



Cambridgeshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Executive

Date: 27 August 2015

REDUCING OFFENDING – UPDATE ON WORK ACROSS BENCH AREA AND DEVOLUTION

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Business Coordination Board (“the Board”) on the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (“the Commissioner”) recent work with the other Police and Crime Commissioners across the ‘BeNCH’ area (Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire), the newly formed Community Rehabilitation Company (“the CRC”) and other partners in Cambridgeshire to reduce offending.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is recommended to note this report.

3. Background to work across BeNCH area

3.1 In May 2013, the Ministry of Justice published its strategy for ‘transforming rehabilitation’. The four Police and Crime Commissioners across the BeNCH area quickly recognised the high ambition within transforming rehabilitation but they also recognised the risks posed by the complex geography for this area.

3.2 They agreed that by collaborating they could be ambitious and take advantage of the opportunities brought by transforming rehabilitation, while managing the risks. They were also mindful of their duty for ensuring an efficient and effective criminal justice system for their areas.

3.3 They entered into a formal collaboration agreement, and brought together key partners. This enabled them to undertake a joint offender needs assessment and then use this to develop a Reducing Offending Strategy. An initial action plan was developed.

3.4 Through the implementation of the Ministry of Justice's transforming rehabilitation strategy, the way in which rehabilitation services are delivered has been undergoing a profound transformation. The National Probation Service was set up on 1 June 2014, along with 21 CRCs that manage low and medium risk offenders. Sodexo took ownership of the BeNCH CRC on 1 February this year.

4. BeNCH Reducing Offending Strategy

4.1 The challenges ahead are significant with budget pressures across all services and hidden demand from crimes which are currently under-reported. Given the challenges, there is a need to work together across all services to reduce demand by reducing levels of offending and reoffending.

4.2 This begins by getting communities involved to prevent and reduce crime. To create the conditions in our communities that reduce the risk of involvement in crime. Undertaking early proactive work with those at risk of offending. Encouraging people to live offence free lives. Enabling support through community networks where appropriate.

4.3 Where crime takes place, we need seamless working across policing, the criminal justice system, local authorities, probation and others to deal with that crime and prevent reoffending.

4.4 We also need to continue to develop and join together our case management of those with the most complex needs.

2. BeNCH Conference

5.1 On 24 July 2015, the four Commissioners jointly hosted an event, with the BeNCH CRC, to discuss the strategy for preventing offending and reoffending. The conference was attended by nearly 100 individuals from key organisations in the criminal justice system across the four counties.

5.2 Speakers from the National Probation Service and the BeNCH CRC updated attendees on how rehabilitation services will operate in the future. A speaker from the Troubled Families Team at the Department for Communities and Local Government outlined details of the troubled families approach and the impact this is having nationally.

5.3 Workshops focused on key issues around restorative justice, through the gate services, integrated offender management and health. Local workshops examined the key issues across the four counties.

5.4 At the end of the day a new BeNCH Reducing Offending Board was established. The Board met for the first time to consider the issues and actions that had been identified through the course of the conference.

3. BeNCH next steps

6.1 The Board was cognisant of the strong foundation of innovative work to build on across the four counties. The Board will be increasing the frequency of how often it will meet to drive this agenda. Additional work will be undertaken on through the gate and integrated offender management to ensure they can be most effective in a changing environment and to ensure that appropriate linkages are made with the troubled families approach.

6.2 Discussions are ongoing to identify if there are any lessons that can be learnt across the Eastern Region.

6.3 The new Secretary of State for Justice recently began to set out a vision for further reform of the Criminal Justice System.

7. Devolution

7.1 The Government is currently taking a Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill through Parliament to enable local areas to take greater control and responsibility over key public services.

7.2 Devolution is providing an opportunity for local areas to take on wide-ranging powers and provides scope for focusing local leadership across community safety, policing and the criminal justice system.

7.3 Leaders of key public services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, including the Commissioner, as well as the Greater Cambridgeshire Local Enterprise Partnership, have written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government asking to open discussions with the Government about a devolution deal for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

7.4 They want to discuss a devolution settlement which would cover three main areas:

- Economic growth;
- Health and social Care; and
- Public safety.

7.5 A deal for public safety across local authorities, Police, Fire, Probation and other services could build on the good work in place to create a better alignment of police priorities, activity to create safer and stronger communities, sentencing, prisons and probation. More detailed proposals are currently under development.

7.4 The Government has also announced it will make further changes, including enabling the fire and rescue services to engage in much closer joint working with the police.

8. Recommendation

8.1 The Board is recommended to note this report

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document	Agenda Item 11.0 – Transforming Rehabilitation – Eastern Region’s Community Rehabilitation Company, Business Coordination Board, 25 February 2015 http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/work/The-Commissioner's Work - The Police & Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire
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