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Napo Quarterly

November 2016

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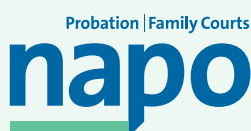
AGM SPECIAL

Probation | Family Courts

napo

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NQ

This year Napo held its AGM in St David's Hall, right in the heart of Cardiff city centre.

The change in venue complimented a sense of renewed energy and determination of those in attendance. Reaching quoracy early on allowed for important discussions which affect members and the operation of the union to take place. As you can see on page 21 there were a wide range of motions that were debated and carried over the three days.

Although there was no minister in attendance, we were fortunate enough to be joined by remarkable speakers including Dame Glenys Stacey, chief inspectorate of probation; Jo Stevens MP and Dai Donavan, who was able to draw parallels between the miners' strike in 1984 and the plight faced by probation staff and young doctors today.

This year, we have made many of the speeches and sessions available to listen to via our podcast page at www.nqonline.org/podcasts. You can also read additional articles that did not make it into this jam-packed issue via www.nqonline.org.uk.

Committed to the sustainability of Napo – chairs' address

After being re-elected to sit for a second term as co-chairs, Chris Winters' and Yvonne Pattison's commitment to the survival of the union was reaffirmed in a speech delivered to members at the beginning of conference.

Chris – who took the rostrum – said that neither of the co-chairs “underestimated the challenges ahead” and spoke briefly on the issues faced by each section of membership.

“Any union is only as strong as its membership,” Chris reminded members and said: “Moving forward we need to ensure a high level of union density in all sectors of membership and this needs your help.

“Just think: if every one of us could recruit just one extra person, who knows what we could achieve.”



adeiladu'r
dyfodol
building
the future

Collectivism is our strength

Ian Lawrence said “collectivism is our strength” in the fight to protect jobs, professionalism and the union he described as “proud and tenacious” during his address to conference.

Acknowledging that there would be some “stark choices” to be made in times ahead, the general secretary warned that while strike action could not be ruled out, increased membership density would be needed for maximum impact.

Job cuts and the government’s “pernicious decision” to end check-off have both led to a reduction in members. The union was able to obtain a 75% direct debit sign up rate across NPS membership, but Mr Lawrence urged for people to “come back to the union and give us the strength we need.”

Applauding the members who “stood united” during times of adversity, Mr Lawrence said it was time to step up the campaign to defend the professional values and standards of all members.

“The most effective strategy that we must and will deploy is to rebuild the concept of workplace trade unionism where our members can gain the confidence from each other to maintain and strengthen our efforts to make Napo the true voice of your profession,” he said.

Referencing an up-coming debate on a new collective agreement Mr Lawrence said: “There are many employers that are ready to walk away tomorrow from any notion of organised bargaining. Then there is the majority who will see the sense in retaining a structure for single table bargaining.

“Whatever you decide, unless we increase our membership density, we won’t be negotiating from a position of strength.”

Ending his presentation of the annual report, Mr Lawrence



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said: “Let me say how privileged and proud I am to be tasked with helping to lead Napo during these difficult times.

“Let nobody be in any doubt that we face many tests over the coming months, and still a potential threat to our survival. But I hope that Napo members continue to respond to those challenges by continuing to demonstrate their resolve to defend and develop this union and maintain its position as the respected and independent voice of reason and tolerance in what is a conflict ridden world.”

TAYTULA BURKE

Family Court Fight

Conference were told that TR and its impact had not stopped the union supporting its family court members. Information obtained from members had been fed-back to ministers and Napo has been able to “build productive relationships with senior Cafcass managers”.

Continued fight against the Trade Unions Act

Branding the Act something that “leaves trade unionists in the position of potentially having to break the law” the general secretary told members: “If or when Napo members decide to launch a strike campaign of industrial action, that would be my barometer of whether the action is lawful or not.”

Brexit aftermath

The vote to leave the EU had created economic uncertainty and “spawned a resurgence of something that is nasty and dangerous in the form of increased bigotry, racism and xenophobia” conference were told.

Blame governments and multi-nationals, not refugees or migrant workers

Mr Lawrence claimed the “pathetic absence of coordinated solutions from world leaders” had fuelled the refugee crisis and said: “Anyone that loads their families into unfit boats in treacherous seas are fighting for the safety of their families.”

He also said migrant workers should not be blamed for “Mike Ashley Sports Direct sweat shops”, zero hour contracts or “unscrupulous British and multi-national employers who fail to invest in skills and training”.

Continued fight against racism

The general secretary spoke of Napo’s continued commitment to “fight against racism in all its forms” announcing that he was working with the officers and officials, Napo’s Black Members’ Network and the newly formed NOMS staff associations. He added: “I was proud to be part of the team that gave evidence to the David Lammy review of racial bias in the criminal justice system.”

Outmoded electoral system

Ian Lawrence told conference he believed it was time for electoral reform calling the current process “outmoded, unrepresentative and no longer fit for purpose”. Citing the election of a minority Tory government off the back of a 24% voter turnout, he said the debate around electoral reform was worth having.



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Link between magistracy and probation vital for justice



Malcolm Richardson

“I sometimes feel someone should say: ‘shouldn’t we be looking at it as a justice system?’ and ‘what happened to justice?’”

Just like many Napo members, Magistrate Malcolm Richardson has been effected by government cuts. For the last twenty five years he has been sitting in a court in North Avon which now, along with many more up and down the country, has heard its last case.

While driving into Bristol to preside over future cases may be a minor inconvenience for Mr Richardson, the greater issue is the loss of a courthouse with a probation office attached to it.

Granted, the probation office at North Avon had closed a while ago following a previous reorganisation, but Mr Richardson could not stress enough how important that link was for the delivery of justice.

“We had local probation officers which we knew, in whom we would build relationships, in whom we could build trust and confidence,” the magistrate said adding: “As sentencers, we need to have confidence that the sentences we pass are going to be administered and achieve the objectives.”

Conference was told that two of the five purposes of sentencing were rehabilitation and reducing re-offending – both of these most likely to be engaged during a community based penalty.

“Despite what those in the Twittersphere may tell you, no magistracy wants to send people to custody,” Mr Richardson told conference. However, there seems to be a lack of confidence in provisions available in the community and the people making these recommendations.

“That confidence will come by building a relationship. Building those relationships become harder with physical distance and are impossible when you are told you are not allowed to meet with anyone from a CRC,” Mr Richardson admitted.

Napo members were as bemused as

the magistrate at the ban on interacting with CRC staff. “There seems to be someone who has this bizarre notion that if I meet someone from a CRC, they are going to sell me a sentencing provision and I am going to be influenced by it,” he told the laughing auditorium.

Jokes aside, the magistrate admitted gaining confidence had been challenged further by the introduction of the Rehabilitation Action Requirement (RAR). “It is sensible that probation be given the opportunity to make decisions if a particular person keeps reoffending under their supervision,” conference were told, but Mr Richardson said when magistrates are not informed of what is written in the RAR “it will undermine the trust magistrates have in recommendations made by probation officers.”

Mr Richardson told members that problem solving was an integral part of the job for everybody working in the justice system. “If we are going to do more than just the ‘punish bit’ we need to engage in problem solving. But to do meaningful problem solving there has to be a service to which we can direct people to help do that problem solving.”

A management consultant by profession, Mr Richardson said: “A fundamental part of all businesses are the three Es: economy, efficiency and effectiveness.”

