4 September 2013

Dear Colleagues.

**UPDATE ON NATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON STAFF TRANSFERS AND PROTECTIONS: TRANSFORMING REHABILITATION PROGRAMME**

This circular updates branches and activists on negotiations at the National Negotiating Council (NNC) to produce a national agreement to cover the transfer of probation staff from Probation Trusts to the proposed National Probation Service or Community Rehabilitation Companies, as set out in the Government’s Transforming Rehabilitation plans. **In particular it advises branches that the consultation timetable for the proposed national agreement has had to be postponed from the week commencing 9 September to the week commencing 23 September, for the reasons set out below.**

Talks took place at the NNC on Friday 30 August and Tuesday 4 August with a view to finalising proposals for the above agreement, in time for the trade unions to consult members prior to a meeting of the full NNC on 18 September. Negotiations were conducted in good faith, but it was not possible for the negotiators to conclude discussions in time to hit this timetable. This was acknowledged by both sides of the NNC.

In light of this, the following has been agreed:

* NNC talks will continue with the aim of producing completed proposals in time for these to be considered by UNISON’s National Probation Committee and Napo’s NEC, both of which are meeting on 17 September
* On 18 September a special meeting of the NNC will meet to review the outcome of the negotiations and any draft agreement, as well as reflecting on the response of UNISON’s National Probation Committee and Napo’s NEC to the outcome of the talks
* From 19 September, a 28 day consultation will commence to put the final draft agreement to UNISON and Napo members

UNISON’s National Probation Committee will come to its own view on the final proposals and will communicate this to members as part of the 28 day consultation.

In light of these developments, it will not now be possible for UNISON Probation branches and activists to consult members on the draft transfer agreement next week as planned, simply because negotiations on the draft agreement have not been concluded.

I apologise for any inconvenience that this postponement of member consultation causes, and recognise that branches and activists will have put in place arrangements for the week commencing 9 September, which will now need to be cancelled. Further information on the rescheduled consultation process, proposed for later this month, will be provided to branches and activists as soon as possible.

It is anticipated that the final proposal will comprise the following:

* Overarching National Agreement on Staff Transfer and Protections
* Appendix A: Guidance on Local Consultation in Respect of ‘Measures’ (Changes that will take place as a result of the transfers)
* Appendix B: Staff Transfer Process (Method for splitting the workforce into the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies)
* Appendix C: Voluntary Redundancy Scheme