

Re-offending

Report of the Re-offending Working Group



A Working Group established by
the External Services Scrutiny Committee

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Chairman's Foreword

This Working Group was set up by External Services Scrutiny Committee to review, improve, recommend and formalise Hillingdon's arrangements for addressing re-offending.

As Chairman of the External Services Scrutiny Committee I chaired this Working Group to investigate the issues and report back to the parent Committee.

I was glad of the opportunity to investigate such an important issue. It is difficult to know the extent of the problem and it was difficult to get accurate information on statistics, so we were very reliant on the witnesses that attended our meetings.



This review focused on over 18 year olds. The overall objective of the Working Group was to identify ways that Council could improve the services it offers to re-offenders and work better with organisations to provide this service.

From the several witness sessions held, the key points that came out from each were housing, employment, education and alcohol/drug abuse are important factors in re-offending rates.

We are very grateful to the many witnesses who came to our meetings to provide us with the information needed to make our recommendations and we particularly thank:

Andrea McCubbin, Development Director, Blue Sky; Marcia Whyte, Assistant Chief Officer, London Probation Trust; Azad Ahmed, Team Leader, Housing Options, LBH; Liz Jones, Community Safety & CCTV Manager, Community Safety Team, LBH; Ed Shaylor, ASB & Investigations Service Manager, LBH; Erica Rolle, Domestic Violence Strategic Coordinator, LBH; Mick May, Chief Executive, Blue Sky Development & Regeneration; Hitesh Dodhia, HM Prison Service; Andrew Wood, Senior Probation Officer, London Probation Trust; Debra Davies, Drug Intervention Programme Manager, Hillingdon Drug and Alcohol Services (HDAS); Sunny Mehmi, Lead for Reed in Partnership, LBH; David Brough, Chair, Hayes Town Partnership; Detective Inspector Jamie Kyffin-Topp, Metropolitan Police Service; Detective Constable Neil Sykes, Metropolitan Police Service; Linda Burgess, NACRO, Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust;

A very special 'thank you' goes to the people that gave up their time to talk to us about their personal experiences of re-offending and how this impacted them.

All these people have clarified the importance of this review and shown the need for the recommendations that we have made.

Cllr Michael White

Summary of Recommendations

This is a composite list of the recommendations made by the Working Group.

Recommendation 1

That Cabinet commend the work carried out by Blue Sky to engage re-offenders into employment. In addition that Cabinet supports the proposal that the Council's lead in Reed in Partnership liaises with the Council's ASB & Investigations Services Manager and the coordinators of the Community Payback Scheme to make links with organisations that work with re-offenders, so that referrals could be made to Reed to seek employment.

Recommendation 2

That Cabinet supports the proposal that the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Housing be asked to ensure that Housing officers continue to identify more private landlords that are prepared to lease suitable properties to ex-offenders.

Recommendation 3

That Cabinet agrees that improvements could be made in the services offered to those offenders with mental health issues and perpetrators of domestic violence. The Cabinet asks that the Hillingdon Reducing Re-offending Strategy Group work with CNWL and Hillingdon's Domestic Violence Co-ordinator on how this service could be improved and this be reported back to the Cabinet Member for Improvement, Partnerships and Community Safety.

Recommendation 4

The Cabinet supports the proposal that offenders who receive a sentence of less than 12 months and those on community orders should have access to the same services and support as offenders who receive sentences of 12 months or more. The Hillingdon Reducing Re-offending Strategy Group be asked to investigate the gap in this service and work towards reducing this, and report back to the Cabinet Member on options for multi agencies to improve this.

Recommendation 5

The Cabinet agree that the Working Group conveys its findings to the London Probation Trust and draw their attention to the suggested increase of the Drug rehabilitation supervision order from 6 to 9 months to allow for effective treatment to be given. In addition the effectiveness of drug testing on arrest be reported back to Members. Subject to its success, consideration be given to lobbying for additional Government funding to continue the work.

Introduction

1. This report presents the findings of the Re-offending Working Group which was established by the External Services Scrutiny Committee to review the Council's arrangements for addressing re-offending in the Borough.
2. Some national facts on re-offending:
 - Re-offending costs the UK £12 billion each year.
 - England and Wales release 90,000 prisoners per annum - 60% re-offend within two years.
 - Employment reduces the probability of re-offending by 33-50%.
 - 75% of ex-offenders have no job on release.
 - The estimated cost for every single re-offender is approximately £200,000.
 - 25% of all prisoners leave prison to homelessness.
 - Employment and accommodation are the two most effective interventions in reducing re-offending.
3. Given the cross-cutting nature of the review the Working Group comprised Members who have experience of various Committees across the Council and the Chairman of the parent Committee, the External Services Scrutiny Committee.

Reason for the Review

4. More than half of offenders serving less than 12 months in prison or on community sentences re-offend within the first year following their release. This puts huge strain on both local and national resources.
5. Re-offenders returning to prison contribute significantly to the steady increase in the prison population and rising costs; handling an individual reconviction could cost the public as much as £65,000 followed by up to £37,500 per year in prison. The overall cost of re-offending to the economy is between £7 billion and £10 billion per year.
6. The Council is involved in: the employment of ex-offenders through Blue Sky / Groundwork UK; housing offenders on release from prison; and drug and alcohol rehabilitation by funding the NHS work of the Drug / Alcohol Action Team.
7. There is a London wide Reducing Re-offending Strategy that can be explored to see how this works in Hillingdon. The problem of how to reform adult offenders remains as a major contributor to the crime rate.
8. Work is currently being undertaken by various departments within the Council to address the issue of re-offending. Current procedures need to be reviewed to ensure that issues are not overlooked.

9. To ensure that the best possible support service is provided for re-offenders and ensure that re-offenders are made aware of procedures and advice that is available to help them.

Aim of the Review

10. The review sought to answer a series of questions including:
- Establish the expectations and concerns of residents' about re-offending and ensure that these are reflected in local service standards?
 - How are instances of re-offending currently identified and dealt with across the Borough and is there any additional scope for this to be improved and standardised?
 - How well developed are local strategies and partnerships with regard to re-offending?
 - How have other areas/councils successfully dealt with the issue of re-offending?
 - What joined-up or cross-borough work is the Council doing to ensure the re-offending rates are minimised?
 - What barriers are there to providing comprehensive support for re-offenders and for joined-up working across agencies?
 - What training is available to staff to support their work with re-offenders?
 - How can education and training in relation to re-offending for probation and prison professionals be improved?
 - What information, support and advice is available to those that may need it? How can this be improved?
 - How can people who have re-offended get more involved in their communities and play a positive role in society?
 - Balance of the 'nanny state' versus an individual's freedom.

Ultimately the aim of the review was to review and recommend improvements to local arrangements to address re-offending in the Borough.

Terms of Reference

11. The Working Group's Terms of Reference were agreed as follows:
- To consider existing local services and procedures which address re-offending and any improvements that could be made;
 - To review whether the local processes which address re-offending are timely, effective and cost efficient;

- To review the guidance and support that is currently available to these re-offenders and their families;
- To seek out the views on this subject from Residents and partner organisations using a variety of existing and contemporary consultation mechanisms;
- To examine best practice elsewhere through case studies, policy ideas, witness sessions and visits;
- To improve awareness and understanding of re-offending for professionals;
- To explore ways that people who have re-offended can get more involved in their communities;
- To explore ideas for developing early intervention; and
- After due consideration of the above, to bring forward cost conscious, innovative and practical recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to the Council's procedure in dealing with cases of re-offending.

Methodology

12. The main method for collecting evidence for this review was through a series of witness sessions held in November and December 2011. Research was done through relevant literature and websites.
13. In addition, the Working Group attended a site visit to Blue Sky offices and visited a team of ex-offenders working at a site in Hayes. This gave Members the opportunity to speak to those directly affected by re-offending on their experiences.
14. This report presents the findings from these meetings and visits. It sets out the background to how the review was undertaken and presents the Working Group's findings from the witness sessions. The recommendations contained within this report address the main issues that arose in the discussions.
15. The Working Group is incredibly grateful to people who gave up their time to attend the meetings and advise Members on the key issues.
16. In addition to those people who attended the meetings, the Working Group is also grateful to the people that gave up their time to discuss their personal issues of re-offending with Members.
17. One of the main aims of this Working Group was to review the Council's arrangements for meeting the needs and requirements of people that re-offend, the agencies that support re-offenders and the services offered to re-offenders. The Working Group also sought to improve awareness and understanding of re-offending for professionals; developing and enhancing early intervention plans and strategies; and ways to reduce re-offending rates in the Borough and, in-turn, reducing the cost to the Local Authority.

This may be a long process and the impact may not be immediately clear, but the Working Group believes that re-offending is an issue that must be addressed.