Private companies are extremely good at measuring and driving towards the first “E” in a bid to make more money, he claimed before saying not enough was being done towards efficiency.

Effectiveness is much more challenging as you are required to “work out the effectiveness of what?”

Finishing his address to conference, Mr Richardson said: “I sometimes feel someone should say: ‘shouldn’t we be looking at it as a justice system?’ and ‘what happened to justice?’”

Edridge: Solidarity and kindness during adversity

Charlotte Dunkley described the work of Edridge as “practical” and “transformative” and told members it “characterises Napo as a union and Edridge as a charity” during her address to conference.

Having recently taken over as the fund’s chair of trustees, Charlotte painted a vivid and moving picture of the people who had benefited from the Fund’s assistance.

“We help me, and you and any of the colleagues that we sit next to day to day,” Charlotte told conference, adding that 65% of the Fund’s beneficiaries were Napo members.

Applicants to the Fund are varied, but not surprisingly there is a higher representation of disabled members – many of whom are facing ill-health retirement or sickness absence procedures. Edridge was approached by the rep of one such member who said: “Your cheque will transform his life. He’s living without heating because he cannot afford it.”

Transforming Rehabilitation has impacted on those working in probation in a variety of ways, but Charlotte has

revealed how detrimental it may be to the finances of members.

Since recording applicants’ employment details, Edridge have found that there are twice as many applications from NPS members than there are from those working in the CRCs. Younger members are also facing “overwhelming” financial difficulties against a backdrop of a reduce in pay at the bottom of the scale.

On top of this, Charlotte reports a great deal of colleagues “in the grips of pay day loan companies.”

An ex-service user now employed by a CRC in what he described as his “dream job” had historic debts that he could not clear. Charlotte told members that by giving him assistance “we have helped him in a way that has made his desistance journey a very real one.”

While a grant from Edridge may help to alleviate financial burden in many cases, it can also dramatically improve the safety of others. The Fund has helped those fleeing domestic violence, and in a case which Charlotte said struck those at Edridge, helped a member move after

receiving death threats from someone due to be released from prison.

Conference was told that many who receive money from Edridge do in fact pay it back. Charlotte said: “For us as trustees, this is the true spirit of practical support that underpins the history of the labour movement. It is the demonstration of solidarity and kindness at a time of adversity in people’s lives.”

As a charity, Edridge relies entirely on donations from individuals and organisations such as Napo and the Civil Service Insurance Society. However, cuts made by both organisations have seen Edridge’s income fall by a third.

In order to continue to help those in need, Charlotte asked members to consider buying into the 50/50 fund or sign up for regular giving. “If 100 people gave £5, that gives us an additional £6000 a year which we can gift aid significantly increasing the amount,” Charlotte told members.

To donate, volunteer, or find out more about the work of Edridge visit <http://www.edridgefund.org/>

TAYTULA BURKE

Your cheque will transform his life. He’s living without heating because he cannot afford it.

this is the true spirit of practical support that underpins the history of the labour movement

We have helped him in a way that has made his desistance journey a very real one

Family Court Focus

Hello to all members

A special open meeting of the Family Court Section Executive Committee was held directly before the main Napo AGM this year. Four motions were debated and passed. The detail of these has been sent to all FCS members directly by the co-chairs of the SEC. The meeting was attended and addressed by Ian Lawrence, general secretary and by Dean Rogers, assistant general secretary. A formal AGM is to be held early in the New Year. There will be vacancies on the various Family Court Committees to be filled then. Members are encouraged to stand for these.

Family Court Section had a very interesting professional slot at AGM this year. Our speakers at this were Lord Fred Ponsonby (magistrate and co-chair of the Justice Unions Family Court Parliamentary Group); Liz Saville-Roberts MP (chair of Justice Unions and the Family Court Unions Parliamentary Groups) and Steve Cavalier (solicitor and chief executive of Thompsons Solicitors).

There was discussion about how



Jay Barlow

women are treated in the family court compared to criminal courts in relation to domestic violence and abuse. Lord Ponsonby pointed out that family court was primary responsible for the welfare of the child, but was surprised to hear some areas allowed cross examination of domestic violence victims by perpetrators.

Lord Ponsonby paid tribute to the work of Cafcass officers and their ability to provide practical solutions to difficulties and to resolve entrenched disputes. It may be that the quality of safeguarding letters quite often allows dispute resolution to occur at first hearings.

The extent to which Cafcass reports are risk adverse was considered. For example recommendations for fact finding in respect of historical domestic violence in situations where there has been contact in the intervening period.

Liz Saville Roberts asked whether there was any correlation between workloads and risk aversion. The answer to that is not clear.

It was suggested that there may be situations where, if resources were

The following emergency motion was proposed and passed at AGM

This AGM is extremely concerned to learn, only yesterday, that Clause 29 of the Government's Children and Social Work Bill published last week in committee will give powers to exempt local Councils from their current legal duties affecting all social care services for children, including Child Protection, family support, the care system, the leaving care services and services for disabled children. It would expose children to a "postcode lottery" of protection.

This motion will impact on all Napo members in both probation work and the Family Court Section. This AGM instructs:

- i) The Napo Professional committee and Campaigning committee to work together with the Family Court Committee, to join the Together for Children Campaign to oppose the Bill which is before the House of Lords in October.
- ii) To campaign with the Parliamentary Family Justice Committee to highlight the dangers inherent in this proposed change and to oppose the Bill.

Proposed by Family Court Section.

You can listen to Nicki Kenny speaking to the motion via the Napo podcast at www.nqonline.org/podcasts

available, further exploration of issues, for example observation of contact may lead to more positive recommendations.

Steve Cavalier commented that the work that has been done by Peers, including Lord Ponsonby, in working to amend provisions of the Trade Union Act was applauded.

It was noted that civil courts made a profit of £95 million a year. Members were very surprised to hear this as it is usually thought that there is a shortage

of funding rather than a profit.

The Lord Chancellor has said that Family Courts should be places of “clarity and hope”.

The issue about court closures and the difficulty for parties in dispute potentially having to travel long distances by public transport was considered.

We discussed the trend of removing legal aid and it was suggested that this is a “class issue”, where only the wealthy have access to justice and that there is inequality where there is one party without representation.

The advantages and limitations of the use of video conferencing technology

were debated. It was suggested that the parties at the least populated site may be disadvantaged and having a vulnerable party in that position would not be good practice.

The potential within the Children and Social Work Bill for statutory child care responsibilities to be outsourced by local authorities to voluntary or even private organisations was discussed with a view being expressed that this would not save money and the only reason why such actions may occur would be as part of an “ideological drive” by the Government. (An emergency motion was passed regarding this on the following day – see left).

Consideration was also given to changes to the regulatory processes for children’s social workers, which is also proposed within the bill to replace HCPC with direct regulation by the government. There is concern about this. No other such system is in place for other organisations.

The impact of dramatically increased public law applications and the strain on the Court system and Cafcass was considered. It has been recognised that Cafcass cannot continue to meet the demand for extra work without extra resources as staff are working extremely hard and over their hours.

JAY BARLOW



Measuring success in this brave new world

When a report into probation in Derbyshire revealed that services in the county were now “significantly lower” no one was too surprised. Napo members had warned government repeatedly that TR would be a disaster – it was only a matter of time before everyone else would start to realise it too.

The report’s author, Dame Glenys Stacey, chief inspector of probation, said “standards had slipped” since RRP had taken over the CRC and she had found no evidence that public protection was being made a priority.

