

IL 25-21

Amy Rees
Director General
National Probation Service
By e-mail

24th June 2021

Dear Amy,

Thank you for your letter of 23rd June to the Probation Trade Unions in respect of the Job Evaluation Scheme Process.

This follows the extensive discussions between the Probation Unions and Jim Barton and colleagues over recent days where we have made it very clear that our Officers, Officials and Representatives have been fielding a substantial number of enquiries from very angry and distressed members about what has gone on with a number of Intervention role evaluations.

That said, we obviously now need to focus on the next steps to explore how we can use the joint review that you have offered with an emphasis on lessons learned about the application of the scheme.

We agree with the actions that you have proposed to defer the appeals for the Unpaid Work Manager, Programme Manager and Treatment Manager roles pending a comprehensive consultation exercise that we hope will contribute to a different outcome from that which has caused so much anxiety for our members. Similarly, and accepting that this is an exceptional process because of the unusual circumstances that we are in, Napo can also agree to setting aside the Performance Manager Appeal outcome while we jointly explore the options open to us following the review.

Without seeking to prejudice the outcomes of this review, I do need to record that a constant factor in the discussions between Napo Officers and Officials and our members who have been affected, has been the observation that there was insufficient information available to JE Panel members tasked with scoring the roles for the posts referred to above, as well as the Performance Manager Appeal. Job descriptions (JDs) and Job Description Questionnaires (JDQs) were described as lacking in detail or missing elements that are believed to exist in roles. To protect the integrity of the scheme only information provided in the JD and JDQ can be considered by the panel. Perhaps if current post holders, or holders of similar posts had been properly involved in the JD and JDQ design this might have delivered different outcomes.

It is clear that some modernisation of the scheme will be appropriate in the long term given the significant changes to Probation and to the world of work in recent years but it is our suspicion that the issue here has been the application of the process itself combined with the pressure to create, consult on and evaluate the roles on a tight timescale in the context of preparation for transition. In addition, we have faced a global pandemic which has placed additional demands on all of us.

You will not be surprised to hear that the overwhelming conclusion from those members is that their prospective employer had a responsibility to have handled this issue better, the responsibility for the consultation on new JDs sits with the employer. We are of the view that this had a deleterious effect on the scoring process and it is one of the factors that we will obviously need to consider in the work that lies ahead of us.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Lawrence
General Secretary



Katie Lomas
National Chair

Cc: Jim Barton SRO Probation Reform Programme