Evidence & Findings

BACKGROUND

18. The Hillingdon Sustainable Community Strategy has five theme groups in 2011, and reducing re-offending is a priority in the Safer Hillingdon Partnership (SHP) Theme Group plan.
19. The SHP Annual Plan is the Community Safety Strategy for the Borough. An annual strategic assessment determines the priorities requiring attention and if existing ones are still relevant and important.
20. The priorities identified by the strategic assessment were considered and discussed at the SHP Board meeting on 25 January 2011. As a result of these discussions the Board agreed that a list of issues that should become the key priority areas for action over the coming 3-years. This list included: **Reducing re-offending:** Addressing reasons why some individuals or families have long histories of causing crime and/or anti social behaviour.
21. The Blue Sky Project, through Groundwork Thames Valley, Hillingdon Council and the Probation Service work together to provide paid work for people coming out of prison. The aim is to break the cycle of re-offending, achieving benefits for the individual and society in general.
22. Employment is probably the key intervention in breaking this cycle. The Blue Sky Project offers this for ex-offenders, with a focus on Priority and Prolific Offenders. Between 2007 and 2010, Blue Sky found employment for over 30 Hillingdon ex-offenders. This equates to an estimated £1 million saving to the taxpayer and a major contribution to the Borough's 64% reduction in offending for the Priority and Prolific group have been achieved.
23. The following national statistics are taken from the report, "Reducing Re-Offending by Ex-Prisoners" produced by the Social Exclusion Unit in 2002. Blue Sky operate in around 9 areas in England and are looking to expand with an increase in the demand of their service:
 - More than 350 ex-offenders have been employed on 6-month contracts since Blue Sky began in October 2005.
 - Only 15% of Blue Sky ex-employees have re-offended – a quarter of the national average.
 - 46% of Blue Sky employees move into sustained employment once they leave Blue Sky.
 - In 2009/10, 70% of Blue Sky employees left with an accredited vocational qualification.
 - Year on year employment in Blue Sky has risen by 87%.
24. Through various programmes, some London boroughs are working closely with their statutory partners to reduce re-offending in innovative ways. The Integrated Offender Management (IOM) model has enabled local authorities to develop a joined up

approach to working closely with local partners to tackle crime and reduce re-offending. Six boroughs also piloted the 'Diamond Initiative' to break cycles of re-offending using a multi-agency approach in 2008-10. Results were found to be mixed despite very large financial investment due to inconsistencies in the partnership arrangements. A report on the Diamond Districts project was published in 2011.

25. In December 2010, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) published its Green Paper consultation, *Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders*. In the Green Paper, the MOJ committed to carrying out a minimum of six rehabilitation pilots across the country, based on a payment-by-results (PBR) approach, and to explore innovative ways for reducing re-offending.
26. Five London boroughs have agreed to be pilots for a financial incentives approach and will incorporate this into their programmes for tackling re-offending. Lewisham, Lambeth, Hackney, Croydon and Southwark have all committed to build on their work with offenders and to explore innovative ways of working with their local statutory partners so as to reduce the demand on the justice system caused by re-offending. The pilots began on 1 July 2011 and will run for two years until 30 June 2013.
27. In addition, scrutiny reviews on offending have been undertaken by various Local Authorities including Derbyshire, Bradford, East Sussex and Haringey. No in-depth work has yet been taken by the London Borough of Hillingdon with regard to re-offending.
28. The Ministry of Justice has released information relating to the re-offending rates of all adult offenders in Hillingdon. Over the course of a 12 month period (2009/10), Hillingdon's Probation Service dealt with 3,061 offenders. The predicted re-offending rate was 7.92%; Hillingdon Probation Service reduced the actual re-offending rate to 7.45%. This is a reduction of just over 6% from the baseline. This data shows Hillingdon out-performing neighbouring boroughs of Harrow (reducing 1.25% from baseline), Hammersmith and Fulham (reducing 0.27% from baseline), Brent (increasing 2.14% from baseline), Ealing (increasing 2.52% from baseline) and Hounslow (increasing 4.82% from baseline).

Resources available

29. The Working Group believes that it is important to remember that the Council's resources are limited and that any action taken to address re-offending should not raise residents' expectations too high.
30. There are currently no additional resources available within the Council to devote to identifying and tackling re-offending. As such, any work undertaken as a result of this review would have to be fulfilled within the current budgetary constraints and subsumed within the workloads of existing officers.
31. In the future, consideration could be given to how additional resources can be identified to deal with re-offending that could result from the recommendations of this review.

EMPLOYMENT

32. Employment is a key factor in reducing re-offending rates in the Borough. This is a key message that was delivered in each of the witness sessions and by various organisations.
33. The Working Group would like to praise the work of Blue Sky who directly employ ex-offenders to work on six month contracts. Ex-offenders are paid above minimum wage and produce good results quickly. The work enables ex-offenders to build their confidence and self-esteem and help them to develop work ethics. Further details of Blue Sky and the excellent work the organisation does can be found in the appendices of this report.
34. Reed has won a contract to deliver a programme to tackle long term worklessness in West London. Reed will be working with the Council and other partners to get individuals who have been unemployed into permanent employment by providing them with training. Although the programme is still in its infancy, it is anticipated that the Police, Probation Service and Council services will make referrals. The Council lead will liaise with the Council's ASB & Investigations Service Manager to make initial links with organisations that work with ex-offenders so that they can then make referrals to Reed.
35. The Working Group would like to highlight the work done by Pret A Manager who, in late 2011, set up an apprenticeship scheme. This scheme helps those who are homeless and/or are ex-offenders. Working in conjunction with charities and community groups, the food retailer is offering apprenticeship places to those people.
36. Pret A Manger say that they recognise how difficult it is for people from troubled backgrounds to get a foot on the employment ladder in normal times, so it's near impossible for these individuals to be given an opportunity in times of economic hardship such as now. The company say every apprentice starts with a clean slate, as they are offering these individuals a chance to rebuild their lives and careers. In addition to paying each apprentice a weekly wage, Pret A Manager will pay for the individual's travel to and from work, and will also give them £100 to buy new clothes for work.
37. Sir Richard Branson, Virgin companies, has for the last 2 years encouraged his managing directors to take on ex-offenders. Sir Richard Branson believes that society should do more to support positive initiatives to encourage the rehabilitation of prisoners.
38. Timpson are providing practical support to ex offenders, working closely with a number of prisons. They have set up a full time training facility at HMP Liverpool and HMP Wandsworth. Timpson colleagues train inmates in a workshop in a prison workshop environment. They also actively recruit ex offenders to work for them.
39. The Working Group feels that more organisations can be encouraged by the examples set by Virgin, Pret A Manager and Timpsons to offer employment to ex-offenders.
40. Further information on employment and the current work is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

HOUSING

41. A lack of housing is often one of the reasons that offenders re-offend. The prison service works closely with St Mungo's, which provides emergency shelter, to ensure that prisoners have somewhere to live when they are released.
42. As accommodation in Hillingdon is cheaper than in central London, councils in other boroughs are frequently housing their ex-offenders in Hillingdon. This has led to a reduction in the number of available properties for local ex-offenders.
43. Nationally, approximately 90% of offenders secure accommodation for when they are released; the suitability of this accommodation is unknown. It is suggested that, if this accommodation is unsuitable, it is more likely to influence the chances of the ex-offender re-offending. It is also important that ex-offenders are not in contact with groups that may encourage them to re-offend.
44. The review has highlighted that it would be useful if the Council could identify more private landlords that are prepared to lease their properties to ex-offenders.
45. The Housing Needs Service is an active participant in a range of panels including Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Integrated Offender Management (IOM) and Prolific and other Priority Offenders (PPO) in an effort to reduce the re-offending rates. The Service faces a number of challenges which include:
 - the risk of losing the focus on re-offenders now that the funding has ended and the re-offenders are absorbed into the mainstream;
 - the Welfare Reform Programme which would see those aged 35+ only being entitled to the single room rate, which means that more individuals will be entitled to less housing benefit. The number of ex-offenders who will be affected by the housing benefit changes is 19. These clients will be visited by the Council's Outreach services and Housing Needs and will be provided with alternative housing options; and
 - a reduction in the housing supply – the buoyancy of the rental market makes it more difficult to obtain properties for ex-offenders.
46. As ex-offenders are vulnerable, housing benefit payments are paid direct to ex-offenders' landlords – this is then reviewed after a period. This is often a more attractive proposition for landlords. Landlords would be more likely to lease their properties to ex-offenders if the rent was guaranteed and the probation service was supporting the individuals.
47. Those offenders that are given custodial sentences of less than six months and have Council tenancies are able to retain their tenancies. It is noted that the Hillingdon housing officers are usually very good at signposting ex-offenders to support services when they are released from prison.
48. Further information on housing and the current work is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

