>This information will be delivered via monthly professional development sessions to enhance practice in relation to applying information from domestic abuse and safeguarding checks with a specific emphasis on court.</p> <p>Court SPOs will utilise the revised guidance and learning in oversight activity including OASys countersigning, management oversight & reflective case discussions. Monthly Management Oversight workshops to support this will start in September 2023 with court specific ones to be</p>	<p>Head of PDU Regional Court Lead</p> <p>Head of Public Protection Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Public Protection</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of PDU</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p>

			<p>delivered to court staff. The contents and guidance will be utilised by all staff by December 2023.</p> <p>The new court audit tool (CAT) commenced in August 2023; the findings once known will be shared with Court leads. This information will be utilised to provide assurance that Risk of Harm Assessments (ROSHa) and Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) are being undertaken to inform reports or address gaps where they are identified at a team and individual level.</p>	<p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>December 2023</p>
8	Ensure diversity is prioritised in both strategic and operational practice.	Agreed	<p>A named equalities lead will be identified to enable immediate sharing of diversity plans and activity as well as supplementing existing regional governance with a forum to support identified leads.</p> <p>A PDU Diversity Action Plan will be developed and implemented, prioritisation of this activity will be reflected in the PDU delivery plan.</p>	<p>Head of PDU Regional Equalities Lead</p> <p>Head of PDU</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p>
9	Develop and implement a stronger offer to engage the voice of people on probation.	Agreed	<p>A PDU Engaging People on Probation action plan has been developed with actions identified.</p> <p>The plan will be implemented to meet local needs and give a stronger offer to engage the voice of people on probation</p>	<p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of PDU</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>March 2024</p>
10	Ensure the delivery of training is prioritised to enhance the skills of the workforce and put in place a blended offer of online and in-person staff training.	Agreed	<p>Monthly practice development days for staff are now being delivered, focussing on key areas such as assessment and risk management, this includes a sufficient level of in-person delivery. This is supporting and enhancing the existing national Learning and Development offer.</p>	<p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
Knowsley & St Helens PDU and Liverpool North PDU should:					
11	<p>Ensure information relating to domestic abuse history is obtained promptly and sufficiently analysed to support the management of risk of harm to others</p> <p>and</p> <p>Ensure information relating to child safeguarding is routinely obtained and used to ensure risks to children are</p>	Agreed	<p>A Pan Merseyside project management group is now in place with weekly oversight meetings in each PDU, tracking common issues or mistakes.</p> <p>A medium-term plan will be created with input from all stakeholders to revise systems to enhance digital capability for information sharing and minimise risk of further backlogs.</p> <p>A robust regional report will be designed and implemented which identifies missed checks for domestic abuse and child safeguarding and build in follow up activity.</p>	<p>Head of Public Protection Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Public Protection Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Public Protection Head of Performance and Quality</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p> <p>October 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p>

	understood and safety arrangements are in place.		<p>A review of the resourcing required to ensure completion of all required checks and timely responses will be completed.</p> <p>A review of all existing domestic abuse and child safeguarding guidance will be undertaken and developed into user friendly information.</p> <p>This information will be delivered via monthly professional development sessions to enhance practice in relation to applying information from domestic abuse and safeguarding checks.</p> <p>SPOs will utilise the revised guidance and learning in oversight activity including OASys countersigning, management oversight, reflective case discussions and the sharing of Regional Case Audit Tool (RCAT) feedback. Monthly Management Oversight workshops to support this will start in September 2023.</p> <p>A domestic abuse and child safeguarding specific audit will be carried out in January 2024 to assess the impact of the practice development activity. The findings will be shared to identify further activity needed and any follow up actions relevant to the Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) to take forward to embed practice.</p>	<p>Head of Public Protection</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p>
12	Provide the necessary training and learning opportunities to support practitioners to apply professional curiosity.	Agreed	<p>In accordance with the Regional Quality Improvement Plan, the HMIP Professional Curiosity resources have been launched to practitioners and middle managers.</p> <p>Work to embed this approach across the groups has commenced. This will predominantly be achieved by the introduction of whole case reflective practice into the PDU monthly practice development days and is to include use of RCAT.</p> <p>The programme of work in the PDU Quality Improvement Plan will be delivered to embed a professionally curious culture by integrating this within management oversight, case discussions, and practice development.</p>	<p>Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of PDU</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p>
13	Ensure managers are providing effective management oversight, focusing on the quality of work relating to risk of harm.	Agreed	<p>An effective PDU level tracking and scheduling of management oversight using available management information will be developed.</p>	<p>Head of PDU</p>	<p>September 2023</p>

