



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Action Plan Submitted: 1st September 2025

A Response to HM Inspectorate of Probation inspection of probation services
in the East Midlands Region Probation Service

Regional Report Published: 4th August 2025

INTRODUCTION

HM Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth justice and probation services in England and Wales. It reports on the effectiveness of probation and youth justice 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 – EAST MIDLANDS REGION

1. Rec No	2. Recommendation	3. Agreed/ Partly Agreed/ Not Agreed	4. Response Action Taken/Planned	5. Responsible Owner	6. Target Date
East Midlands Probation region should:					
1	Improve the quality of court reports to inform sentencing, ensuring domestic abuse and safeguarding information is used effectively	Agreed	<p>Regional CCAT (audit) training to be conducted for Senior Probation Officers (SPOs). Implementation of Quality Development Assurance Cycle (QDAC), including reflective supervision and use of CCAT to increase quality of Pre Sentence Reports (PSRs) and sentencing advice.</p> <p>A Practitioner Working Group will be set up to advise regarding PSR length and type to ensure timely, succinct, and quality PSRs to inform sentencing, with particular attention being given to priority cohort defendants and those with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Regional implementation of the WHAT model to enhance risk assessments of domestic abuse (DA) and safeguarding (SG) information, required actions and sentencing proposals.</p> <p>The WHAT model requires the practitioner to ask the following in respect of DA and SG information received: <i>What is the new information telling me? How does this information impact risk of safeguarding? Any actions that need to be taken with this information to ensure peoples safety? Timeframe to complete any required actions and tell and inform a Senior Probation Officer?</i> The consistent application of using the WHAT model will address the concerns raised in the inspection. This will be monitored through regular PDU audit activity.</p> <p>In Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire PDU, issues were identified regarding the format of information shared by Police and Social Care partners. Liaison in these PDU areas is ongoing at a senior strategic level to seek to resolve this issue. Similar arrangements</p>	<p>Head of Operations, Head of Performance & Quality, Strategic Lead for Courts</p> <p>Head of Operations, Strategic Lead for Courts</p> <p>Head of Operations, PDU Heads</p> <p>PDU Heads</p> <p>PDU Heads</p>	<p>December 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>August 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p>

			will be set up in the other PDU's to achieve consistency of information shared across the region.		
2	Work with sentencers to ensure advice from probation court staff is obtained pre-sentence	Agreed	<p>Maintain effective sentencer liaison, monitored and audited through the judicial engagement tracker. Ensure pre-court meetings are taking place consistently through monthly accountability meetings to increase volume of PSR's.</p> <p>Adequate resourcing of Court staff, teams operating to target staffing mode by active recruitment processes and monitored by monthly workforce planning meetings.</p>	<p>Head of Operations, Strategic Lead for Courts, PDU Heads</p> <p>Regional Probation Director, Head of Operations, PDU Heads</p>	<p>March 2026</p> <p>January 2026</p>
3	Ensure that all MAPPA Level 1 cases have sufficient management oversight and that there is an appropriate focus on information exchange with other agencies to inform risk assessment and review	Agreed	<p>Level 1 case reviews are being prioritised and the numbers of outstanding reviews closely monitored using management information provided within the region to Senior Leaders and subsequent monthly Accountability Meetings to monitor completion levels. This will also focus on the quality of information exchanged with other agencies.</p> <p>East Midlands will reduce the MAPPA Level 1 backlog to level which is within tolerance level advised by the Senior Operational Leadership Team (SOLT).</p> <p>Consistent application of MAPPA level 1 review process to be monitored in all PDU's through an annual audit sample which will be undertaken by Quality Development Officers. Findings will be delivered to the Public Protection Board and an action plan formulated on findings.</p>	<p>Head of Operations, Head of Performance & Quality</p> <p>Head of Operations, Head of Performance & Quality</p> <p>Head of Public Protection, Head of Performance & Quality</p>	<p>Ongoing monthly</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p>
4	Improve the quality of work to assess, plan for, manage and review risk of harm	Agreed	<p>Undertake Domestic Violence / Safeguarding audits on all 6 PDU's within the region. Remedial action to be taken immediately on any cases which are identified as requiring attention and appropriate feedback provided to the practitioner.</p> <p>The East Midlands region have commissioned De Montford University to help deliver and support the application of risk management skills through case-based practice. Sessions will be delivered to a targeted cohort.</p>	<p>Head of P&Q / Heads of PDU</p> <p>Head of Operations</p>	<p>September 2025</p> <p>September 2025</p>

