

UNISON JOINS PROBATION ALLIANCE

UNISON has joined with an alliance of influential criminal justice stakeholders to ask the Secretary of State for Justice to return the privatised Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) to public ownership when the current private contracts to run them end in 2020.

The Probation Alliance comprises the following:

- The Probation Institute
- Napo
- UNISON
- GMB/SCOOP
- The Howard League for Penal Reform
- The Centre for Crime and Justice Studies
- The Centre for Justice Innovation

LETTER TO THE JUSTICE SECRETARY

In a letter sent to Justice Secretary David Gauke on 11 January 2019, the 'Probation Alliance' expresses deep concern at the unrealistic timetable for the re-letting of the contracts which have failed so badly that they had to be terminated 2 years early. The letter sets out the following:

'We write to express our collective concern regarding the proposal to re-let the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) contracts.

Even without making any presuppositions about the long-term future and viability of these contracts, we are very concerned over the short time frame that the government proposes during which it is intended to re-align and re-let these undertakings. Moreover, this project is set against the unprecedented political uncertainty to which we are all currently subject. This does not help, precluding, as it does, any prospect of supporting legislative amendments in the foreseeable future.

We hope you will agree that the implications

of the making a further series of mistakes in the name of Transforming Rehabilitation (TR) are extremely serious for the probation services, for organisations working in partnership with probation - the courts, the prisons, the police service, local authorities and the voluntary sector - and for many thousands of service users and for the public.

It is our view that these contracts should be taken back into public ownership as management operations as soon as possible and not later than 2020. This would then allow sufficient time to properly consider and plan for future organisational arrangements. There are a number of precedents for this type of arrangement. This arrangement would take the CRCs back into the public sector ownership which applied to them from their creation in June 2014 to their privatisation in February 2015. There would be no complex legal, legislative or employment changes required, as the CRCs would simply revert to the ownership model which applied when first created.'



LET'S FIX PROBATION

UNISON's 'Let's Fix Probation' Campaign aims to see the Probation Service re-united, an end to privatisation, and the recreation of Local Probation Services managed and democratically accountable at local level again. UNISON is working with like minded allies and with MPs in Parliament to make the case for this alternative to the failed proposals set out in the government's 'Strengthening Probation, Building Confidence' consultation paper.

Given the failure of Transforming Rehabilitation, it is astonishing that the government's 'rescue plan' for Probation is basically more

of the same: namely a continuing split in the Service between the CRCs and the NPS and even bigger private contracts for the failing private contractors.

It looks like the Ministry of Justice is hoping that no-one will notice just how badly thought out its plans are. It is UNISON's job to make as much noise about this as possible and alert all those who care about justice, rehabilitation and community safety of the dangers in the government's plans.

The government's proposals are not a done deal. UNISON aims to fight them to the end.

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JOIN UNISON

UNISON stands up for probation staff in the CRCs and the NPS. We opposed Transforming Rehabilitation and we are opposing 'Strengthening Probation'. We have a positive, realistic alternative in our 'Let's Fix Probation' agenda. The more members we have the stronger we can make these arguments. Be part of the solution. Join UNISON Now.

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