

Reasons for a Reunited Probation Service

Briefing 7: No end to end management which is proven to be the most effective for desistance.

End to end offender management was championed by the former government agency NOMS in response to the Carter report published in 2003. Their model said: *“a more strategic approach to the end-end management of offenders across their sentence is needed”*

The rationale for this was to ensure that greater focus was given to the offender and reducing their offending and that this focus spanned across both prisons and probation. End to end management meant that, in the majority of cases, clients had their pre-sentence report written by the same person that would then supervise them throughout their sentence. The benefits of this are widely recorded in evidence based research some of which are outlined below. Splitting both the workforce and the workloads in TR completely destroyed this model without any evidence being offered by the MoJ to say why this approach was more effective, would improve client experience and reduce re-offending.

All research into desistance talks about the importance of the relationship between client and worker in reducing reoffending. This needs to be based on trust, respect and a willingness to engage. Clients need to be able to feel they can discuss, at times, very personal details of their lives and this cannot be done if they are repeatedly seeing strangers with no relationship between them. Seeing someone for the first time pre-sentence report stage can be a vital part in building that relationship as well as enabling the practitioner to maintain the client’s motivation. Consistency throughout a sentence gives the client a sense of stability which, if for example they are regularly moving prisons, may be the only constant they have. This relationship and its importance has been recognised by sentencers and was included in the Magistrates Association response to the MoJ consultation.

Having a consistent worker enables the effective delivery of the sentence plan. Worker and client build that plan up together and are therefore best placed to deliver it together. It is much harder for staff to pick up a case part way through and try to continue the work. Clients who have had numerous officers will often say they hate having to repeat themselves over and over again and feel they are getting nowhere which has a negative impact on their motivation and willingness to engage.

End to end management also assists in effective multi agency working. Not only does a worker have to build up the client relationship but they must also establish relationships with others who are involved in the management of a case. Having a clear line of communication with agencies enables effective information sharing and co-working.

Resettlement also requires end-to-end management to be the most effective it can. Having an officer on the outside throughout a client's sentence enables both parties to build up a relationship and to work collaboratively on how resettlement can best work for the client, for risk management and for other parties, such as family. Through The Gate (TTG) was seen as a fundamental part of TR, offering effective resettlement programmes being delivered by CRCs. In reality it has failed to deliver at all with HMIP describing as so ineffective that if it disappeared tomorrow you would not notice. With CRCs delivering TTG it added yet another barrier between client and worker and prevented workers from developing the most effective release plan.

Questions you may wish to ask:

- What evidence does the MoJ have that the current split model is more effective than end-to-end management and will the Minister share that with practitioner and the unions?
- If the newly developed Offender Management in Custody model (OMiC) goes ahead will this not mean an even further split between worker and client and what evidence is there to suggest that would be more effective than having a consistent probation officer on the outside throughout a custodial sentence?
- What plans does the Minister have to improve resettlement given that TTG has fundamentally failed in its purpose of effective resettlement?

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