			<p>A monthly dip sample of management oversight aimed at assessing the quality of this work in relation to keeping people safe will be implemented to improve governance.</p> <p>Quarterly workshops on management oversight and assessment quality will be initiated regionally which all PDU Senior Probation Officers (SPOs) will attend. Following this they will be required to undertake a minimum of one detailed assessment assurance per practitioner per year followed by a session to discuss findings in line with Reflective Practice Supervision Standards (RPSS).</p>	<p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p>
14	Ensure that the interventions necessary to improve desistance and reduce reoffending and risk of harm are provided in all cases.	Agreed	<p>All practitioners will attend the good sentence management workshop offered by the regional Quality Development Team and this will be followed up in the sentence planning PDU practice development day.</p> <p>Analysis of monthly RCAT results is being undertaken to identify trends and assess the extent to which this development activity is supporting practice improvements. In accordance with the regional strategy this is shared directly with SPOs each month to support reflective case discussions.</p> <p>Toolkits and structured interventions will be relaunched via workshops and champions, ensuring key messages are given regarding the requirement to use these to improve desistance and reduce reoffending and risk of harm. The delivery of this will be strengthened through the implementation and adherence to a monthly target of structured intervention use.</p>	<p>Head of PDU Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of PDU</p>	<p>October 2023</p> <p>Completed and Ongoing</p> <p>November 2023</p>
Blackburn with Darwen PDU, Knowsley & St Helens PDU and Liverpool North PDU should:					
15	Improve the quality of work to assess, plan for, manage and review risk of harm.	Agreed	<p>Monthly practice development days for staff are now being delivered, focussing on key areas such as assessment and risk management, this includes a sufficient level of in-person delivery.</p> <p>Quarterly workshops on management oversight and assessment quality will be initiated regionally which all PDU Senior Probation Officers (SPOs) will attend. Following this they will be required to undertake a minimum of one detailed assessment assurance per practitioner per year followed by</p>	<p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p> <p>September 2023</p>

			<p>a reflective practice supervision session to discuss findings in line with Reflective Practice Supervision Standards (RPSS).</p> <p>Risk Assessment Practice (RAP) workshops are now being offered monthly virtually.</p> <p>In person RAP workshops will be offered in geographical sub regions starting in September 2023 through to early 2024.</p>	<p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>March 2024</p>
Cumbria PDU should:					
16	Ensure domestic abuse and safeguarding information is analysed sufficiently to inform the quality of assessment, planning, and management of people on probation.	Agreed	<p>A robust regional report will be designed and implemented which identifies missed checks for domestic abuse and child safeguarding and build in follow up activity.</p> <p>A review of the resourcing required to ensure completion of all required checks and timely responses will be completed.</p> <p>A review of all existing domestic abuse and child safeguarding guidance will be undertaken and developed into user friendly information.</p> <p>This information will be delivered via monthly professional development sessions to enhance practice in relation to applying information from domestic abuse and safeguarding checks.</p> <p>SPOs will utilise the revised guidance and learning in oversight activity including OASys countersigning, management oversight, reflective case discussions and the sharing of Regional Case Audit Tool (RCAT) feedback. Monthly Management Oversight workshops to support this will start in September 2023.</p> <p>A domestic abuse and child safeguarding specific audit will be carried out in January 2024 to assess the impact of the practice development activity. The findings will be shared to identify further activity needed and any follow up actions relevant to the Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) to take forward to embed practice.</p>	<p>Head of Public Protection Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of Public Protection</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality</p> <p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p>