EDUCATION

49. Whilst effort is being made to get re-offenders into education and then employment, this is frequently aimed at too high a level. Offenders often benefit from basic reading and writing skills rather than obtaining qualifications as they will need these basic skills to improve their chances of gaining permanent employment.
50. Although prisoners are assessed in relation to literacy and numeracy and given advice with regard to careers, employment, housing needs and benefits, it is suggested that more work needs to be undertaken to improve interagency provision. The prison service already works with Job Centre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau and the London Borough of Hillingdon but further work could be undertaken with the PCT to provide more follow-up support to ex-offenders that are given short-term sentences.
51. The London PIANO project (Providing Innovation And New Opportunities) is a two year £7.2m project funded by the European Social Fund and National Offender Management Co-Financing Organisation. The project is managed by the Resource Development Unit, a department of London Probation Trust, and provides employment and training opportunities in the community to be able to help prisoners when they are released.
52. During employment with Blue Sky, ex-offenders obtain life skills, tailored and accredited training and help with interview techniques, CV writing and career planning. If an ex-offender requests training for a specific work-related issue this will be investigated.
53. Reed in Partnership will be able to provide ex-offenders with training (for example, literacy skills, CV writing, completing application forms, IT skills, interaction with colleagues and interview skills). Reed will be providing a tailored service to individuals.
54. The Working Group has suggested that consideration be given to requesting that local adult education providers ensure that there is better promotion of the existing courses available to ex-offenders to enable them to develop employable skills.
55. Further information on education and the current work is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

DRUGS/ALCOHOL ABUSE

56. As there are a significant number of offenders that have mental health issues, it is suggested that the mental health services need to be more aware of ex-offenders. Re-offending is not high on these services' agendas so consideration could be given to how this can be changed. An offender's mental health issues need to be identified prior to release from prison so that they can be addressed in a timely manner.
57. Hillingdon has a high instance of drug use (56%) and it should be noted that 42% of that group also has mental health problems. Although those offenders with mental health problems are assessed in court for mental health care, negotiations are needed to secure the extra support required for these individuals.
58. It is requested that, rather than offenders receiving six month drug rehabilitation supervision orders, this be increased to nine months. This is discussed in further detail in the report.
59. Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) specifically works with ex-offenders to gain treatment for their drug and/or alcohol issues and reduce their chances of committing more crime. This is further explained in the appendices of this report.
60. The success of DIP can be measured in small steps which can have a significant impact on both the offender and the community, particularly if the individual stops committing crimes such as burglary as a result of receiving an opiate substitute prescription.
61. The DIP team work predominantly with the Police, the courts and Wormwood Scrubs to identify and target offenders. The aim is to get these individuals treated quickly to stop them from offending.
62. Targeted testing on arrest will mean that individuals that have committed certain crimes that are commonly related to substance misuse (e.g., trigger offences such as robbery, burglary, etc) would be tested for opiates and Class A drugs whilst in the custody suite. If they test positive, they would be required to attend a follow up appointment with the DIP and would subsequently enter into treatment. Failure to attend this appointment could lead to re-arrest and further sanctions.
63. The issue of dual diagnosis is also raised whereby re-offenders have mental health issues as well as drug and/or alcohol issues. As this will usually result in these individuals being seen by HDAS and CNWL, it is important that there are good links with the community treatment teams. There is also more scope for the service to consider looking at its provision specifically for re-offenders.
64. The Criminal Justice Integrated Team (CJIT) provides access to drug and alcohol treatment for offenders. Most, but not all, treatment is based upon an order of the court. At court, if an individual's offending behaviour is linked to drug or alcohol use, then the court could require treatment as a part of the sentence.
65. Further information on drugs/alcohol abuse and the current work is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE FROM BLUE SKY EMPLOYEES

66. Rick¹

The Working Group met with Rick who came across as very confident. He seemed to have a good family network and various different skills experience from previous jobs, training and his own interests. This included work as an electrician, an interest in music productions and gigs, and a keen interest in the gym which he wished to have a career in. Rick felt that his offending background and his age deterred employers from giving him a chance. He discovered Blue Sky via the Internet (Facebook), he thought he would give it a go, and so self-referred. He had been out of prison for some time before joining the Blue Sky project. Rick hoped that working with Blue Sky would give him references to gain future employment and also open up the various employment options that were available to him.

67. James¹

The Working Group met with James who was only released six months ago and was hoping to start up his own business in IT. He thought that before that he may need to be fully employed and in order to do that he needed a reference from an employer. James liked the chance to get a good reference from an employer, an employer who has contacts with other employers who do offer permanent work to known offenders. He enjoyed the camaraderie of the gang with new friendships being built and getting what he said was 'a second chance'. James also commented that he was optimistic about his future.

68. Mike¹

The Working Group met with Mike who had been out of prison since 2004 and was 5 months into his six months spell with Blue Sky. He had previously struggled to hold down steady employment, if he eventually got any, and he was happy with the assistance and guidance given by Blue Sky. He stressed the sense of self worth by working and gaining a wage was something that made him very happy. Mike wasn't exactly sure as to what line of work he wanted to do on a permanent basis, but liked that the people at Blue Sky advised him in 'a language he could understand' as to what could be his best options. Mike stated that he was optimistic about his future.

69. Further information on the site visit to Blue Sky is available in Appendix 4 of this report.

¹ These names are not the real names

FUTURE WORK

70. Having researched work done in other boroughs, there are very limited solutions that we found that Hillingdon could follow. We hope that our work at Hillingdon can help raise the awareness of the importance of the issue of re-offending within Hillingdon and beyond the Borough.
71. The issue of re-offending is a problem and has always been a problem. It is estimated that 10% of Prolific and other Priority Offenders commit 80% of the crime. How this can be prevented is something that needs to be looked at so that the effects of crime on society are minimised.
72. Further work also needs to be undertaken regarding what action the Council can take to improve the services it offers. Consideration needs to be given to how the Council can link in with other organisations to meet the needs of those who re-offend, and to look at early intervention strategies so that potential re-offencing is minimised.
73. It is stressed that sign-posting and multi agency working is crucial in order to get support and advice to re-offenders. The Council needs to look at ways that sign-posting and multi agency work can improve to ensure a much better service is provided.
74. There are offenders that are not getting any advice or support as they are not seen as a priority. These include those that have short sentences and/or those that do not receive custodial sentences. It is important that services are offered to all those that have committed an offence regardless of the punishment they receive, so to prevent re-offending.
75. Whilst there is currently a triage system for young offenders, this is not available for adults. This could potentially prevent some offenders from becoming re-offenders and it has been suggested that triage be extended to adults for their first offence.
76. A big improvement that could be made to help reduce re-offending is the co-location of the Police with the Probation Service, Council and other relevant services. This is something that would need careful consideration and has financial constraints, so is something that could be a future consideration. Further information on the Police and Probation Service can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.
77. All organisations are under pressure to perform with fewer resources so they have to be innovative with what they have available. Other avenues have to be considered if resources are not available including coordination, communication and multi agency working.

Closing word

78. Re-offending is an issue that not only affects the person committing the crime but society who will pay the economic and social costs of re-offending. The Working Group believes strongly that more information needs to be given to offenders to get the support they need and to try and prevent re-offending.
79. From the several witness sessions held, the key points that came out from each were that housing, employment, education and alcohol/drug abuse are important factors in re-offending rates.
80. It is hoped that the recommendations in this report have highlighted the need for advice to be given in a timely manner when dealing with re-offending. Signposting and knowing where to go for help, support and guidance is crucial in providing the help that is required.
81. It is noted that Reed in Partnership will be working with the Council and other partners to get individuals who have been unemployed into permanent employment by providing them with training. This work is at an early stage and it is anticipated that the Council's lead for this work will liaise with coordinators of the Community Payback Scheme (CPS). Further information on Reed in Partnership can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.
82. The Working Group would like to highlight the excellent work that has been done by organisations such as Blue Sky, who have made huge progress since 2005 when it was set up. The results produced by Blue Sky show what a positive impact the organisation has had on re-offenders. Further information on Blue Sky can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.
83. The Working Group would also like to highlight organisations such as Prêt-a-Manger, Virgin and Timpson's who have made a commitment to employing ex-offenders.
84. The Working Group acknowledges importance of the recent Government Alcohol Strategy. It is important to recognise the value of the strategy in reducing alcohol fuelled crime. A new minimum alcohol pricing system is being proposed which should reduce alcohol in-take, and comes at a time where alcohol can be cheaper than water to buy.
85. It is appreciated that the implementation of the recommendations contained within this report will not be something that can be completed overnight. The approach to implementing change is likely to be slow to ensure that we get it right first time and to manage the expectations of those affected by re-offending.

Comments of the External Services Scrutiny Committee

86. The External Services Scrutiny Committee established this Working Group to examine the issue of re-offending in the Borough. We, the Committee, have considered the Working Group's findings outlined in this report and are delighted to present these to Cabinet and the Council's partners. The report outlines the importance of providing a coordinated response to the needs of adults that re-offend and those affected by it. It highlights the main areas which affect re-offending and how improvements could be made. We fully endorse the recommendations.

