



changing lives  
reducing crime

# Response to Punishment and Reform: Effective Probation Services

June 2012

# Introduction

Nacro is the largest crime reduction charity in England and Wales. We help over 70,000 people each year, reducing crime and the impact of crime in over 200 communities across England and Wales.

Nacro's mission to change lives and reduce crime is predicated on the conviction that we must reduce the devastating effects crime has on individual victims and on communities, using evidence-based practice to do what works to reduce crime and reoffending. Victims of crime have to live with the experience forever, whilst those who commit crime can find it hard to break the destructive cycle of offending. At Nacro we focus our work on:

- intervening early with people at risk of becoming involved in crime and antisocial behaviour to prevent crime happening in the first place
- working with people in prison or on a community sentence so they change their behaviour, take steps to repair the damage they have caused individual victims and communities, and move on from crime and offending, and
- resettling offenders after custody helping them to find a home, a job, develop new skills, rebuild relationships and reintegrate into their community.

In our response to this consultation, Nacro has focused on the questions which are most pertinent to its work and on what will impact on our ability to reduce crime and reoffending in the future.

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**Q1. What are the key issues in competing the management of offenders and how should they be resolved? For example, where should we strike the balance in deciding how far to compete offender management?**

The central issue in the debate about competition for offender management/probation services is how to reduce reoffending with large cohorts of offenders over large geographical areas. As the latest Ministry of Justice statistics show, reoffending rates are at a record high.<sup>1</sup> Statistics indicate that 47% of adults are reconvicted within a year of being released from prison, and this figure is even higher for those prisoners who receive sentences of less than a year, of which 57% reoffend within a year of being released.<sup>2</sup> Whilst community sentences are more effective at reducing reoffending than short-term prison sentences (by eight percentage points),<sup>3</sup> reoffending rates remain stubbornly high. This is a clear indication that – when it comes to reducing reoffending – the criminal justice system, as a whole, is failing. This is borne out by the fact that over a third of offenders in the criminal justice system have more than 15 previous convictions.<sup>4</sup>

This consultation is one of many attempts to make the criminal justice system more effective, and the introduction of the Offender Management Act in 2007 was intended to encourage probation trusts to commission out more services to private and voluntary sector providers. But what could have been a radical shift in direction has still not materialised. Instead, there has been a piecemeal and relatively limited opening up of the market, with fewer real opportunities for providers to engage in the delivery of probation services than was envisaged when the legislation was passed. If the government is to achieve real gains in reducing reoffending, it must follow through on its commitment to these reforms because it is only through systemic change and a fundamental shift in approach that public confidence in the justice system will be secured.

In resolving the key issues in effective offender management services and competition, first of all, there must be a clear and sustained focus on outcomes. This includes taking into account all the different outcomes associated with changing offenders' attitudes and behaviour, and not confining the debate to binary measures of reductions in reoffending. It must take into account offence frequency and seriousness, as well as intermediate outcomes such as improved housing/jobs and positive progress on issues such as drug/alcohol dependence. Secondly there is the need to focus on scale, giving due regard to large-scale commissioning of offender-related services, as opposed to relying on relatively small-scale pilots. There is a need to learn lessons about the challenges of large-scale outsourcing and this cannot be achieved through a plethora of localised pilots. Thirdly, there are clear benefits to focusing on locality where outsourced budgets are pooled to tackle intractable social problems which affect the whole locality eg, crime and reoffending. In this way more than one social outcome could be tackled and the financial and social benefits captured and shared. This draws on the 'Total Place' initiative started by the last administration and joins up centrally organised public services such as criminal justice

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Justice (2012) *Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly Update to December 2011* London: Ministry of Justice

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Justice (2011) *Proven Reoffending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin January to December 2009* London: Ministry of Justice Table

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Justice (2011) *2011 Compendium of Reoffending Statistics and Analysis* London: Ministry of Justice

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

services with those where the local authority has lead responsibility, eg housing and education. But reducing reoffending is likely to require a variable geometry of provision where some services are commissioned locally whilst other services are purchased centrally. Finally, there is a need to focus on the 'what' as opposed to the 'who'. This shifts the debate away from who delivers offender services, and on to what is being achieved. For too long the debate has been driven by a 'heroes and villains' approach to cross-sector collaboration, characterised by a 'public sector is good, private sector is bad', 'voluntary sector is soft, private sector is hard', and 'private sector is fleet of foot, public sector is not' mentality.