With the government seemingly still burying its head in the sand, perhaps the impending probation services review may force the changes needed. Dame Glenys told members she herself had three expectations of the review.

The chief inspectorate said that the development of effective performance measures that stimulate quality services and professionals to be able to deliver well was definitely needed.

“Current measures are task orientated and do not tell interested parties how effective or not you, your colleagues, managers and leaders are in your work to protect the public, resettle, rehabilitate and ensure the sentence of the court is served and served well,” Dame Glenys said.

CRCs having a “sufficiently secure financial footing” is also required to ensure they are able to “settle their operating models, staff their organisations sensibly and commit to work with others” conference was told.



“Measures and payments should stem from an understanding of what is expected of probation,” Dame Glenys said, claiming that big initiatives like transforming rehabilitation “accrete expectations” until the definition of success was eventually lost.

Being chief inspector of probation, Dame Glenys admitted that she might have a different view from Napo members since her job is to set standards, drive improvement and demonstrate public accountability. Ultimately however, she hoped that if her and her colleagues were successful, there would be greater clarity around standards and what “good” looks like in this “brave new world.”

There would also need to be a greater focus on sharing good practice. Dame Glenys said: “We can play a better part in that by providing clear, considered, well grounded recommendations and by finding better IT enabled ways of spreading good practice.”

Dame Glenys believes that a “mix of innovation and the tried and tested” is required going forward saying improved technology could free staff up to try out new ideas.

More than that, she felt that the ability to “go the extra mile” would make the difference in supervising clients and protecting the public.

Saying that she hoped probation staff would “remain motivated” the inspectorate added: “HMI Probation will play its full part to enable you to do so.”



Dame Glenys Stacey was asked how possible it was to keep sight of diversity issues when focused on processes and outputs.

The chief inspector said that of the four reports completed since April, diversity issues were well attended to which she attributed to the professional ethics of probation staff.

To ensure that diversity is given the proper attention it deserves, there should be measures and payment mechanisms that reward good work in that area. “I’m very glad you have raised it because I will stake it straight back to the Ministry of Justice and raise it myself,” she concluded.

A day in the life of... Katie Lomas

No two days are alike in my job, and no day turns out as expected. We work flexible hours to allow us to respond to crises by staying late and to cater for clients who may work so need to meet us in the evening.

A typical day starts with looking at my diary to see what is in store. My “day job” is juggled with my role as a trade union rep so my day consists of meetings with clients or colleagues.

As a probation officer I have a specialism in working with women. They make up a tiny proportion of our caseload but have very different needs. Women I work with may be in prison or been released from prison or they may be serving a community sentence. They come with a range of back stories, from the woman abused by her partner for 15 years before she lashed out at him and stabbed him; to the woman who doesn't understand why she can't stop drinking and using drugs and really doesn't want to cause the harm to others, but needs to rob people to fund her substance use.

My job is to help these women understand how to live their lives differently, by understanding what has gone so wrong for them. Some women just can't manage to make the changes, their lives too chaotic to allow them to. Like the woman who goes back again and again to her damaging relationship and loses her children as a result. The trauma this causes is intense and it would be easy to wonder why she doesn't just leave him. It's never that simple, the abusive relationships are built over time at the expense of her self esteem and ability to exist independently of him. She blames others for the hurt caused, because it is too hard to admit where the blame really lies. My job is to make sure that the public is protected, so throughout this, I have to make decisions that she will be further hurt by such as sending her back to prison to stop her harming someone or placing restrictions on her. The skilled part of my job is to do these things while maintaining a good working relationship with her. Making sure that



we can continue to try to work together to address the underlying reasons for her offending.

I work with around 40 cases at any one time. Balancing face to face work with the endless paperwork is always a challenge. Each time I see someone, speak to them or someone else about them, send a letter or a message I have to make a note on a computer system. At the start of my work with someone I complete a hugely detailed assessment, gathering vast amounts of information and making sense of it in a structured way to develop a plan for our work together. This is reviewed every six months or when something significant changes. Things change constantly so there are lots of reviews. If we need someone else to do some work with our client we have to complete a referral, even internally. On top of the main assessments there are specialised assessments for specific circumstances, in domestic violence cases, or sexual offending. Working out what we can do to help someone move away from offending may also require specific assessments, some take hours to complete. We also write reports about our clients, for courts, for the parole board (who make decisions about certain prisoners moving through the system), for MAPPA (multi-agency

public protection arrangements) or any number of other agencies. Someone once estimated that we spend 70% of our time in front of a computer.

You might think that we would have sophisticated IT systems for all of this paperwork. I'd love to tell you we do but a combination of bad infrastructure, dodgy contract arrangements and randomly bolted together systems means nothing works well.

On Monday I arrived at work with only two clients to see hoping to get some paperwork finished. The system was only allowing us to make the most basic of entries, reports weren't accessible all day. Deadlines don't move when things like this happen, we just have to stay later the following day to complete the work. Every so often a shout goes around our open plan office “press save, my system has crashed”. Crashing systems are an accepted part of our daily work; we know the drill, save as you go to limit what you lose. Many experienced officers like myself have a mantra, we do what we need to do (coping with bad IT and endless bureaucracy) in order to do what we want to do (work with people to change their lives and prevent them offending again).

There are many moments of despair in our working lives, our clients are damaged people who cause damage to others. We have to navigate bureaucracy and endless change. We often work under intense pressure to meet deadlines or justify decisions we have made. We have to work hard to make sure we look after each other. I work in an open plan office and we survive on tea and laughter. When someone returns to their desk despondent or has a difficult phone call we are there to put on the kettle, to listen to them and reassure them and once that is done to cheer them with a joke or funny story, to help them to smile and remind them this is not all there is in life. We may take a colleague for a walk around the block, or to a nearby café for a bun. Small things can help to heal the hurt caused by the job that we do.

Dai Donovan: a mine of information

The year long miner's strike in 1984 for many epitomises the spirit of trade unionism. Not only has it been etched into the hearts and minds of those that were around to experience it first hand, it also became immortalised in film when *Pride* was released back in 2014.

Pride tells the tale of an unlikely but powerful alliance between the striking miners and a group called Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners. Dai Donovan – one of the striking miners depicted in the film – answered questions from Napo members.

On the relevance of the miner's strike today...

Dai described Thatcher's Britain in 1984 as being "a cold place" and said: "It was a dismantling of the post-war consensus and an introduction of the market place

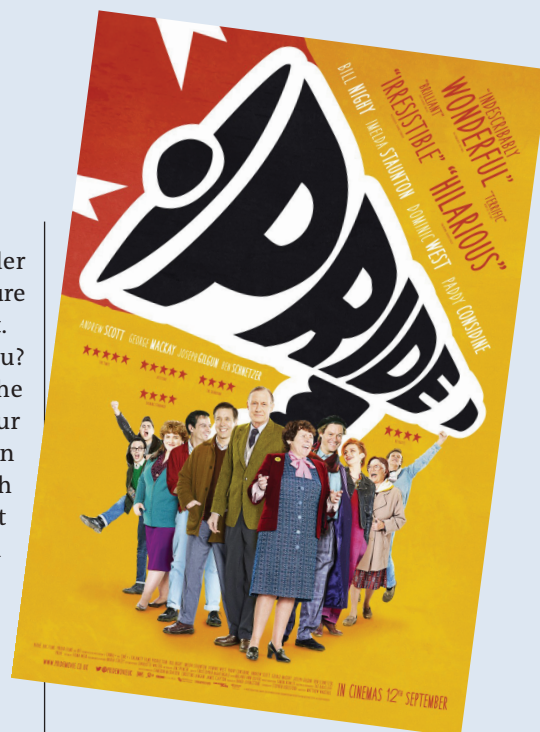
and privatisation."