Appendix 1: Current Work

Community Safety Team

87. The Community Safety Team (CST) supports the Safer Hillingdon Partnership (SHP) in its work to reduce crime in the Borough. The Council works closely with the Police and the Probation Service in relation to PPOs and the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) work which has recently started. This IOM programme addresses the provision of support for the whole family and looks at achieving sustained abstinence from re-offending by targeting specific offenders to achieve better outcomes. The CST facilitated these meetings and reports back to the SHP on the targets.
88. The national performance indicators have been deleted and each area is setting targets locally. In Hillingdon, re-offending is seen as a priority. The CST recognise that an inability to integrate is sometimes a barrier for offenders so the Family Intervention Project is being used to try to break the cycle of re-offending.
89. Reed has won a contract to deliver a programme to tackle long term worklessness in West London. This work is being integrated into the IOM programme.
90. After a long period of reductions in the crime rates in Hillingdon, the number of burglaries, robberies and violent crimes are increasing in the Borough. Although the long term trend is a continued reduction in the overall crime rates, it is anticipated that, if the current increases continues, the long term trend will also increase. One way of reversing this trend is to deal with re-offending and, as such, the CST is working with offenders to address this.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Investigations

91. The Council has a lead role in the Safer Hillingdon Partnership. Crime rates could be kept down by preventing re-offending as the 50 most active offenders in the Borough are doing the most crime. Funding (£33k) has been made available for a post at the Probation Service to work with non-statutory supervision offenders with sentences of less than 12 months. £2k of this funding is available for emergency costs such as new shoes or Oyster cards for prisoners that have been released. An additional £5k is available for emergency housing costs.
92. Anyone can ask for help or refer themselves to the Hillingdon Drug Advisory Service (HDAS) or Hillingdon Action Group for Addiction Management (HAGAM) at Old Bank House in Uxbridge. Different drug dependencies require different treatment. It is noted that the majority of offenders that visit HDAS for scripting appointments generally attend the site in Belmont Road. The Council has provided funding for the refurbishment of Old Bank House from the LAA reward grant.
93. Safer Hillingdon Partnership has released £20,000 from LAA reward grant to enable compulsory drug tests on arrest. Other funding (total of £80k) for drugs and alcohol projects from the LAA Reward Grant is as follows:
- £9,550 towards building improvements at 65 Belmont Road
 - £1,200 for publicity and training materials
 - £13,600 accredited training package
 - £40,000 satellite accommodation
 - £5,000 resettlement packs
 - £2,000 voucher incentive scheme
 - £8,650 to improve the reception and conference room areas of Old Bank House
94. Landlords would be more likely to lease their properties to ex-offenders if the rent was guaranteed and the probation service was supporting the individuals.
95. With regards to the support provision, there are a range of organisations that work with all offenders in prison to provide them with information about services that are available on their release. This support could be enhanced by appointing a key-worker to bring these services together.
96. Although there is concern about a reduction in employment opportunities because of the recession, it is thought that there are fewer lower skilled jobs available anyway as a result of the improvements in technology. The provision of voluntary work for ex-offenders when they are released could help them gain paid employment in the longer term.

Housing Options

97. 154 offenders have approached the Council on 182 occasions between 1 April 2009 and 31 October 2011. Of the 28 individuals that approached the Council on more than one occasion (17%), 11 returned to prison. The outcomes for the 154 individuals are summarised as:
- 37 homeless applications (15 accepted and housed in temporary accommodation / 22 rejected)
 - 27 housed in the private rented sector
 - 10 housed in the social rented sector
 - 55 given advice on housing
 - 25 other homeless preventions
98. There are a number of reasons why individuals become homeless: just released from prison, evicted by their parents, other evictions, no fixed abode and other accommodation ended. A large number of the high risk housing clients are placed in out of Borough probation hostels. Once these individuals' probation ends, the Council needs to find more permanent accommodation for them.
99. With regard to those 22 individuals whose homeless applications were rejected, they have been given advice on renting in the private sector. There is concern that these individuals are very vulnerable and are often ostracised by society. This could lead to them committing more frequent or more serious crimes.
100. Between 2007 and 2010, funding was made available from the London Probation Trust (LPT) to establish partnership arrangements and a framework for housing offenders. Since 2010, the Council has held a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the LPT the continue to framework and service standards.
101. The Housing Needs Service is an active participant in a range of panels including MAPPA, IOM and PPO in an effort to reduce the re-offending rates. The Service faces a number of challenges which include:
- the risk of losing the focus on re-offenders now that the funding has ended and the re-offenders are absorbed into the mainstream;
 - the Welfare Reform Programme which will see those aged 35+ only being entitled to the single room rate, which means that more individuals will be entitled to less housing benefit. The number of ex-offenders who will be affected by the housing benefit changes is 19. These clients will be visited by the Council's Outreach services and Housing Needs and will be provided with alternative housing options; and
 - a reduction in the housing supply – the buoyancy of the rental market makes it more difficult to obtain properties for ex-offenders.
102. As ex-offenders are vulnerable, housing benefit payments are paid direct to ex-offenders' landlords – this is then reviewed after a period. This is often a more attractive proposition for landlords. The LPT helps ex-offenders with their budgeting as part of the probation statutory supervision. The Housing Needs Service also ties ex-offenders into Look Ahead which provides a range of support services.

Domestic Violence

103. With regard to perpetrators of domestic violence (DV), the primary support service provided is the Domestic Violence Intervention Programme (DVIP). Further information has been sought with regard to how the programme can help perpetrators and victims of DV in the Borough and how the success of DVIP can be measured.
104. The Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) is available to try to change the behaviour of the perpetrators of domestic violence and stabilise the family unit over a period of 32 weeks. As participation in IDAP is on a voluntary basis, unless the courts request their participation, it is not obligatory for offenders to attend. In addition to IDAP, IDAPA has been developed in April 2011. The success of IDAPA is yet to be measured.
105. The Hillingdon Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Project (HIDVAP) received referrals for 675 victims of domestic violence in 2010-2011. This volume has created 19 perpetrator referrals to IDAP and 21 referrals to IDAPA. In 2009/2010, 24 individuals were accepted onto IDAP, 13 of which successfully completed the programme and 11 failed to complete it. This is not a favourable result given that the offenders taking part on the programme were given this mandatory order by the court.
106. As IDAP and IDAPA are not clearing the backlog of referrals, the Probation Trust has introduced one-to-one sessions for individuals that request them. In 2010, 11 referrals were made to the one-to-one programme. The introduction of this programme is thought to be good as it has provided new options that had not previously been available to the courts.
107. In the majority of cases, perpetrators of domestic violence are already repeat offenders by the time they appear in court as initial instances of DV are often unreported by the victims. By agreeing to attend one-to-one sessions with a probation officer, it would appear to the courts that offenders are trying to change their behaviour.
108. The Council is working with Care to Talk (a counselling service) and Respect (which offer help to perpetrators of DV) to develop a drop-in support service in the Borough. This could potentially be situated within the Wellbeing Centre at Boots in Uxbridge.
109. Of the 118 cases of DV that have been reported to police in the last year in Hillingdon, only 12 have been considered by the courts. The courts have a number of options which include: fining, a custodial sentence, conditional discharge and Community Payback. When deciding on what action should be taken, the court also considers the impact that the sentence would have on the family of the offender.

Metropolitan Police Service

110. With regard to offender management, the Police currently work on Priority Prolific Offenders (PPOs) and, from 2012, will be working on Total Offender Management (TOM - previously known as Integrated Offender Management). It is anticipated that TOM will be in place by the end of January 2012. Once in place, the Police will be able to work a bit smarter by identifying key players and will be able to build up intelligence in relation to things like housing and drugs.
111. There are many different definitions of re-offending. The Metropolitan Police definition involves offenders having offended four or more times, but at least once in the last two weeks. The offences that are taken into account tend not to include those related to drugs. Technically, with this definition, Hillingdon has only had six re-offenders in the last two weeks.
112. Of the 850 re-offenders identified in the last two weeks across London, 520 have committed crimes in two or more boroughs in the last 12 months. This clearly indicates that offenders are not just committing crimes in the boroughs in which they live. The difficulty is deciding whether efforts should be concentrated on reducing the number of total notifiable offences (which would impact positively on other boroughs) or concentrate on the offenders that commit offences in Hillingdon.
113. Of the 800-900 offenders released from prison into Hillingdon each year, using the Offender Group Reconviction Scale (OGRS), 150 of them have an 80% chance of re-offending.
114. Currently the priorities of the Police revolve around burglary, robbery and motor vehicle crimes. As there are only a few officers dedicated to this work, they concentrate on those individuals that commit the most offences. These individuals are identified through a combination of OGRS and Police intelligence.
115. From a Police perspective, the biggest improvement that could be made to help reduce re-offending is the co-location of the Police with the Probation Service, Council and other relevant services. It is also suggested that tackling drugs and unemployment amongst offenders will reduce the instances of re-offending.
116. The Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) and Ward Panels determine the policing priorities for an area. It is suggested that the IAGs and Ward Panels liaise with the Police Consultative Committee (PCC) to ensure that the PCC's priorities marry with those that have already been determined for an area.
117. Whilst there is currently a triage system for young offenders, this is not available for adults. It is suggested that triage be extended to adults for their first offence. This could potentially prevent some offenders from becoming re-offenders.
118. A new Youth Centre has been set up in South Ruislip. Whilst the Centre seems to be quite good with a strict door policy, this means that those young people that are not admitted are hanging around on the streets. Crime in the area has subsequently gone up.