17	Review the focus of management oversight to ensure that risk of serious harm is accurately assessed and proactively managed.	Agreed	<p>A monthly dip sample of management oversight aimed at assessing the quality of this work in relation to keeping people safe will be implemented to improve governance.</p> <p>Quarterly workshops on management oversight and assessment quality will be initiated regionally which all PDU Senior Probation Officers (SPOs) will attend. Following this they will be required to undertake a minimum of one detailed assessment assurance per practitioner per year followed by a reflective practice supervision session to discuss findings in line with Reflective Practice Supervision Standards (RPSS).</p>	<p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p>
18	Have an effective process in place to ensure actions set by managers are completed effectively.	Agreed	A Management Oversight Improvement Group will be established, to ensure consistency of quality and actions set in management oversight meetings are completed.	Head of PDU	November 2023
19	Improve planning activity in high-risk cases with particular focus on links to the work of other agencies.	Agreed	<p>Monthly practice development days for staff are now being delivered, focussing on key areas such as assessment and risk management, this includes a sufficient level of in-person delivery.</p> <p>Risk Assessment Practice (RAP) workshops are now being offered monthly virtually.</p> <p>In person RAP workshops will be offered in geographical sub regions starting in September 2023 through to early 2024.</p>	<p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of Performance and Quality Head of PDU</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>March 2024</p>
20	Improve pre- and post-release engagement activity for those in custody to ensure that assessment and plans are timely and meet the needs of those on probation.	Agreed	<p>An instruction to all staff confirming the requirement to undertake Prison Offender Manager (POM) to Community Offender Manager (COM) handover meetings in all relevant cases has been published and shared.</p> <p>Professional development sessions to enhance practice in relation to pre-release planning and preparation will be delivered. This will include accessing POM/COM handover briefings and will be followed up by agreeing a PDU approach to ensure SPOs are checking and assured on the quality of the work.</p>	<p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Head of PDU Head of Performance and Quality</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>December 2023</p>
21	Ensure diversity across all protected characteristics is prioritised and barriers	Agreed	A RISE cultural awareness workshop will be delivered to all PDU staff to increase understanding.	Regional Equalities Lead	December 2023

	for staff and people on probation are fully understood and addressed.		A named equalities lead will be identified to enable immediate sharing of diversity plans and activity as well as supplementing existing regional governance with a forum to support identified leads.	Head of PDU Regional Equalities Lead	September 2023
North West region should:					
22	Ensure Senior Probation Officers have sufficient capacity and resources to undertake effective management oversight of casework. (Cheshire West PDU) and Ensure middle managers have sufficient capacity to provide the appropriate level of oversight according to the needs of staff members. (Cumbria PDU)	Agreed	SPO development is a priority in the North West Regional Quality Improvement Plan for 2023/24. Middle manager/ SPO resource is now at establishment levels in Cheshire West and Cumbria. In addition, administrative support for the SPO group from the management support hub has increased in the last six months and will continue to grow to improve capacity. Quarterly workshops on management oversight and assessment quality will be initiated regionally which all PDU Senior Probation Officers (SPOs) will attend. Following this they will be required to undertake a minimum of one detailed assessment assurance per practitioner per year followed by a reflective practice supervision session to discuss findings in line with Reflective Practice Supervision Standards (RPSS).	Head of Operations Heads of PDU Head of Corporate Services Heads of PDU Head of Performance & Quality	Completed September 2023
23	Ensure unpaid work (UPW) requirements start promptly. (Cheshire West PDU)	Agreed	At the time of inspection, the North West region had recently developed and implemented two performance frameworks for Unpaid Work. These are now fully embedded, and this has supported the region to achieve targets in respect of timely starts of Unpaid Work.	Head of Interventions	Completed
24	Support the PDU to improve joint working with local prisons and enhance pre-release engagement and planning. (Cheshire West PDU)	Agreed	HMPPS have developed and implemented a Pre-release and Resettlement Policy Framework and Guidance which sets out the role of pre-release teams and how they should work with prison and community teams. PDU Heads are to be included in local networking events with prison governors with the next event taking place in September 2023. Quarterly attendance by Prison-based SPOs (Offender Management in Custody OMiC and Pre-Release) to local PDU management meetings to improve connection and operational understanding between prison and community-	HMPPS Regional Resettlement Lead Regional Resettlement Lead Head of Operations	Completed September 2023 September 2023