Trade unions were routinely under attack, and workers blamed for the failure of services rather than the government.

"Does this sound familiar to you? Think about the introduction of the market place and privatisation of your profession. Think about the attacks on junior doctors sticking up for our health service and our contracts. Think about the way people fleeing from war and workers from Europe are portrayed. That's the similarity, relevance and subtext in *Pride*," said Dai.

On the unlikely alliance between Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners and the south Wales miners...

Dai painted a picture of a time where lesbians and gays were vilified by the press and attacked in the streets.



However, some of the miners suddenly had "the scales fall from their eyes" when the LGSM decided to stand and fight with them.



© Stefano Cagnoni

Expressing his eternal gratitude to the group he said: "It would have been so easy for them to have said to the mining community: "you know all these hassles you're talking about, you know this fuss on the picket lines and the brutality you're experiencing – join the club."

On whether there were homophobic attitudes that needed to be broken down to allow for greater unity...

"I am pleased to say that from the first moment we built a relationship with LGSM in London and they came to visit us in the locality, there was no immediate antagonism," Dai told conference, explaining that there was usually a long list of families offering their homes for members of LGSM to stay overnight or for the weekend.

What was more remarkable, according to Dai, was a growing awareness in the community of the issues facing gay men and women, particularly around sexual health and HIV.

"I am sorry if that's a disappointment, but I would rather tell you something more fundamental, and that fundamental thing is the willingness to accept strangers because potentially they could become some of your best friends," said Dai.

On persevering with the strike when faced with prolonged hardship...

"The dynamic of the strike was so all encompassing that instead of feeling depressed by another attack by the government and the portrayal in public, people were sustained by it," explained Dai.

"If you're not passionate about your profession to defend it, who do you think will?" he asked members.

"I believe that most miners who took part in that strike wouldn't change a single day because for them it was a battle. Even though they lost that battle, every day since then they have lived with the knowledge that most of Britain supported their fight."

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AGM stress survey

The AGM stress survey was a tiny indication of what we know to be much wider problem for our members working in probation services and family courts, who are suffering from very high levels of stress at work.

Comments from the survey included:

- From a CRC member:

Miserable in the job – bored – not PO work anymore

- From NPS members:

Feeling of being overwhelmed

Most job stress from lack of training and management a team with high sick levels.

Our members are not alone; the TUC's biennial survey of more than 1,000 health and safety reps around the UK ask them to pick out the hazards at work that most trouble them and their workforces - stress was at the top of the list. With 7 in 10 reps (70%) citing it as a problem – up 3% since the last survey in 2014 when 67% did so, and a higher proportion than in any previous TUC study. Stress is one of the main causes of mental health problems, in particular anxiety and depression. The TUC explain:

- **Stress is not a weakness or your fault:** it can affect anyone at any time.
- **Don't let the stigma of mental health force you to suffer in silence:** but instead talk to someone like your union rep, a friend, your GP or a support service
- **Stress-related illnesses caused by work are preventable.** Employers have a legal responsibility to reduce or remove anything at work that could make you ill – and that includes workplace stress.

Recording stress at work:

NPS are asking their staff to record incidents of stress in the sickness absence recording system. Please do this as NPS do not record stress separately otherwise.

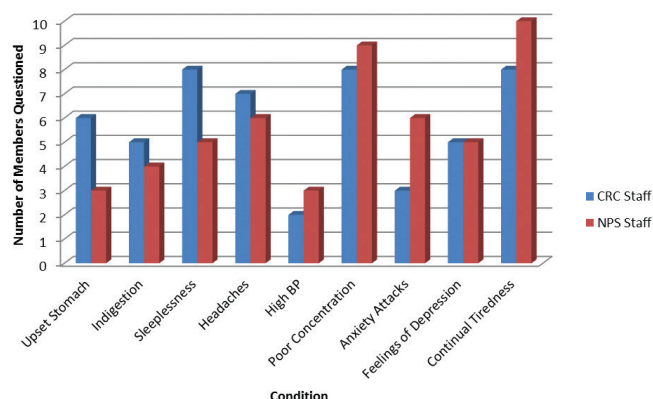
If you require more information on how to deal with stress at work please see the Napo website – H&S section at <https://www.napo.org.uk/health-safety> which has useful links or talk to your local H&S Rep.

Stress risk assessments

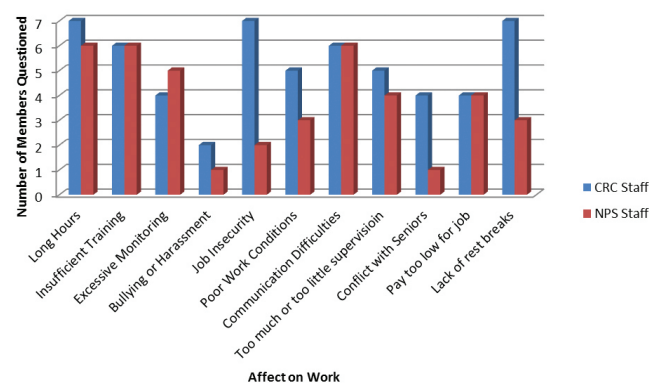
Please complete individual stress risk assessments. Your line manager should carry out the assessment.

Where specific problems of stress are reported for a team, ask for a team stress risk assessment.

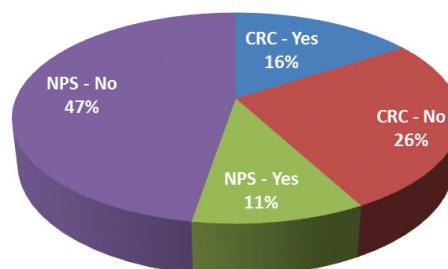
Stress Survey - Medical Conditions Suffered



Stress Survey - Affects on Work



Have you taken sick leave for TR-related stress at work?



Gill Kirton: Union resilience is essential

When professor Gill Kirton first heard about TR, she knew that splitting the probation service and privatising half of it was wrong. Not only would it have implications for public safety and rehabilitation, the professor's industrial relations experience meant she could also foresee the impact it would have on the workforce.

Redundancies, deteriorating working conditions and an increase in temporary and casual staff were all to be expected. The public sector had always provided good working conditions and well paid jobs – particularly for highly qualified women. Since the probation workforce was disproportionately female, the effects of TR had the potential to impact disproportionately on women.

On top of this, Napo's capacity to sustain, mobilise and represent members effectively through these challenging times would also be threatened.

Having worked with Napo previously on a Women in Napo research paper, professor Kirton was already "deeply in awe" of probation staff and "impressed" with their dedication to clients. Embarking on a new research paper to assess the effects of TR would allow the professor to see if any of this had changed.

"When I do my research, one of the principles I always adopt is that people are experts in their own working lives," professor Kirton told members. "My job as a researcher is to listen to the subject and then tell their story so others beyond the immediate context will understand its meaning and significance."

Professor Kirton said there was a "homogenous" response amongst those surveyed for the research: probation workers were no longer experiencing a positive and enabling workplace climate.