119. It is acknowledged that re-offenders often have children. If the offender is sent to prison, this can result in the children being taken into care which has a financial impact on the Council. The Council is undertaking a holistic approach to family intervention services. The Police are completing MERLIN reports when children are coming to their attention and forwarding them to the Council so that action can be taken quickly to safeguard the children.
120. Consideration is being given by the Police to take things back to basics by working with the Probation Service to identify key nominals who have been overscored so are not actually prolific offenders. The Police will be producing a list of ward level nominals. This will result in the production of a map of the offenders that commit the majority of the crimes as well as where stolen goods are often handled, e.g., pawn brokers. It is anticipated that this will ensure that the Police know who and where the re-offenders are at any one time.
121. There have been issues where an offender has been released from prison and has had to wait for 3½ weeks before they could start a placement with Blue Sky. During that 3½ week period, this individual has re-offended. It is suggested that early intervention is provided at Wormwood Scrubs to get individuals referred to Reed in Partnership so that they have an appointment within three days of release. This will enable them to gain skills and training which will then help with securing permanent employment.

HM Prison Service

122. Offenders coming into Wormwood Scrubs are screened for drugs within 24 hours of admittance to the prison. It is noted that there are a number of ex-offenders that re-offend once released so that they can be sent back to prison to access the drug treatment programme there. This sometimes happen within a week of release. Some offenders that receive sentences of less than 12 months do not have access to the same services as other offenders.
123. Although prisoners are assessed in relation to literacy and numeracy and given advice with regard to careers, employment, housing needs and benefits, it is suggested that more work needs to be undertaken to improve interagency provision. The prison service already works with Job Centre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau and the London Borough of Hillingdon but further work could be undertaken with the PCT to provide more follow-up support to ex-offenders that are given short-term sentences.
124. Improvements need to be made with regard to engaging with ex-offenders, early intervention and ensuring a seamless transition through the services available. Further improvements could be made to the communication and information flow between services such as CNWL and housing. A reduction in the risk of re-offending could be achieved through the provision of attitude, thinking and behaviour programmes.
125. The assessment process at the prison is good and the prison service has a good relationship with DAAT (Drug and Alcohol Action Team). However, there are some concerns about whether actions have taken place following the assessment.
126. It is noted that Wormwood Scrubs already has offender management processes in place, which include prison officers and probation officers. The Integrated Offender Management (IOM) work will create stronger links with the community. This positive work will also enable the sharing of information with officers from outside of the prison service. An IOM link worker with the prison could establish the community links that would enable work that has been done in custody to be continued back in the community on release.
127. There are issues with regard to the support that can be provided to individuals in the short term. As everyone is innocent until proven guilty, little can be done with individuals on remand at Wormwood Scrubs. If individuals on remand are sentenced, as they have already served part of their sentence, they are often not in prison for much longer which means that little support can be provided. It is noted that the prison service is not always aware of what other services are available in the community.
128. The London PIANO project (Providing Innovation And New Opportunities) is a two year £7.2m project funded by the European Social Fund and National Offender Management Co-Financing Organisation. The project is managed by the Resource Development Unit, a department of London Probation Trust, and provides employment and training opportunities in the community to help prisoners when they are released.
129. A lack of housing is often one of the reasons that offenders re-offended. The prison service works closely with St Mungo's, which provides emergency shelter, to ensure that prisoners have somewhere to live when they are released. It is noted that those

offenders that are given custodial sentences of less than six months and have Council tenancies are able to retain their tenancies. It is noted that the Hillingdon housing officers are usually very good at signposting ex-offenders when they are released from prison.

130. It is agreed that a reduction in the number of re-offenders can be achieved through improvements in the work that is undertaken with them and that this should be primarily focussed around:

- employment;
- education;
- housing;
- mental health care; and
- substance misuse support.

131. It is suggested that consideration be given to requesting that local adult education providers ensure that there are affordable course available for ex-offenders to enable them to develop employable skills.

London Probation Trust

132. The London Probation Trust (LPT) works interdependently. The Service aims to inspire confidence in reducing re-offending across London and helps ex-offenders to lead responsible, law-abiding lives, thus protecting the public. It is noted that the crime rates in Hillingdon are not rising at the same rate as other London boroughs. Although the latest data has been released, analysis on it has not yet been undertaken.
133. As of 27 October 2011, there is at least one measuring tool being used to record crimes. Data going back to 2009 will be entered into the database, which equates to 148,000 adult offenders across England and Wales.
134. Although the re-offending rate in Hillingdon is 8.43%, this does not tally with the 24.9% stated in the Ministry of Justice document entitled *Proven Re-offending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin: January to December 2009* published on 27 October 2011.
135. The LPT team works with the Police and other partners to influence a change in the behaviour of offenders, at the same time as ensuring that the victims are okay. The PPO and IOM partnership work helps to provide a responsive approach to criminality and therefore reduce re-offending. The LPT is looking to involve the voluntary sector in the IOM work.
136. The IOM Strategy Group involves a number of key stakeholders across London which include: London Crime Reduction Board; local authorities; London Councils; Metropolitan Police Service; LPT; Ministry of Justice; Home Office; Prison Service; PCTs; Youth Offending Service; and Youth Justice Board. It is anticipated that, in the next 12 months, this interagency working will result in a reduction in re-offending.
137. The assessment tool used by the LPT (OASYS) enables managers to produce a plan to work with individual offenders. Education and employment are used to help reduce the number of crimes perpetrated by prolific offenders. LPT regularly helps offenders to achieve basic levels of English and maths to assist them in their search for employment. Robust enforcement is used with those offenders that do not change their behaviour.
138. It is noted that the skills of re-offenders are often limited which hinders their ability to obtain employment. With regard to employment opportunities for re-offenders, it is suggested that consideration be given to how planning obligations can be used create jobs for re-offenders on building sites. Thought will also need to be given to how ex-offenders can secure work in the voluntary sector in a more formalised way which could make them feel more integrated in the community, e.g., talking at schools about offending.
139. It is acknowledged that accommodation is also important as it is more difficult to engage with prolific offenders in they are not securely housed. There are mechanisms in place across London boroughs to monitor the housing movements of offenders. This includes background checks to establish why the offender is moving and whether the accommodation that they are moving to is suitable. If an offender on probation has not advised the LPT that they are moving, they could be recalled to prison.

140. It is noted that there is prolific re-offending in the 15-21 age group. Probation Officers work with the Council's Youth Offending Team to reduce the number of re-offenders from this age group coming through to the LPT when they reach 18.
141. Hillingdon has a high instance of drug use (56%) and 42% of that group also has mental health problems. Although those offenders with mental health problems are assessed in court for mental health care, negotiations are needed to secure the extra support required for these individuals. It is requested that, rather than offenders receiving six month drug rehabilitation supervision orders, this be increased to nine months.
142. Domestic violence is more associated with alcohol misuse rather than drug misuse. Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRRs) are community orders that are used to provide treatment and support for an offender's crimes and drug use. A DRR is a voluntary punishment option for those facing criminal proceedings for drug related crimes. Although it is suggested that, rather than giving offenders a six month drug or alcohol rehabilitation supervision order, this should be increased to nine months. It is noted that approximately 50% of individuals with DRRs breach them. As such it would be beneficial to have a mental health worker attached to the Probation Service.
143. DV offenders are not usually given the Community Payback option as it could give the perpetrator time to develop additional negative feelings towards their victims. However, it is noted that, in these instances courts will often consider custodial sentences. The proportion of DV cases has increased significantly as awareness has grown that DV is unacceptable.
144. A national review of DRRs was published in November 2011. It is noted that guidance regarding treatment is limited and that alternative therapies need to be investigated.
145. With regard to IDAP, an offender needs to display an acceptance that what they have done is wrong before they would be included on the programme. If the offender has alcohol issues, they are often referred for treatment rather than inclusion on IDAP.
146. Although the number of individuals completing IDAP is not huge, it is thought that the programme's success rate in London has been good. It is recognised that IDAP is not suitable in all cases, which is why the one-to-one sessions have been developed.
147. The Probation Trust runs a range of programmes for different offences including: sex offending, drink driving, thinking skills and anger management. In addition, organisations such as J Training are on hand to provide advice to ex-offenders on educational opportunities.
148. The Trust has recently undertaken a survey of charities which provide employment advice to ex-offenders. It has become apparent that there is a need for more organisations to employ ex-offenders.
149. With regard to the statistics in relation to offending, there are two different measures:
 - the local re-offending measure has been in place for 3-4 years and solely reflects the number of offenders under the supervision of the Trust. The figures are recorded over the four quarters of the year and, it is noted, could include a certain amount of 'double counting'. The 2009/2010 figure for this measure has

been recorded as 7.42% (3,061 offenders) - the predicted figure has been 7.92%; and

- the proven re-offending rates were first published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) on 27 October 2011 and included all offenders that have been given community penalties, e.g., fines, community service, etc. This re-offending figure has been recorded as 34% for London and 24% for Hillingdon.