			based teams (OMiC and Pre-Release) will become mandatory.		
25	Consider the implementation of a regional intranet for staff to access regional updates, policies and tools to support interventions. (Blackburn with Darwen PDU)	Not agreed	The recommendation is not agreed for resource and operational reasons. The region does not have sufficient resources to transform the current communication approach which is well utilised by staff.		
26	Ensure police information relating to domestic abuse is accessible and of sufficient quality to ensure the effective management of risk. (Liverpool North PDU) and Ensure police information relating to domestic abuse is accessible and of sufficient quality at the earliest stage in the assessment process. (Knowsley & St Helens PDU)	Agreed	A robust regional report will be designed and implemented which identifies missed checks for domestic abuse and child safeguarding and build in follow up activity. A review of the resourcing required to ensure completion of all required checks and timely responses will be completed	Head of Public Protection Head of Performance and Quality Head of Public Protection	September 2023 September 2023
27	Review the impact and efficacy of the regional enforcement hub and develop a consistent approach to enforcement quality assurance so that practitioners, court staff and sentencers are confident in the quality of this work. (Cumbria PDU)	Agreed	The Performance and Quality team will complete an audit to assess the quality of work going into and out of the North West Enforcement Hub (NWEH). A regional effectiveness review will also be undertaken of the impact of the NWEH. The subsequent findings of the audit will ensure development activity will be identified and delivered to ensure consistency and quality.	North West Court Lead Head of Performance and Quality North West Court Lead Head of Performance and Quality	October 2023 March 2024
28	Undertake an impact assessment to provide an understanding of how learning and development is reflected in the quality-of-service delivery to inform future learning needs. (Cumbria PDU)	Partly Agreed	The recommendation is partly agreed for operational reasons. Whilst the region will not be carrying out an impact assessment several actions will be carried out to help understand how learning and development is reflected in the quality-of-service delivery which will help inform future learning needs. The 2023/2024 PDU Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) has been developed and all key areas of practice development activity expected within the PDU outlined. The impact of delivered activity against defined success metrics will be demonstrated in the PDU QIP via bimonthly	Head of PDU Head of PDU Head of Performance &Quality	Completed March 2024

			<p>reviews drawing on RCAT and audit findings to inform progress made.</p> <p>Protected Learning/Practice Development Days are now being held and focus on the practice development areas identified in the QIP.</p> <p>Local themes of learning (Serious Further Offences, RCAT & bespoke audits etc.) are being monitored to ensure the PDU QIP captures any additional practice improvement focus.</p> <p>Quarterly reports on mandated training completion levels within the PDU are being provided and monitored by the Head of PDU to ensure that all necessary training is undertaken and understood.</p>	<p>Head of PDU Head of Performance & Quality</p> <p>Head of PDU</p> <p>Regional Learning & Development Team Head of PDU</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p> <p>Completed and Ongoing</p> <p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
29	Improve completion rates of accredited programmes and structured interventions. (Cumbria PDU)	Agreed	A Cumbria PDU specific plan will be developed to expand the delivery of accredited programmes and structured interventions across Cumbria sites and to work with staff to increase referrals.	Head of Interventions Head of Programmes Head of PDU	November 2023
North West region and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service should:					
30	<p>Ensure sufficient infrastructure in the region to appropriately support the number of people recruited onto the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) training programme, which includes ensuring PDUs have sufficient capacity to deliver effective training, co-working opportunities, and management oversight to trainees. (Cheshire West PDU)</p> <p>and</p> <p>Evaluate the PQiP allocation process to ensure there is sufficient infrastructure within PDUs to manage high numbers of staff in training. (Blackburn with Darwen PDU)</p>	Agreed	<p>The North West region has taken a whole organisation approach to deliver the appropriate support and infrastructure for PQiPs. Dedicated SPOs are in place and provide supervision, oversight and practice development. Practice Tutor Assessors (PTAs) are in post across the region offering support, developmental sessions and assessment activity for the Vocational Qualification Learners. PQiP's can also access buddy's and co-working arrangements to help with team integration and working on complex medium and high-risk cases, this is complimented by quality development support via training events and practice sessions.</p> <p>Mentoring will be provided for all learners in the region for the last nine months of their qualification.</p> <p>In 2023/24 PQiP recruitment in the North West region will be limited to Probation Service Officer (PSO) progression</p>	<p>North West Probation Learning Lead</p> <p>North West Probation Learning Lead</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>October 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p>