"This isn't simply about whether a

workplace is friendly. It speaks to the purpose and values of probation," the professor said.

"Draconian" approaches to sickness absences, failure to make adjustments for disabilities, removal of flexible working, job cuts and mounting health and safety issues were all contributing factors to the low morale seen in both the CRCs and NPS.

The professor also pointed out that the allocation of work also had its pressures. Those in the CRCs were dealing with excessive workloads, while those in the NPS were feeling the strain of dealing with intense cases.

It's no wonder that only a fifth of those surveyed in the CRCs and a third of those from the NPS were planning to remain in probation.

The issues revealed in the research throw up a major problem for Napo as a trade union. Demands from members for representation grow, but restrictions on branch reps being able to assist members from another employer have made this difficult.

"Like other unions, Napo struggles to get people active and take on roles. It's



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vital that people step up and do so," the professor said.

Looking to the future professor Kirton said: "There are challenges for probation staff and Napo but even in this turbulent context, union resilience is possible and it is essential for the health of probation that Napo maintains a presence."

TAYTULA BURKE



Jo Stevens MP: TR is a dog's dinner

Before becoming shadow secretary of state for wales, Jo Stevens MP proudly took part in a Napo rally against the privatisation of probation. Two and a half years later, her support for the cause has not waned.

In her very first speech from the dispatch box in parliament, she described the privatisation of the service as “reckless” which she claims drew gasps and groans from the opposite bench. “They know that TR has been a complete dog's dinner and it's not as though they weren't warned in advance,” she told members.

Responses to the NOMS consultation on TR were overwhelmingly negative, but as the shadow Welsh secretary pointed out: “The Tories are well versed in issuing consultations and then completely ignoring the answers.”

Dismantling the service of course created an untold amount of issues. “Handing over this critical service to global corporations with no oversight or control to allow them to profit from the criminal justice system was always going to produce rather than prevent problems,” Ms Stevens said.

There have been huge numbers of redundancies across the CRCs – 40% in Wales alone. The shadow Welsh secretary also referenced IT systems which were not fit for purpose and said there were “cases falling through the cracks.”

In the last parliament Labour opposed the privatisation and the shadow justice minister at the time – Sadiq Khan – made clear the Party's opposition to the plans. “Like you we warned of the risks in artificially fragmenting the service. We know what works best is agencies working together locally and joined up.”

The shadow Welsh secretary said that Labour were also appalled by the way contracts were signed which tied the hands of future governments and guaranteed large profits for private companies.

Transforming Rehabilitation was the handy work of Chris Grayling, a man who Ms Stevens described as having a “slash and burn policy” in every government position he has held.

The baton was passed to Michael Gove briefly before being handed to new justice secretary Liz Truss.

Napo members were audibly shocked when Ms Stevens informed them Ms Truss had told parliament: “Those on shorter sentences now get much more support due to our new probation contracts.”

The shadow Welsh secretary was asked how confident she was that the Labour party and all of its members could unify and support Leader Jeremy Corbyn to fight the Tories.

Ms Stevens acknowledged that none of what she spoke about could be achieved without a Labour government and said: “We have to unite as a party and that means all levels of membership. The public do not like divided parties. We are way behind in the polls and if a snap general election were to be called we would get absolutely spanked.”



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“I don't think she even understands what a pre-sentence report is, or that she has a clue what is happening on the ground day in and day out in our probation service,” the shadow Welsh secretary said to members.

“Privatisation has failed and it's time for the Tories to fess up and admit it. If the MoJ leaves it too late, the service will be decimated beyond repair and 106 years of probation work will be lost for good,” conference were told.

According to Ms Stevens, the MoJ will need to work with and listen to Napo to repair the damage.

Labour will be working with Napo and other justice unions to develop a probation policy which the shadow Welsh secretary says will not be driven by “profit and privatisation”.

Ms Stevens, who was honoured to attend the conference taking place in her constituency finished by saying: “The

working conditions of dedicated probation and family court staff will not be made tougher and tougher through continued reckless ideological dismantling of our critical public service,” and added: “Trade unions will not be treated like the enemy and Labour will repeal the Trade Union Act.”

TAYTULA BURKE

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Sonia Crozier sets forth her vision for probation

Sonia Crozier's career in probation started almost 30 years ago in London and she has steadily risen through the ranks to earn the title director of probation.

Inheriting the top spot during such turbulent times would be daunting for some, but Ms Crozier told Napo members she felt "honoured, humbled and excited" to be given the opportunity to help shape the future of probation.

"Napo and the other justice unions had a good working relationship with my predecessor Colin Allars, and I am looking forward to continuing that constructive relationship and working with you to take forward our shared commitment to the reform, rehabilitation of offenders and public protection," she said to conference just two weeks into her post.

Saying that a "vast amount of work" went into establishing the NPS and CRCs, she told members: "This was definitely one of the most far reaching reforms of the public sector that I can remember."

"It's an absolute tribute to the professionalism of probation staff in particular, and everyone else involved, that such a plan was delivered in such a challenging time table," Ms Crozier continued.

Admitting there were still problems as confirmed by the Public Accounts Committee, the director said: "My commitment is to work with you, to work across the whole system systematically and methodically to put solutions in place."

One of the issues identified by Ms Crozier is the fact the NPS had inherited a range of practices from the previous trusts. Shaping it into a "truly national organisation with a single operating model" is apparently the aim of E3.

"The OM model is another area where work is in progress," Ms Crozier told conference. Quoting NOMS chief operating officer, Phil Copple, she said: "Using the special skills of qualified probation officers working in our prisons will give the right kind of focus of what we need to do to develop a rehabilitative culture and improve rehabilitation outcomes."

Based on that thinking Ms Crozier said: "We in the NPS have been making strong representations that the new head of offender manager posts in public sector prisons should go to senior probation officers." HM Berwyn opening in 2017 will be one of the pioneers of the new OM model.

Ms Crozier told members she was "acutely aware" of the IT frustrations many had and said she was pleased that the Strategic Partner Gateway that allows data sharing between the NPS, CRCs and MoJ was currently being tested by CRCs. E3 will also have tailored IT systems to allow for improved service delivery in areas such as approved premises and courts.

Alluding to a review of CRC operating models and contracts, Ms Crozier said: "We have been conducting a planned review of the performance measures of both the CRCs and NPS and we are considering what outcomes we want to see to support the rehabilitation of individuals and promote the quality of

intervention and supervision.

"As we are all aware, the volume of new starts has reduced across the system and a greater proportion of individuals coming through our courts convicted of sexual violent offences affecting the balance of workloads between the NPS and CRC. The impact of this change is now something that is actively part of this review."

As highlighted by the Public Accounts Committee, the quality of resettlement services that should be delivered is variable across England and Wales.

"There are problems with prisoners being released from non-resettlement prisons and not receiving Through the Gate services from the CRC," Ms Crozier said, adding that work is being done to streamline processes making it easier for NPS to purchase resettlement services for the offenders the manage in those prisons.

With so much work to do to ensure the probation service is able to deliver a high level of service in the post TR landscape, Ms Crozier said: "I hope what I have said today has given you a flavour of where and how I see probation developing. I'm glad to have had such an early opportunity to share my thoughts with you."

TAYTULA BURKE



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Cafcass heading for a crisis

The increasing number of child care cases coming before courts is reaching breaking point and the current system is unsustainable. This alarming view has been publically stated by those directly responsible for the service – Cafcass chief, Sir Anthony Douglas – and echoed strongly by the president of the family division, Sir James Munby.