150. These two measures are not directly comparable. However, it is possible to compare the MoJ figure for Hillingdon with that of other London boroughs.
151. Offenders that receive sentences of less than 12 months are not supervised after their release as there are no resources available to do this. The expectations of offenders after their release are set in statute. "At risk" offenders that are released after half of their custodial sentence would immediately be put back in prison if they were caught for another offence during the second half of their sentence.
152. The Integrated Offender Management programme is being set up. The programme includes a range of local agencies and identified those offenders that are most at risk of re-offending in the Borough. It is likely that the programme will target offenders in relation to burglary, vehicle crimes and violence.
153. The Criminal Justice Integrated Team (CJIT) provides access to drug and alcohol treatment for offenders. Most, but not all, treatment is based upon an order of the court. Arrest referral workers attend each custody centre and provide assessments and brief interventions. At court, if an individual's offending behaviour is linked to drug or alcohol use, then the court could require treatment as a part of the sentence. If an individual is imprisoned, treatment could continue during their sentence and on release.
154. The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) was established in 2004 by the MoJ as a way of bringing together the work of the correctional services. NOMS is responsible for contracting services out and is continuing to change shape. NOMS has not been hugely successful as it has not taken account of the difference in cultures between the prison service and the probation service.
155. It is noted that there used to be a housing officer at Hillingdon to whom the Trust made direct referrals. The Trust would send information to the officer prior to the offender's release so that he could assess them and provide assistance. As this post is not longer funded, the referral work is now absorbed by the wider housing team as part of their general duties.
156. A housing Service Level Agreement is now in place to give priority to MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) offenders and PPOs (Prolific and other Priority Offenders). MAPPA offenders are risk managed by the Police, Probation Service, Social Services and health service. These organisations will discuss an individual offender approximately six months before their release to ensure that accommodation is secured for them. It is noted that the housing needs of other offenders might only be considered a few weeks before their release.
157. The Trust has floating support contracts in place with charities such as St Mungo's and Look Ahead. It is suggested that a greater input from the voluntary sector would be beneficial.

158. As accommodation in Hillingdon is cheaper than in central London, councils in other boroughs are frequently housing their ex-offenders in Hillingdon. This has led to a reduction in the number of available properties for local ex-offenders. Approximately 90% of offenders secured accommodation for when they were released; the suitability of this accommodation is unknown. It is suggested that, if this accommodation is unsuitable, it is more likely to influence the chances of the offender re-offending. As such it would be useful if the Council could identify more private landlords that are prepared to lease their properties to ex-offenders.

Blue Sky

159. Blue Sky is a social enterprise and a registered charity which was established in December 2005. The organisation has won Charity of the Year 2010 and Social Enterprise of the Year 2011.
160. Blue Sky directly (and solely) employ ex-offenders (those that have been given a custodial sentence) to work on six month contracts predominantly in the grounds maintenance and waste recycling sectors. Ex-offenders are paid above minimum wage and, because of the low-skilled nature of the work, produce good results relatively quickly. The length of the contracts have been set at six months as any longer would create a dependency on Blue Sky and any less would hinder the chances of embedding employability skills. The work enables ex-offenders to build their confidence and self-esteem and helps them to develop work ethics.
161. The programme is operational in West London, the South West, Manchester, Wakefield, Birmingham and the Thames Valley. To date, 500 ex-offenders have participated in the programme – 5% of which have been women. Of these 500, 89 have been residents of Hillingdon and have been employed in the Hillingdon grounds maintenance teams (55) and at the Harefield Civic Amenity site (34). Of these 89 individuals, 12 (13%) have re-offended (which is a quarter of the national average percentage), 43 (48%) have moved into sustainable employment and 72% have received accredited training. 8 of the 89 ex-offenders have been Prolific and other Priority Offenders (PPOs) and 16 have committed more serious crimes (MAPPAs).
162. Blue Sky has held the contract to supply a team at the Harefield Civic Amenity site since 2008. This work has diverted 1,500 tonnes of wood and 500 tonnes of metal from landfill in the last year which has reduced costs to the Council. Other work in the Borough undertaken by Blue Sky teams includes:
- grass cutting at Lake Farm Country Park and Minet Country Park;
 - maintenance of allotments, paths and bridleways;
 - maintenance of Public Rights of Way twice a year; and
 - working with Hillingdon Housing and the Community Safety Team to maintain gardens for the elderly in the Borough to reduce the risk of distraction burglary.
163. Blue Sky works in partnership with Wormwood Scrubs and the Probation Service. This work enables the organisations to identify individuals for inclusion in the programme. It also ensures that offenders are trained in things such as grounds maintenance before they are released from prison and referred to Blue Sky.
164. The teams are led by supervisors who are also ex-offenders. Individuals in each team are specifically chosen to ensure that the team dynamics remain stable. This has resulted in a form of peer-mentoring where the team members support each other to ensure that they do not re-offend as this could result in the contract being lost and the ex-offenders losing their jobs. Towards the end of their six month employment, Blue Sky helps the ex-offenders by job brokering. After the ex-offenders have left Blue Sky's employ, they are all given references and are then tracked for about 18 months (any longer than that is thought to be intrusive). Additional support is available to them during that tracked period if required.

165. During employment with Blue Sky, ex-offenders obtain life skills, tailored and accredited training (e.g., fork lift licences and pesticide spraying licences) and help with interview techniques, CV writing and career planning. If an ex-offender requests training for a specific work-related issue (e.g., car mechanics), this will be investigated. The SKIDZ Motor Project is already in operation in West Drayton and provides opportunities for young people to develop their passion for motor vehicle maintenance and safer road usage.
166. Analysis has suggested that Blue Sky's work creates £18 social value for every £1 invested. 86% of this is realised through a reduction in crime, the avoidance of further prison sentences and decreased support to the families of the offenders.
167. With regard to the selection procedure, Blue Sky receives a number of referrals of ex-offenders from Reed that have been long-term unemployed and receives regular referrals from the Probation Service and from Turning Point. Ex-offenders are also able to refer themselves to Blue Sky.
168. Employees with a history of substance or alcohol misuse are required to be 'clean' and on a treatment plan before they can start work as they often need to operate machinery. If these individuals lapse back into misuse, their employment is put on hold until they are 'clean' again. Their employment will then restart.
169. Blue Sky is proud of its strategic partnership with the London Borough of Hillingdon and the organisation highlights this partnership working as an exemplar of intelligent procurement in action. If any additional competitive tendering opportunities arise within the Council that fit the Blue Sky model (e.g., work in relation to graffiti, kerbside, fly-tipping, grounds maintenance, fencing, canal dredging, tree planting and cutting), the organisation would be interested in submitting a tender. The Council also helps Blue Sky by promoting its work in Hillingdon People.
170. Blue Sky is currently looking into the possibility of seeking employment for its ex-offenders in the catering industry. It is thought that this will encourage more women to get involved in the projects.
171. Blue Sky has previously secured work through British Waterways in the North West. Consideration could be given as to how Blue Sky could gain work with British Waterways in other areas.
172. There is a long waiting list for Blue Sky employment (about 3-4 months). Given the history of the employees, the organisation works closely with the Probation Service to manage the risks.
173. The organisation is looking at diversifying. Consideration needs to be given to the impact that an increase in the number of jobs undertaken by ex-offenders from Blue Sky would have on the wider unemployed population of the Borough. Blue Sky focuses on securing relatively low skilled employment for ex-offenders as there is less demand and the individuals doing these jobs require less training. Many ex-offenders are often very keen to gain regular employment.
174. Although the majority of Blue Sky ex-offenders have completed custodial sentences, the organisation also provides employment for some ex-offenders that have been given

community service orders. A pilot scheme is underway in Bristol, in partnership with Bristol council and the Probation Trust, to develop employment opportunities for individuals with community service orders.

175. Blue Sky has worked with Wormwood Scrubs and 30-40 individuals from that prison over the last four or five years. Blue Sky does not provide services to ex-offenders on issues such as drugs counselling or literacy. Individuals in need of these services are signposted to the appropriate organisation.

Reed in Partnership

176. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has appointed Reed to deliver a new pan-London service which will start in the new year. In its tender submission, Reed has assured the DWP that it has staff in place that are trained to deal with complex family issues as well as issues such as drugs, alcohol and mental health. Reed will be working with the Council and other partners to get individuals who have been unemployed (or in receipt of benefits for six months or more) into permanent employment by providing them with training.
177. Reed will be paid for results – i.e., helping individuals who have been unemployed or in receipt of benefits for six or more months to maintain a job for at least 12 months. Often, re-offenders have very complex needs (e.g., mental health, drugs and alcohol) so would not be the easiest individuals to help gain permanent employment. Concern is expressed that, because of these complex needs and because Reed is paid by results, Reed's focus may err towards volume rather than dealing with the more difficult cases.
178. Although the programme is still in its infancy, it is anticipated that the Police, Probation Service and Council services will make referrals. The referral form is only one page and will need to be completed by the individuals and will include their name and National Insurance number so that confirmation can be sought from Job Centre Plus regarding their worklessness.
179. The Council lead has so far been meeting with various Council departments to advise them of this new option of being able to refer individuals to Reed in Partnership. The Council lead will liaise with the Council's ASB & Investigations Service Manager to make initial links with organisations that work with re-offenders so that they can then make referrals to Reed. It is noted that referrals will be on a voluntary basis.
180. Pre-sentence reports will identify if someone is a re-offender and can also highlight whether the individual has been unemployed for more than six months. As such, it is suggested that referrals could be used by courts as part of sentencing. Although a re-offender might come from a family, all of whom worked, as long as the offender has been unemployed or in receipt of benefits for six months, they would still be eligible for referral to Reed. However, offenders under the age of 18, those that are employed or those from a stable family that all work will not be eligible for a referral.
181. Blue Sky provides full time temporary employment for ex-offenders and Reed in Partnership will be able to provide ex-offenders with training (for example, literacy skills, CV writing, completing application forms, IT skills, interaction with colleagues and interview skills). Reed will be providing a tailored service to individuals.
182. It is suggested that the Council lead liaise with the coordinators of the Community Payback Scheme (CPS). Once an individual has completed two thirds of their CPS sentence/term, consideration could be given to asking them if they wanted to be referred to Reed.