			<p>candidates only, in order to reduce volumes and provide respite for the region whilst continuing to recruit in line with demand.</p> <p>A review has been undertaken to assess current PQiP resource infrastructure to ensure sufficient ratios to PQiP learners for 2023/24.</p> <p>A package of additional support for PQiP learners will be agreed and options developed within the PQiP learner support model to support regions in managing the volume of learners on an interim basis until numbers decrease (launched May 2022). This package will remain in place until learner volumes reduce by March 2024 and an enhanced service to learners can be offered in line with the Criminal Justice Learning Manual specification.</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>March 2024</p>
31	<p>Review the commissioned rehabilitative services (CRS) contract for accommodation support services to provide an effective service which meets the needs of people on probation. (Blackburn with Darwen PDU)</p> <p>and</p> <p>Review contract arrangements for Commissioned Rehabilitation Services (CRS) accommodation services to ensure that these meet the needs of people on probation. (Liverpool North PDU)</p>	Agreed	<p>When the NPS and CRCs unified in June 2021 to become the Probation Service, responsibility for the delivery of resettlement services moved to the Regional Probation Directors (RPDs) with key interventions delivered by Commissioned Rehabilitative Service (CRS) providers (commissioned by RPDs). Where this service is not meeting those needs, the North West Contract Management Team will apply contractual levers available to hold the supplier to account i.e. through improvement plans and regular reviews with the supplier.</p> <p>CRS Accommodation support and assistance includes; completion of accommodation applications and applications for Housing Benefit/related benefits; support and guidance to ensure continuation of an existing tenancy, to understand and comply with any tenancy obligations, to avoid or manage accommodation arrears and to access rent deposit and rent advance schemes; advocacy and liaison with accommodation providers to maintain accommodation.</p> <p>The current CRS Accommodation contract and the future specification for CRS Accommodation contracts are being reviewed by both the region and HMPPS functions. The</p>	<p>Head of Resettlement and Commissioned Rehabilitative Services</p> <p>Head of Resettlement and Commissioned Rehabilitative Services</p> <p>Head of Resettlement and Commissioned Rehabilitative Services</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>December 2023</p>

			decision on future design will be agreed with the regions in 2023.		
His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service should:					
32	Resource probation regions sufficiently to oversee the training and development needs of a newly experienced workforce. (Cheshire West PDU)	Agreed	The required learning for all PQIP's and PSO's in relation to risk assessment, planning and management has been redesigned. The Module 2 Risk Management, Risk Assessment, and Sentence Planning Foundation Learning was launched in March 2023.	Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme	Completed
			The scoping of workforce numbers and learning needs was undertaken jointly with North-West region to determine Learning & Development demand. A revised process was subsequently implemented to ensure demands are met and to resolve learning back logs.	Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme	Completed
33	Provide suitable buildings and estates for staff, people on probation and services for effective service delivery. (Blackburn with Darwen PDU)	Agreed	The Probation Reform Programme's Estate workstream continues to deliver estate improvements across England and Wales. With the limited funding available HMPPS have had to prioritise where that funding is spent. The North West region has already had significant investment in some of its estate and further investment in the area is to follow this financial year and beyond. HMPPS are also drawing up a second estates business case – following on from the case submitted as part of the Probation Reform Programme – and this will detail further ambitions to invest in the probation estate. Work has begun in earnest and there is an established list of prioritised work that will form part of that business case in advance of future spending reviews.	Deputy Director for Business Strategy and Change	May 2024
34	Improve the vetting timescales for the recruitment of staff. (Liverpool North PDU and Knowsley & St Helens PDU)	Partly Agreed	This recommendation is partly agreed for operational reasons. Whilst HMPPS are committed to improve the vetting timescales for the recruitment of staff, some of the issues impacting on timescales are subject to factors outside of the direct control of HMPPS. HMPPS has implemented a new case management vetting process for probation applications which went live in April 2023. Shared Services Connected Ltd (SSCL) now present all cases that have not been concluded to the Approvals and Compliance team no later than day 15 from commencement	Head of Personnel Security Vetting	Completed and ongoing