The scale of the increase is startling. The number of cases per year has risen to 12781 and is still rising. The number of new cases between April and August 2016 was up 23% on the same period in 2015 and only 22 less than the whole of 2007-8.

This is putting enormous strain on the quality of provision. Douglas and Munby are both quick to praise staff for their efforts, but fear there are no more safe efficiencies left to find.

Napo's recent FCS TOIL survey highlighted how far members are already going beyond what is reasonable and how close to breaking point the service

is. Staff are working an average nine extra hours a week for free, taking them to the limit of the legal maximum in the European Working Time Directive. Many are working well beyond this safe limit, with six day working common due to contact meetings being scheduled for weekends.

Excessive hours are being culturally entrenched in Cafcass. Half of responders report not recording additional hours and/or not knowing how much TOIL they are owed. Over 25% said they did not know there still was a TOIL policy. The most common stated reasons for working additional hours were needing to complete court reports on time; high cases loads in red, including being allocated cases when on leave; and increased administration. Part-time staff talked of "volunteering" on their day off to keep up.

The good news is that those who have ultimate responsibility for the service are not hiding from the problem. This refreshing honesty means Napo, as the professional association for family court advisors can work alongside Cafcass and others to look for solutions to this crisis. This will not be easy as the causes are complex – the increase in cases dating to the Baby Peter case – are not all in the employers' gift. Lobbying the new ministerial team is already under way for additional resources for staffing and we are inviting stakeholders to debate organisational and professional options, including through the Napo Family Court Journal.

DEAN ROGERS



Reflections on the Edridge Fund

My formal involvement with Edridge ended in August prompting me to record a few thoughts about the Fund and its work.

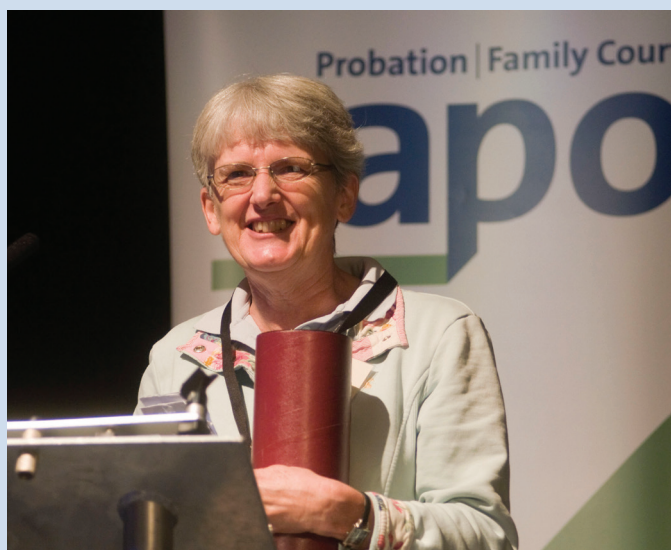
Twenty years ago my dear friend Janet Cocks was planning her retirement and asked me if I was interested in taking over from her as the branch Edridge rep. I was duly instated, but little did I know! Either about the fund, or how long my relationship with it would be.

Like too many people working in probation and family court services, I had only the haziest idea about what Edridge was and how it worked. Over the next 20 years I was to find out, as I saw first-hand how much the fund was needed and how the personal involvement of a rep can sometimes make a huge difference. The Edridge secretary at that time was Richard Martin, who I had known for years when we both worked in King's Lynn. When a trustee vacancy occurred he prompted me to apply and I joined the trustees in 2006 and became chair in 2008.

I've worked with three Edridge secretaries. Firstly Richard Martin, whose contribution to and dedication to the Fund over 30 years was, and I think always will be, unsurpassed. His knowledge was incredible and it took every bit of the two years' notice of his retirement to succession plan for the gap he would leave. However we used the opportunity to have a wholesale review of the structure and have moved to increasingly "online" working methods which has made savings and improved our response times. Most applicants have a decision – and a cheque if a grant is awarded – within days of sending an application into us.

We also thought it would be prudent to ensure our governance was as tight as possible. Richard's successor, Karl Deakin, was a solicitor and ensured in the three years he was with us that this was achieved, including some important revisions to our Trust Deed. Our secretary now is Cherry Bushell, who has significant experience in the charity sector and who we know will be a great asset in areas such as communication and fundraising.

The staff and trustees have worked incredibly hard to ensure



the Fund has moved with the times and kept its relevance. However some things, in my experience, have not changed:

- Not enough people are aware of the Fund's existence and purpose
- Probation and family court staff are as vulnerable to illness, relationship breakdown, domestic violence, loss of income and tragic events, as any other group in society
- As caring and capable people, they/we often find it extremely difficult to ask for help (we are more used to giving it)
- Edridge staff, trustees and reps are a fantastic bunch of people
- The support Edridge gives is as vital now as it ever was

It is invidious to pick out individuals, but I must sing the praises of our staff, David Cox and Sarah Byatt, who ensure the show is always kept on the road, and whose sensitivity in dealing with people, often at times of crisis, is fantastic, and frequently commented on by applicants. An outstanding friend of the Fund is Kath Falcon at Chivalry Road, who never misses an opportunity to help us and provide support and advice. If I mentioned everyone who has helped us, this would go on for ages, but I can only stress that everyone who donates, signs up for 50/50, rattles a bucket at AGM, (or goes into those freezing seas), the dozens of fund raising events held, and the support of branches, is wonderful and absolutely critical if the work of the Fund is to continue at its current level.

The Trust Deed limits a trustee's period of office to a maximum of two five-year terms, hence my departure. It is a good rule as it ensures that the Fund regularly recruits and benefits from an injection of new ideas and skills. I'll finish by encouraging members to take up vacancies for branch reps, and trustee places, when they occur. Probation and family court work is all about people and Edridge is uniquely equipped and experienced at helping staff in those organisations when they need it most.

ANNE KING

AGM 2016 Resolutions

National Executive Committee

1. Edridge Funding

This AGM is aware that the annual contribution Napo makes to the Edridge Fund was reduced in 2015 from £25,000 to £20,000. At the NEC meeting on 22/03/2016 it was reduced to £10,000, a sum which will not even cover its operating costs. Funding for Edridge was formerly based on a percentage of Napo membership according to policy and current funding is far less than it would be under this criteria.

This AGM believes that the Edridge Fund exists to support Probation and Cafcass staff in financial need and the need for this support has never been greater given the changes our services have faced and are still facing. We believe it is wrong to cut Edridge funding at this time and budget savings should be made elsewhere. We also believe the budget decision countermands Napo policy.

This AGM resolves that Napo should immediately reinstate Edridge funding at the rate stated in the policy and hold a review into whether the percentage should increase given that we have fewer members.

2. Sodexo Booths

This AGM wishes to reiterate the fact that Sodexo's booths are not fit for any kind of professional or probation working practice. The lack of confidentiality and constant breaches of data protection place both staff and service users at risk.

Given Sodexo's planned 'retrofitting', abject refusal to remove the booths from the workplace and to provide confidential interviewing facilities, this AGM therefore calls upon Napo nationally to register a formal dispute with the owners of the Sodexo CRCs, with a view to campaigning professionally, politically and industrially to have the booths consigned to the dustbin of probation history.