Drug Intervention Programme

183. The Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) comprises five staff. DIP is just one part of Hillingdon Drug and Alcohol Services (HDAS) which is a multi-disciplinary team that comprises approximately 40 staff in total, including doctors and nurses. DIP specifically works with re-offenders to gain treatment for their drug and/or alcohol issues and reduce their chances of committing more crime. Many GP surgeries in the Borough display posters advertising the services offered by HDAS.
184. Although, in the past, the service has used a harm minimisation model, this has now been replaced by a recovery agenda. The new agenda means that effort is made to help individuals rehabilitate rather than just stabilise their drug or alcohol usage.
185. The success can be measured in small steps which can have a significant impact on both the offender and the community, particularly if the individual stops committing crimes such as burglary as a result of receiving an opiate substitute prescription. A Treatment Outcome Profile is completed for every person that use the DIP service. This means that comparisons can be made between an individual's condition at the start, midway and end of their treatment.
186. DIP works predominantly with the Police, the courts and Wormwood Scrubs to identify and target offenders. The aim is to get these individuals treated quickly to stop them from offending. It is noted that there is often only a small window of opportunity in which action can be taken, so time is of the essence. The time from identification to treatment could take up to three days.
187. The Home Office has been providing significantly more funding to Ealing and Hounslow for their drug intervention programmes for some time despite crime levels being comparable and, in some cases, higher in Hillingdon. This funding enables those councils to employ teams of about 16 staff. However, this funding is being reduced by the Home Office year-on-year.
188. Although the DIP team is already currently working to capacity and funding has been reduced over previous years, a request has been made to the Home Office to not reduce funding to the DIP in 2012/2013 as there are plans to implement test on arrest. Furthermore, £20k has been released from the Council's Local Area Agreement funding for the DIP to implement targeted testing on arrest at Uxbridge Police Station. This one year pilot to identify drug usage will start on 1 April 2012. All of the funding will be used for equipment and supplies.
189. Targeted testing on arrest will mean that individuals that have committed certain crimes (e.g., trigger offences such as robbery, burglary, etc) would be tested for opiates and Class A drugs whilst in the custody suite. If they test positive, they will be required to attend a follow up appointment with the DIP and will subsequently enter into treatment. Failure to attend this appointment could lead to re-arrest and further sanctions.
190. Other local authorities are not targeting their testing on arrest which means that they test all offenders. This results in a significant number of negative tests and unnecessary work. Targeted test on arrest could be used in Hillingdon for locally identified trigger offences in addition to those offences being targeted at the discretion of the Inspector.

191. The additional work created by the new targeted test on arrest provision will be absorbed by the existing staff at the Police Station and DIP. The DIP service does not currently cover weekends or bank holidays. As the testing will continue at the Police Station during these periods, consideration will need to be given to how a potential glut will be dealt with.
192. Individuals are currently enrolled on a drug intervention programme which last six weeks. Should a backlog be created by test on arrest, consideration could be given to condensing the treatment programme to three weeks. This will still be in addition to services such as provision of a group worker and group support. It is recognised that this could potentially impact on the workload of GPs and other teams within HDAS.

NACRO/Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust

193. The core functions of the court diversion service promoted by NACRO, a national crime reduction charity, are to: provide signposting; facilitate access to mental health services; refer to other services; liaise and provide an information exchange; collect data and monitoring; provide post-sentence support and follow-up; provide screening; and undertake assessment.
194. Uxbridge has been taking part in a pilot court diversion service with a view to providing information for the Bradley Report. CNWL has been funding the pilot but it is unclear where future funding will be sourced for the expansion of the service. Referrals can be made in a number of ways which include from the Crown Prosecution Service, Police, Probation, Mental Health Teams and prisons. Self referrals can also be made by anyone with a mental health issue that is already known.
195. A bid has been submitted for £200k to the Department of Health for additional staff to develop the existing court diversion service in Uxbridge to make it more robust. The bid has gone through to the second stage of the assessment process and the outcome of whether or not it has been successful will be known by 16 December 2011. There is a possibility that, even if it was successful, the full £200k will not be granted.
196. Although Uxbridge court is already really busy, from 1 January 2012, it will start receiving remand and bail prisoners from other courts. A significant number of re-offenders have mental health issues. The issue of dual diagnosis is also raised whereby re-offenders have mental health issues as well as drug and/or alcohol issues. As this will usually result in these individuals being seen by HDAS and CNWL, it is important that there are good links with the community treatment teams. There is also more scope for the service to consider looking at its provision specifically for re-offenders.
197. The small team does not currently provide weekend or bank holiday cover. As the courts will start to open on Saturdays from 1 January 2012 (and soon after on Sundays too), consideration will need to be given to providing a seven day service.

Hayes Town Partnership

198. The Chairman of Hayes Town Partnership has been involved with Wormwood Scrubs and elements of the London Resettlement Strategy in relation to housing, employment, money management, education and training, health, drugs and alcohol. There are a number of lessons that have been learnt from the Strategy and it is suggested that more effective coordination of these issues could improve its impact. Agencies are now going into prison prior to an offender's release to identify their needs once they have been released (e.g., drugs services, mental health services).
199. As there are a significant number of offenders that have mental health issues, it is suggested that the mental health services need to be more aware of re-offenders. Re-offending is not high on these services' agendas so consideration could be given to how this can be changed. An offender's mental health issues need to be identified prior to release from prison.
200. Whilst effort is being made to get re-offenders into education and then employment, this is frequently aimed at too high a level. Offenders will often benefit from basic reading and writing skills rather than obtaining qualifications as they will need these basic skills to improve their chances of gaining permanent employment.
201. It is agreed that employment is one of the single biggest factors in stopping offenders from re-offending. There are a number of large companies that have made a commitment to employing ex-offenders. These organisations included Prêt-a-Manger, Virgin and Sainsbury's.
202. It is suggested that the Council's Chief Executive and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) be asked to make enquiries about the possibility of large organisations in Hillingdon reflecting the best practice illustrated by Virgin by employing ex-offenders. Furthermore, consideration could be given to including the employment of ex-offenders as a condition attached to certain non-domestic planning applications.
203. The Chairman of Hayes Town Partnership has been working in Hayes with the Cathedral Group to get the young people living at Jupiter House into employment. However, it is recognised that these young people are mostly under 18 and not necessarily offenders.
204. Housing is also an issue for offenders. It is suggested that a business case be made as, if offenders are not housed, they will gravitate back towards other offenders.
205. With regard to mentoring, consideration could be given to how reformed offenders could be involved in talking to young offenders to prevent their offending from escalating or to prevent them from offending in the first instance. There is a potential role for HAVS to develop a voluntary mentoring service along these lines.

Appendix 2:

Safer Hillingdon Partnership Plan 2011-2014 2011 - 2012 Annual Update



HILLINGDON
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Safer Hillingdon Partnership Plan 2011-14

2011 - 12 Annual Up-date

Contents

- Chapter 1 Introduction - Sustainable Community Strategy
- Chapter 2 Terms of Reference for the Safer Hillingdon Partnership
- Chapter 3 Governance structure
- Chapter 4 Objectives and action grid for 2011/12
- Chapter 5 Allocation of resources
- Chapter 6 Community Engagement Plan
- Chapter 7 Review of performance in 2010/11
- Appendix Annual Strategic Assessment 2011

Chapter 1

Introduction - Sustainable Community Strategy

Introduction

Hillingdon Partners brings together local public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to improve the quality of life for all those who live in, work in, and visit Hillingdon.

The Hillingdon Partners Executive develops a shared strategic vision to advance the social, environmental and economic well-being of the London Borough of Hillingdon.

In the current economic climate it is more important than ever that we focus on the things that matter most to local people.

Our priorities for Hillingdon

We have identified ten priority areas for the focus of our joint work. Our priorities are to:

- Promote community-based provision, prevention, independence, recovery and reablement.
- Develop prevention strategy for young people undertaking risky behaviours.
- Increase Housing supply - with appropriate infrastructure.
- Reduce re-offending.
- Promote sport and leisure.
- Maintain resident satisfaction levels.
- Increase access to employment apprenticeships and skills.
- Promote and invest in town centres.
- Maintain parks and green spaces; preserve greenbelt.
- Promote resident-focused recycling.