			Work on an audit tool for Pre-Release activity is to be developed between Prison SPO's and Quality Development Team. This will be completed for use by 31st October 2025.	Head of P&Q / Head of Public Protection	October 2025
5	Ensure that learning delivered by the region is embedded by managers and practitioners	Agreed	<p>East Midlands region Probation Service will ensure that all staff complete the mandatory and required training specified to their job role. Progress will be monitored through monthly accountability meetings using management information dashboards.</p> <p>Delivery by SPO's within PDU's of the new Management Oversight Framework and Quality Development and Assurance cycle. Individual case audits (R-CATs), practice observations, and personalised action plans to prioritise Public Protection activity, will identify if learning has not been embedded and relative action taken to remedy area of development identified</p> <p>Review of protected learning time arrangements across the region has been completed and the regional recommendations will be agreed and implemented by the end of September 2025.</p>	<p>Head of Operations, Probation Learning Lead.</p> <p>Head of Operations, Head of P&Q</p> <p>Head of Operations, Probation Learning Lead.</p>	<p>Ongoing monthly</p> <p>First cycle due to be completed in December 2025</p> <p>September 2025</p>
6	Ensure robust quality assurance of sentence management is in place, with appropriate manager workloads to deliver this effectively	Agreed	<p>The Quality Development team to train SPOs in the consistent application of R-CAT, which will allow the region to reliably measure public protection practice improvement.</p> <p>Implementation of the new Management Oversight Framework and Quality Development and Assurance cycle (QDAC). Individual case audits (R-CATs), practice observations, and personalised action plans to prioritise Public Protection activity.</p> <p>The QDAC cycle has 5 steps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manager undertakes CCAT / RCAT audit on a probation practitioner case 2. Manager undertakes a SEEDS observation 3. Manager undertakes post observation interview with Person on Probation 4. Manager undertakes Reflective Practice Supervision Session (RPSS) 5. Manager & Probation Practitioner agree Professional Development Plan to address themes from step 1 – 4. 	<p>Head of P&Q, Heads of P&Q</p> <p>Head of Operations, Head of P&Q</p>	<p>September 2025</p> <p>Complete</p>

			<p>The progress to be monitored through monthly PDU accountability meetings.</p> <p>First complete cycle of QDAC process completed by all PDU's by December 2025 and the second complete Cycle of QDAC process completed by all PDU's by April 2026.</p> <p>Replicate approach with C-CATs (assurance of court work). Assistance to the East Midlands region Probation Service for this process is to be provided by the Performance, Assurance and Risk Group (PAR).</p>	<p>Head of Operations, Head of P&Q</p> <p>Head of Operations, Head of Performance & Quality, Strategic Lead for Courts</p>	<p>December 2025 and April 2026</p> <p>December 2025</p>
7	Review referral rates and use of CRS to ensure that they are meeting the needs of people on probation	Agreed	<p>East Midlands region Probation Service plan to establish a 'Referral Hub' to increase the number and quality of referrals to CRS and other providers. Feasibility studies are underway which includes reviewing schemes already in place in Wales and South Central. Implementation of referral hub will take place by end of October 2025.</p> <p>A Commissioned Rehabilitation Service (CRS) dashboard has been developed to provide direct access of management information to Heads of PDU and Regional Leadership Group It provides details of referrals and includes details on whom hasn't been referred.</p> <p>The numbers of CRS referrals are closely monitored using management information provided within the region, with feedback to Senior Leaders and subsequent monthly PDU accountability meetings to monitor completion levels to meet annual targets projected.</p>	<p>Heads of Operations, Head of Community Integration</p> <p>Head of Community Integration, Head of Performance & Quality</p> <p>Head of Operations, Head of Performance & Quality</p>	<p>October 2025</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing monthly</p>
His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) should					
8	Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to the region to enable effective and timely serious further offence reviews	Agreed	Public Protection Group (PPG) has drawn up a backlog recovery plan, with alternative formats used (as was the case during the Pandemic). SOLT has agreed the plan, and PPG has shared it	Executive Director South West, South Central & Public Protection HM	September 2025

