

For immediate release

Probation Union outraged as Secretary of State announces preferred bidders for the Probation Service despite evidence that it's not safe to sell off

Napo is outraged today that Chris Grayling Secretary of State for Justice has gone ahead with his announcement of who his preferred bidders are for the Probation Service despite increasing evidence that it is not safe to sell off. The 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) which will deal with low – medium risk of harm offenders are still in utter chaos following the decision to split the Probation Service up on 1st June this year. Staff of all grades have spoken openly about risks to public safety with offenders not being supervised properly, continuing IT failures, staff shortages and ever increasing workloads.

Ian Lawrence General Secretary said: “it is purely ideological that Grayling is pressing ahead with his untried and untested so called reforms to probation. We have mounting evidence that neither the CRCs or the National Probation Service is stable at the moment and this is having a direct impact on the supervision of offenders and public safety. The fact so few organisations have won contracts also suggests that this has been a flawed competition with little or no real interest from providers in taking these contracts on.”

Napo has been on strike twice in the last 12 months in opposition to these outsourcing plans and will continue to campaign against them.

Ian Lawrence said: “Grayling has made a written statement to parliament rather than risk having to answer questions in the House. Yet again he is trying to avoid scrutiny which is in our view further evidence of a lack of transparency in the whole process. We would urge MPs to ask questions of him and to hold him to account for his decision to press ahead without providing evidence that it is safe to do so.”