			<p>of the process, the Approvals and Compliance now provide a decision by day 22. This supports the unblocking and timely progression of any cases where further information is outstanding.</p> <p>HMPPS vetting will continue to monitor data to ensure that the case management process (in place from April 2023) continues to support a reduction in time to hire as intended. If time to hire begins to increase this will be reviewed and additional measures explored which will be appropriate and commensurate to the evidenced conclusion as to the reason for any increase in time to hire.</p> <p>The Approvals and Compliance team can also seek to prioritise cases presented to them by the Probation Service where vetting priorities are nationally co-ordinated across all regions. This requires a designated national SPOC to identify the agreed regions for prioritisation each month. This has been effective previously when volumes have required this approach to be taken.</p>		
35	Ensure all probation offices have reliable Wi-Fi access. (Knowsley & St Helens and Cumbria PDU)	Agreed	In collaboration with our MoJ Digital and Technology teams HMPPS have a plan in place to deliver .gov wi-fi in all probation contact centres. Work has been completed with regions to prioritise the order in which wi-fi is deployed with a focus, in the early months of deployment, on London Probation sites, but by the end of the financial year it is expected nearly all probation sites to have fully functioning wi-fi.	Deputy Director for Business Strategy and Change	March 2024
36	Review the national training offer for PSOs to ensure a consistent and equitable offer of learning and development across all regions. (Knowsley & St Helens PDU)	Agreed	<p>A systematic wholesale review of the PQiP & PSO Learning and Development (L&D) curriculum will be completed to ensure it offers a consistent and equitable offer. Following the review, a revised and refreshed curriculum will be implemented with a focus on core skills and learning at point of need prioritising live opportunities to develop and practice core practitioners' skills. The curriculum will provide the core national framework for PSO development.</p> <p>A finalised revised learning outcomes for PQiPs and PSOs will be introduced.</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p>	<p>March 2024</p> <p>October 2023</p>

37	Review the role of the middle manager to ensure they have the right capacity to provide oversight to the increased numbers of newly qualified staff and those going through training. (Cumbria PDU)	Agreed	<p>A quarterly review of the activity-based analysis of the Senior Probation Officer role (sentence management and court) will take place to update workload activity and weightings in line with the new target operating model, the implementation will be monitored, and effectiveness evaluated.</p> <p>An agreed action plan from the Managerial Role Review (MRR) and adjusted workforce plans within Probation Regions is currently being implemented.</p> <p>A further evaluation of MRR recommendations will take place to monitor ongoing impact for SPO's on the frontline.</p> <p>A review of Sentence Management is being conducted by the Workforce Planning System (WPS) to gather timings for activity. This will inform resource modelling for organisational change and capture the baseline assumptions for probation resource requirements.</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p> <p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p>	<p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p> <p>March 2024</p>
38	Improve access to Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) vetting and training. (Cumbria PDU)	Agreed	<p>External training provision has begun delivery of ViSOR training nationally. In addition to this an internal IT training team and regional IT training resource is committed to delivery of regional specific training over the next six months. The combination of both these elements of training will target all vetted staff and allow greater access to ViSOR.</p> <p>Vetting remains the main challenge in the ViSOR space. HMPPS are working with the sole provider of vetting – Warwickshire Police – to explore options for increasing their capacity to provide support. Recent analysis suggests an additional four vetting officers would be required to meet current demand and the demand created by future recruitment campaigns. HMPPS will continue to work with Warwickshire Police to explore ways and means of introducing that additional resource.</p>	<p>Deputy Director for Business Strategy and Change</p> <p>Deputy Director for Business Strategy and Change</p>	<p>January 2024</p> <p>March 2024</p>

Recommendations	
Agreed	35
Partly Agreed	2
Not Agreed	1
Total	38