			<p>with the Inspectorate. PPG will submit advice to Ministers with a view to launching the backlog recovery plan in September 2025.</p> <p>Public Protection Group will consider whether local learning reviews can help form the basis for a new format for SFO reviews, such that reviews are proportionate as internal management reviews and accessible for victims.</p>	<p>Prison & Probation Service</p> <p>Deputy Director Public Protection</p>	January 2026
9	Ensure that senior probation officers have sufficient capacity and resource to undertake effective management oversight of casework	Agreed	<p>Central Operations Support (COS) will support the East Midlands region Probation Service in implementing the Management Oversight Framework, aiming to reduce the volume of countersigning required from SPOs. By March 2026, an evaluation will measure changes in SPO capacity and how this capacity has been reallocated to ensure reflective practice and casework oversight.</p> <p>COS will work with the East Midlands region to pilot the implementation of the recommendations from the review of business support functions in the East Midlands. The pilot will aim to reduce the amount of time that SPOs spend on HR and facilities management tasks. Evaluation activity measuring the reallocation of SPO capacity to management oversight of staff and casework will be completed by March 2026.</p>	<p>Head of Operations HMPPS Central Operations Support (COS)</p> <p>Head of Operations HMPPS Central Operations Support (COS)</p>	<p>March 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p>
10	Evaluate the effectiveness of training material delivered to practitioners in relation to keeping people safe and provide reporting mechanisms for regions to identify concerns about deficits in practitioner skills and knowledge	Partly agreed	<p>This recommendation is partly agreed because evaluation is already a key aspect of central probation learning design and there are reporting mechanisms in place for regions to identify concerns, provide feedback and commission new learning through the single commissioning route.</p> <p>All of the core national learning products have a corresponding evaluation strategy, the complexity of which is aligned with the product's organisational priority and significance. Learner feedback is sought for all learning products to provide feedback on issues such as accessibility, engagement and immediate</p>		

			<p>achievement of learning objectives. Of those products with high organisational significance, a 24-month evaluation is undertaken which seeks to measure longer term performance objectives and impact at an organisational level.</p> <p>Reporting mechanisms are in place to ensure that Probation regions can raise concerns and provide feedback, including a single commissioning route, regular engagement with Regional Probation Directors, and the presence of Probation Learning Leads (PLLs) in each region. Being linked by formal and informal channels, PLLs play a vital role in bridging regional priorities with the central Learning and Development team. This ensures two-way communication, local insight, and consistent implementation of national learning strategies.</p> <p>A new product designed for existing practitioners to enhance their risk assessment and management skills (Risk of Serious Harm: Developing and Enhancing Practice) was launched in April 2025 and will be evaluated in Spring 2026 to assess its impact on practitioner skills.</p> <p>Following 30-month review, the safeguarding suite of facilitated learning is currently being refreshed and redesigned to ensure it remains aligned with strategic priorities and reflects current policy and best practice. This redesign is grounded in extensive learner feedback and evaluation insight, with the aim of enhancing the relevance, accessibility and impact of the offer. It reflects our commitment to maintaining a high-quality, evidence-informed learning experience that supports confident, capable and safe probation practice. The refreshed learning packages are expected to launch in November 2025 for Domestic Abuse and Child Safeguarding, with Adult Safeguarding following in early 2026</p> <p>There is currently a 24m product review underway (estimated to be completed Summer 2025) to evaluate the new entrant learning package for risk assessment, management and sentence planning. This review will primarily focus on individual learning</p>	<p>DD Workforce and Capability, Transforming Delivery Directorate</p> <p>DD Workforce and Capability, Transforming Delivery Directorate</p> <p>DD Workforce and Capability, Transforming Delivery Directorate</p>	<p>May 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p> <p>August 2025</p>
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			experiences and the key learning acquired. In addition to learner feedback collected via surveys, focus groups will be facilitated to obtain further insights on learner experiences, the impact on their knowledge and their confidence/preparedness in risk assessment, risk management, sentencing planning and OASys.		
11	Delegate greater authority to regional probation directors in relation to spending, including on commissioned services and contract management, and streamline commercial processes	Agreed	<p>HMPPS are working with Commercial to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide a self-service facility where, for certain types of purchases, it will be possible for regional probation directors to take decisions above the current £10,000 threshold creating more options for low value procurement, including a portal solution for products which are not available under existing contracts <p>As this work is completed business areas will be advised of the changes.</p>	Executive Director - Directorate Contracted Operational Delivery	Ongoing

Recommendations	
Agreed	10
Partly Agreed	1
Not Agreed	0
Total	11