3. Pay Claim

AGM is concerned that probation staff's pay has been decreasing for years and more rapidly since incremental progression was slashed. The pay claim for 2016-17 is supposed to include this as part of the negotiations, but concerns remain that equal pay claims will not be pursued legally as part of this, if the employers refuse to make the changes we feel we deserve.

There is case law supportive of this on the basis

of age and gender discrimination. Thousands of staff, mostly PO grades and mostly female, are paid in the region of £6000 less than someone at the top of the scale for doing exactly the same job. To reach the top of the scale now takes over 20 years.

Consequently, we want assurances from the national Officers that equal pay claims will be pursued through legal routes if the employer refuses to address these issues as part of the pay negotiations.

Campaigning Committee

4. TR: IT ISN'T WORKING

This AGM builds upon the resolution overwhelmingly passed at last year's Conference which exposed the shocking consequences of privatisation.

Transforming Rehabilitation is not working; it is disastrous for staff and for service users, and exposes the public to unnecessary risk.

This AGM will co-ordinate a campaign for late in 2016 when all members will seek a surgery meeting, over a 2 week period, with their MP and will blitz their local media to present the reality of the current meltdown in the NPS and CRCs. Nationally Napo will provide a comprehensive briefing paper for those meetings to include "horror stories". Branches will call upon recently retired members, alongside branch post holders, to present the evidence in order not to compromise those staff now muzzled by civil service rules.

5. Workload Campaign

This AGM remains concerned for the second year in a row that, despite a motion on workloads being passed at the 2014 AGM, and concerns being raised that no progress had been made at the 2015 AGM, nothing effective has been done to pursue this by Napo nationally.

Workloads continue to be unacceptably high, both in the CRC and the NPS and this is not sustainable. It creates unacceptable levels of stress, leads to staff illness and to resignations from staff unable to cope anymore.

AGM wants confirmation that a workload campaign will be organised and fought, accurate workload timings will be pursued and there will be a workload measurement tool that accurately reflects the work we do.

6. Jeremy Corbyn and TR reversal

This AGM is aware that the introduction of TR (Transforming Rehabilitation) by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats has been catastrophic. Napo believes that Jeremy Corbyn is the only party leader with the ability and commitment to re-form an effective national Probation Service, based on the necessary professional and ethical values, and run in the public interest, not for private profit.

This Union will therefore support the Labour Party, led by Jeremy Corbyn, in any campaign which includes the re-instatement of such a national, amalgamated public service.

Equal Rights Committee

7. Hidden Disabilities

Conference believes disabilities, including mental health, that have no outward physical sign are too often ignored or unsupported in the workplace. In many cases people with hidden disabilities are often subjected to bullying and harassment. As a result workers could be prone to hiding their disability, suffering in silence with fear, which discourages workers from disclosing their condition.

There are around 11.9 million disabled people in the UK; this is roughly 19% of the population. By 2020 it is estimated that nearly 60% of people over 50 will have a long-term health condition.

Conference believes we need better access to information and assistance to help reps and employers understand that individuals affected by hidden disabilities need support that is specific and tailored to that individual.

Conference calls upon Napo, to develop a campaign around hidden disabilities. This will include:

- what constitutes a 'Hidden Disability';
- developing a fact sheet to advise members who may have a hidden disability of their rights at work;
- holding training and awareness raising seminars on Hidden Disabilities for union reps and full time officials;
- lobbying to encourage probation and Cafcass employers to adopt a standalone disability policy.

Family Court Committee

8. Children and Social Work Bill

This AGM is extremely concerned to learn, only yesterday, that Clause 29 of the Government's Children and Social Work Bill published last week in Committee will give powers to exempt local Councils from their current legal duties affecting all social care services for children, including child protection, family support, the care system, the leaving care services and services for disabled children. It would expose children to a 'postcode lottery' of protection.

The very system which should protect children from abuse will be open to abuse of a different kind from the private profit-making companies who have stolen the work of the Probation Service.

These changes will impact on all Napo members in both probation work and the Family Court Section. This AGM instructs:

- i) The Napo Professional committee and Campaigning committee to work together with the Family Court Committee, to join the Together for Children Campaign to oppose the Bill which is before the House of Lords in October.
- ii) To campaign with the Parliamentary Family Justice Committee to highlight the dangers inherent in this proposed change and to oppose the Bill.



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AGM 2016 Resolutions *continued*

Health & Safety Committee

9. Women's Health Matters

Both men and women can face various health challenges as they get older. An estimated 3 ½ million women over the age of 50 are currently in employment. This number will rise as the retirement age in occupational pension schemes for women increase. However, women have a particular health issue which is largely ignored in the workplace - the menopause.

Over the past few decades, the issue of pregnancy is now a feature of HR thinking, with support networks, advice and understanding. However, there is little support for women going through the menopause.

If performance were affected by symptoms that could be attributed to a different medical condition, there would be far more acceptance and allowances made.

Conference understands that high workplace temperatures, poor ventilation, toilets, which are not always easily accessible, or lack of access to drinking water at work can exacerbate the symptoms.

Conference urges Napo to:

- highlight the issues of the menopause for women in the workplace;
- promote sickness absence procedures which can take account of menopause related sickness absence;
- encourage openness and discussion amongst women members;
- promote training/awareness raising about menopause within probation and Cafcass.

10. Stop TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) free trade treaty

This AGM agrees to campaign against TTIP and calls on Officers and Officials to alert our members as to the dangers of the treaty.

TTIP is being negotiated between the European Union and the United States - talks have been very secretive. The treaty will give transnational companies rights to sue governments if they enact legislation believed to adversely affect profits. This means that safety legislation, employment rights and food safety laws will be assessed as 'barriers' to profits of transnational corporations.

The TUC state that the two main points of concern on health and safety and TTIP are the reduction in standards and the possible provisions to allow companies to sue governments in secretive courts - the ISDS (Investor State Dispute Settlement) clause. These courts will allow any investor to sue a government if they think they are being blocked from making profit in cases where they feel they have not had 'fair and equitable' treatment, including health and safety standards. Disputes would be settled in closed, international and "independent courts" led by business experts.

There is a European wide campaign to stop TTIP - we must join this to strengthen workers' rights, and stop TTIP being used to reduce standards.

11. Lone Working

As budgets are cut and working practices change there are many professions where lone working in the community has become the norm. The introduction of mobile technology, reduced offices across the whole of probation and Cafcass, hot-desking and fewer staff on the front line, are likely to cause lone working to be pushed into the limelight. In the last 12 months within one CRC area, staff were moved out of their shared office with the NPS before the next office had opened. Many of the staff were expected to continue to carry out their work without having a base from which to practice, something already experienced by colleagues in Cafcass. Whilst the risks faced by lone workers are similar to other workers in probation and Cafcass, the hazards are greater due to the fact that they are on their own.

This AGM calls upon the Health and Safety Committee to undertake a survey of members to see how prevalent lone working practices are becoming and what processes are in place to protect staff in these environments. We then call upon Napo to develop guidance for members advising on their rights and responsibilities if/when lone working.

Negotiating Committee – Probation

12. Time off for trade union duties and facility time

Effective and constructive operation of trade unions at a local level are vital for positive employment relations and are conducive to professional operations and the rights of workers. To operate effectively, statutory law and local, formal recognition agreements provide for time off with pay for carrying out trade union duties and 'facility time'.

Napo is concerned that, whilst some employers operate provisions reasonably, there has been a growing trend towards unreasonable restriction by management in some areas. This has been heightened by the ideologically driven split between CRCs and the NPS.