Theme Groups

Action to address the priorities will be delivered through five theme groups. In some cases, priorities are the responsibility of more than one theme group. All groups have a key priority to maintain the current high resident satisfaction levels.

Safer Hillingdon Partnership

The Partnership brings together agencies with responsibility for reducing re-offending, reducing the harm caused by alcohol and drugs, reducing antisocial behaviour and youth crime.

Priority areas

Reduce re-offending

Develop prevention strategy for young people undertaking risky behaviours

Maintain resident satisfaction levels

Hillingdon Children & Families Trust

The Trust brings together services for children and young people. The Trust has responsibility for improving the health and well-being of young people, focusing on risky behaviour groups.

Priority Areas

Develop prevention strategy for young people undertaking risky behaviours

Maintain resident satisfaction levels

Health & Wellbeing Board
The Board's purpose is to provide leadership and direction across agencies that deliver services to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Hillingdon.
Priority Areas
Promote community-based provision, prevention, independence, recovery and reablement
Develop prevention strategy for young people undertaking risky behaviours
Increase housing supply with appropriate infrastructure
Maintain resident satisfaction levels

Sustain, Renew & Prosper Group
The Group is responsible for overseeing economic and regeneration objectives, including promoting employment and skills and our approach to town centres.
Priority areas
Increase access to employment, apprenticeships and skills
Promote and invest in town centres
Maintain resident satisfaction levels

Strong & Active Communities Partnership
The Partnership aims to make Hillingdon a borough with strong and cohesive communities, where local people have real opportunities to take an active part in local life, leisure and culture
Priority areas
Promote sport and leisure
Maintain parks and green spaces; preserve greenbelt
Promote resident-focussed recycling
Maintain resident satisfaction levels

The SHP Annual Plan is the Community Safety Strategy for the Borough.

An annual strategic assessment ¹ determines the priorities requiring attention and if existing ones are still relevant and important.

The priorities identified by the matrix were considered and discussed at the SHP Board meeting on 25 January 2011. As a result of these discussions the Board agreed that the following focussed list of issues should become the key priority areas for action over the coming 3-years:

¹ See Appendix

- **Reducing harm caused by alcohol and drugs**
 - Misuse of alcohol and drugs generates a significant amount of acquisitive crime (burglary, robbery, motor vehicle crime) and violent crime.
- **Reducing anti social behaviour**
 - The Stakeholder Survey suggests vandalism, misuse of alcohol and drugs, nuisance behaviour, flytipping, noise and graffiti should be the priority areas for action.
- **Reducing youth crime**
 - Addressing crime and disorder issues that affect young people as both victims and perpetrators. Many young people have identified public transport around school travel times as particular areas of concern (through both Stakeholder Survey and past Your Shout surveys).
- **Reducing re-offending**
 - Addressing reasons why some individuals or families have long histories of causing crime and/or anti social behaviour.

Detailed action plans for each objective in the plan contain specific actions for partner agencies (see chapter 4).

Reducing harm caused by alcohol and drugs

Develop interventions and pathways that divert clients admitted to hospital for alcohol-specific reasons into structured treatment.

Develop early interventions targeting harmful and hazardous drinkers, making best use of existing resources in community services and primary care.

Develop the quarterly alcohol scorecard in order to measure numbers of clients diverted from acute settings

Implement a Responsible Retailer Scheme

Increase successful outcomes of drug treatment

Conduct Home Fire Safety Visits in priority households

Reducing anti social behaviour

Establish mechanisms to deal effectively with ASB reported to the Council

Establish mechanisms to deal effectively with ASB reported to the Police

Ensure vulnerable residents are offered appropriate support to deal with the impact of ASB

Run a diversionary programme including Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

Create ASB intelligence products using the London Information Exchange System

Implement a Partnership ASB Communications Campaign

Reducing youth crime

Ensure the Safer Transport Teams are deployed around transit routes for young people

Ensure safe routes to and from school

Establish a new Youth Offending Strategy

Reduce the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system

Reducing re-offending

Maintain the crime reductions achieved prior to 2011/12

Increase the number of offenders brought to justice

Reduce the re-offending rate of offenders

Ensure the Domestic Violence Action Plan is up dated and reported to the DV Executive each quarter

Operate a Specialist DV Court

Operate a Multi Agency Referral and Assessment Conference system for DV

Several milestones in the partnership plan refer to other related action plans. The partnership plan is meant to be high level, with considerable detail deferred to the action plans for specific issues such as domestic violence, drug treatment plan, alcohol strategy, youth crime prevention plan and Youth and Connexions plan.

A summary of the partnership plan will be published on the council's web site.

For more information about the current position please contact the London Borough of Hillingdon Community Safety Team at communitysafety@hillington.gov.uk or 01895 277295.

Appendix 3: Re-offending Statistics from Blue Sky

Statistics provided by Blue Sky for Hillingdon Employees from start (2005) to January 2012:

Employees	90
Still on	6
Left	84
Onward jobs	51
Accredited training	61
CSCS	27
Driving Licence	12
Wamitab	6
Literacy	4
Numeracy	3
Spraying	2
Drink/drug driving courses	3
Health & safety	4
Total courses delivered	86
Re-offended	5
Recalled	2
Total left to recall/offending	7
Total no. PPO	8
Of these re-offended	4

Appendix 4:

Site Visit: Blue Sky

The Employment and Training Manager and the Senior Operations Manager, of Blue Sky welcomed the Working Group to a site visit at Blue Sky. The Senior Operations Manager is the co-founder of the organisation. Both are ex-offenders.

The Senior Operations Manager previously worked as the New Deal works supervisor for Groundwork Thames Valley and has much experience in the grounds maintenance sector. He worked for the Royal Parks for ten years, gaining industry knowledge and experience. His role is to ensure that contracts are delivered to the correct quality standards and to manage employee recruitment.

The Employment and Training Manager has previously worked for A4E as an Ex-Offender Community Liaison Officer and was responsible for the Hertfordshire caseload of ex-offenders. He also devised and delivered training in motivation and employment skills. He was a tutor in South Bank University where he taught literacy and numeracy to City & Guilds Level 3 and 4. He devised Family Learning programmes for parents and teachers to teach, using different learning styles. At Blue Sky, the Employment and Training Manager liaises with potential employers to identify job-opportunities for employees after their contract with Blue Sky ends. He mentors team-members and also devises and delivers vocational training programmes to prepare them to enter long-term employment.

It is stressed that more education is needed in prison to deter offenders from re-offending. It is noted that 10% of PPO's commit 80% of crime. Offenders need to distance themselves from certain friends that may keep them in the cycle of offending.

Blue Sky has a revolving door policy and track people for 2 years after they have left Blue Sky. It is noted that a lot of offenders will not tell people that they have numeracy or literacy problems and this may be reasons that prevent them from gaining employment.

Blue Sky gives offenders a 6 month contract, this 6 month contract is in place to give other people a chance to come on board the programme. The offenders that enrol on the programme need to be committed to change their life. Offenders are risk assessed before they are brought on the programme. Certain types of offenders will not be offered certain jobs and some offenders will not be enrolled on the programme. If offenders have a drug programme they would need to be clean before they start on a programme with Blue Sky. Incentives will be offered to help and achieve this.

The teams that work together at Blue Sky police themselves and support each other. The supervisor of the group is an ex-offender and a lot of peer support is offered to each other. 4/5 months into the Blue Sky programme employees are engaging into looking at alternative employment.

It is noted that 28% of all employees at Blue Sky have been homeless but will have some sort of address (e.g. shelter).

The usual type of employment that is offered is low skilled work and Blue Sky is looking into catering. This may increase the number of women employed and diversify the organisation.

Appendix 5: Glossary, References & Further Reading

Glossary

ASB	Anti Social Behaviour
CJIT	Criminal Justice Integrated Team
CNWL	Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust
CPS	Community Payback Scheme
CST	Community Safety Team
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Action Team
DIP	Drug Intervention Programme
DRRs	Drug Rehabilitation Requirements
DV	Domestic Violence
DVIP	Domestic Violence Intervention Programme
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
GP	General Practitioner
HAGAM	Hillingdon Action Group for Addiction Management
HAVS	Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services
HDAS	Hillingdon Drug and Alcohol Service
HIDVAP	Hillingdon Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Project
IAGs	Independent Advisory Groups
IDAP	Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme
IDAPA	Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme Accelerated
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
LAA	Local Area Agreement

LPT	London Probation Trust
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MAPPAs	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
OGRS	Offender Group Reconviction Scale
PCC	Police Consultative Committee
PCT	Primary Care Trust
POC	Policy Overview Committee
PIANO	Providing Innovation And New Opportunities
PPOs	Prolific and other Priority Offenders
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SHP	Safer Hillingdon Partnership
TOM	Total Offender Management

Further Reading

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- Proven Re-offending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin, January to December 2009, England and Wales; **Ministry of Justice**; October 2011
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- Working with the Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, Reducing the risks and saving money; **Domestic Violence Intervention Project**; January 2011
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- Sainsbury's Centre for Mental Health, **Securing employment for offenders with mental health problems**; September 2009
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