

Embargo – Immediate

Evidence from Ministry of Justice confirms probation reforms are danger to the public

Napo has this evening written to Chris Grayling in advance of tomorrow's Justice Select Committee to highlight its concerns about the serious risks to public safety posed by Mr Grayling's proposal to sell off 70% of the probation service, in light of evidence collected by Napo and the Ministry of Justice's own tests, which were disclosed to Napo late on Friday 28 November 2014 following a High Court order compelling Mr Grayling to disclose the test results. The Ministry of Justice has claimed that the test results must be kept secret. Napo is currently contesting this on the grounds that it is in the public interest that the safety of the proposed sale is known.

The reforms which have been rushed through by Chris Grayling, Secretary of State will see 70% of the probation service privatised by early next year. Napo is challenging the Secretary of State's decision to move to sell off 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies through a Judicial Review due to be heard 10th December 2014. The union believes that failing IT systems, staff shortages and the fact that the reforms have never been piloted will lead to serious further offending, risk issues such as safeguarding children will be missed by overworked staff and the performance of the service will be reduced.

The Secretary of State is due to appear in front of the Justice Select Committee tomorrow morning. Napo anticipates that Grayling will announce his decision to move to share sale despite growing concerns from the unions and other stakeholders in the justice sector.

Attached is a letter from Napo to the Secretary of State. This has had to be redacted due to confidentiality clauses insisted upon by the Secretary of State which Napo is also challenging.

Ends