For the concept of paid time off to be properly applied, then provision has to be made for necessary workload relief which should be factored in to workforce planning calculations. Failure to do so effectively has resulted in undue work pressure on Napo branch officials and other workers within their teams who are pressed to take on additional work in the absence of adequate staffing provision.

This AGM instructs the Officers and Officials to secure national agreement with the employers on a fair and uniform method of applying obligations for time off for trade union duties and 'facility time' across all areas in the cause of positive employment relations.

13. Unfair termination process by the Probation Qualifications Advisory Board (PQAB).

Napo notes with dismay that members have been dismissed from their employment with

the NPS and CRCs in direct consequence of decisions by a sub-committee of the Probation Qualifications Advisory Board (PQAB) to terminate their continued participation on the qualification programme. Such decisions have left the relevant employers without reasonable alternative but to terminate contracts of employment for which continued participation was an essential term.

The decisions of the sub-committee in question were taken summarily on the basis of reports from local NPS personnel without any provision for due process such as the right of response or representation to the PQAB. Furthermore, no opportunity was provided for appeal against the decision to terminate participation notwithstanding the consequence of loss of employment.

This AGM instructs the Officers and Officials of Napo to correct any such unjust process through its discussions with the PQAB and to ensure that any future arrangements for probation qualifying training conform fully to the principles of natural justice.

14. The Effectiveness, Efficiency and Excellence (E3) Programme and YOTs

Napo is deeply concerned by the threat E3 poses to the welfare principals and aims of the Youth Justice System.

Probation staff have always been seconded to YOTs in line with evidence-based research, which demonstrated that multi-agency team working is the best way to reduce youth offending. The dominant ethos of the YOT ensures that long term, often complex, welfare needs of young people are addressed quickly. Thus, seconded POs work within the Youth Justice Board framework, not within that of the NPS. Until E3 this was always accepted by probation areas.

Proposed E3 reforms to the PO role within YOTs are both unrealistic, in terms of expectations of workload, and divisive due to the differing function being carved out for them. The changes appear to be based solely upon cynical cost cutting, not upon hard evidence that they would achieve the effectiveness, efficiency and excellence which the document describes.

This motion proposes that Napo:

- insists that the underlying tenets of Youth Justice remain with the Youth Justice Board, not with NOMS;
- resists the changes put forward through E3;
- argues for overall management of probation staff in YOTs being implemented via local structures.

15. Defend national collective bargaining

The National Agreement On Staff Transfer and Protections signed 28th January 2014 gives a specific undertaking to protect national collective bargaining. This is summarised in paragraph 21 where it states:

"It is agreed that the existing national collective bargaining arrangements will continue in the CRCs and NPS on 1 June 2014 by means of

the Staff Transfer Scheme. The NNC and SCCOG machinery will also continue to apply to new staff.”

Post share sale a number of CRC owners are threatening to replace national collective bargaining with completely local arrangements. While a few staff may benefit from locally competitive local pay and conditions, in all likelihood this will result in a ‘race to the bottom’ in most areas. More importantly, it will torpedo Napo’s stated aim of achieving a nationally agreed, fair and equitable pay structure.

Officers and Officials are instructed to oppose any attempt to break up national collective bargaining and to launch a campaign amongst members in any CRC that threatens to withdraw from current NNC/SCCOG arrangements.

Professional Committee

16. Cheap services cost lives

As predicted, since TR, there has been a rapid deterioration in gathering, assessing and sharing information essential to risk management and safeguarding. From the point of Court appearance, the drive for speedy and cheap justice means that a large number of defendants are sentenced without a report or on the basis of a short format report. Neither of these situations allow for necessary safeguarding checks.

Predicted difficulties of communication between the NPS and CRC have been exacerbated by the physical separation of operations. This has resulted in failures to share crucial information essential to manage risk. Inconsistency of practice means that in many areas the benefits of multi-agency working such as attendance at MARAC and liaison with MASH has been lost.

Serious case reviews/SFO investigations have consistently cited the central role of a failure of communication, particularly between agencies. The risk of vital information getting lost or miscommunicated has been dramatically increased by the TR split. Sensitive information potentially now passes between several individuals, IT systems and agencies.

This AGM, therefore, calls upon Napo to gather examples and widely publicise this scandalous and dangerous state of affairs.

17. Written out or written off?

With TR the drive for ‘speedy justice’ moved on apace increasing demand for more ‘short form’ reports based on minimal information. Also more defendants sentenced without reports.

The pre-sentence report was intended to provide offence analysis, thorough risk assessment, a proposal for sentence to reduce risk and reoffending and was used as a starting point for future work with service users. Probation workers have specialist knowledge. Now workers in CRCs cannot directly inform the court or write PSRs. This skill will soon also be squandered in NPS case management teams. So little time afforded to the preparation of PSRs means corners are cut and the value of the PSR diminished. Adequate safeguarding checks, central to risk assessment and public protection, are not always made. Ultimately this risks increasing prison populations and serious further offences.

The demise of the PSR erodes professional probation practice. It is vital that Napo reasserts the importance of high quality pre-sentence assessment as critical to sentencing and the safe allocation of cases. This issue needs to be addressed by Napo as a matter of urgency, particularly when role boundaries and upholding the professional role of probation workers are being discussed.

Trade Union Organisation Committee

18. NEC REFORM

Following the cancellation of September’s NEC and the iniquity of the previous two meetings, the AGM feels that reform of the functioning of the NEC is required to ensure it can execute its duties and responsibilities in carrying out the mandates of AGM.

This AGM has heard a passionate speech about the need for quoracy in order to conduct business. This is as true for the NEC as it is for AGM and

this AGM calls on TUO Committee, as a matter of urgency, to consider how the NEC can best execute its duties in order to function effectively throughout the year. This AGM instructs TUO Committee to meet before the next NEC, then report to it, or the Officers’ Group should the next NEC be inquorate.

Constitutional Amendments

CA1. Constitutional Amendment to permit agency staff to be full members of Napo

Napo The Four Shires (TFS) asks:

This Annual General Meeting (AGM) to amend the constitution by inserting a new subsection 4 (a) (vii) Membership Eligibility, which will read as follows:

“Those employed by agencies though working in an organisation delivering probation or family court services.”

CA2. Amending Quoracy for General Meetings

In Clause 13c General Meetings

Delete: “5% of” (both instances in clause)

And replace with: “150” (in both instances)

Abbreviations used in Resolutions

ACAS - Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service

AGM - Annual General Meeting

CA - Constitutional Amendment

Cafcass - Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Service

CJS - Criminal Justice System

CRC - Community Rehabilitation Company

E3 - Effectiveness, Efficiency, Excellence

Programme

FCS - Family Court Section

HMIP - Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation

HR - Human Resources

i.e. (id est) - that is

ISDS - Investor State Dispute Settlement

IT - Information Technology

MARAC - Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference

MASH - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

MoJ - Ministry of Justice

MP - Member of Parliament

NEC - National Executive Committee

NOMS - National Offender Management Service

NNC - National Negotiating Council

NPS - National Probation Service

PO - Probation Officer

PQAB - Probation Qualifications Advisory Board

PSO - Probation Service Officer

PSR - Pre-Sentence Report

SCCOG - Standing Committee for Chief Officer Grades

SFO - Serious Further Offence

T4S - The Four Shires (Napo branch)

TTIP - Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

TR - Transforming Rehabilitation

TUC - Trade Union Congress

YOT - Youth Offending Team





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