In reality, there is a need for a much better understanding of the unique qualities each of the sectors brings and how more can be achieved in reducing reoffending by cross-sector collaboration. This starts from the premise that the different sectors each have something unique to offer to the rehabilitation revolution and that any reforms should knit these together. Whilst it has long been argued that many of the things the probation service currently does could be delivered by others, what is seldom talked about is the fact that where the probation service has unrivalled capability is in its relationship with the court. This relationship is founded on over 100 years of probation delivery and is pivotal to any attempts to move sentencing away from short-term imprisonment and towards community sentences. With the probation service acting as an 'honest' broker between the court and those providing offender management programmes/services, the all important confidence of sentencers could be maintained, taking the probation service back to its roots as a servant of the court. This would satisfy the requirement that no matter who delivers the plethora of offender management services, they all meet the needs of the primary customers – the courts and the local community. This does not negate the potential for probation to deliver other relevant services but it does clarify its central position within the wider criminal justice landscape.

Ever since the introduction of private prisons in the early 1990s, corporate sector involvement in the justice system has been controversial. Nevertheless, an increasing number of prisons are privately operated and private sector provision is now well established in the provision of prisoner escort services, electronic monitoring and offender accommodation and employment. Against a backdrop of payment by results and in view of the early comments about the need to reduce reoffending on a large scale, it is difficult to envisage reforms being achieved in the absence of private sector involvement. Other sectors do not necessarily have the capability or the balance sheets necessary to manage the risks associated with payment by results and large-volume delivery. In addition, a significant element of future offender management service delivery will inevitably involve managing large-scale logistical operations, of which only the private sector has any real experience.

The unique strength of the voluntary sector is its capacity to reach the hardest to help and help the hardest to reach. Its experience of working with offenders, families and communities on the ground means it is uniquely placed to combat attrition, narrow the gap between the offender and the community, and get ordinary people involved. Voluntary groups also have a long track record of finding innovative and cost-effective solutions to society's problems and joining up the national with the local – bridging the divide across the sectors. All of these features are crucial to reducing reoffending and building public confidence in the system.

There are three key areas of the consultation that raise particular concern for Nacro. Firstly, the concept of a purchaser/provider split as outlined in the consultation is inherently problematic. Maintaining a model whereby probation trusts have a dual role as both the commissioner and provider of services may stifle and inhibit competition. To drive forward competition and create the necessary impetus to involve external providers, probation trusts must have a distinct commissioning focus. There needs to be a clear and unequivocal purchaser/provider split. Any public sector provider role would need to act as a separate entity from that of the commissioning body.

Secondly, to make what seem to be arbitrary demarcations between offenders based on risk is overly complicated and places the emphasis on the who as opposed to on reducing reoffending outcomes. Moreover, the stipulation that private and voluntary sector providers cannot work with some groups of offenders presents a number of practical problems given the tendency for offenders to zigzag across categories over time. Even where offender risk assessments have taken place, the results are not constant and are subject to change. Furthermore it ignores the fact that the private and voluntary sectors currently work with high-risk offenders, both in custody and in the community (for example, Nacro provides intensive supported housing services to high-risk sex offenders). This makes the distinction in the present proposals even more problematic.

Given the right governance arrangements, there is no reason why the experience and expertise of organisations like Nacro should not be brought to bear on more serious cohorts of offenders, and it is equally inappropriate to exclude large cohorts from the competitive tendering process. By definition, the highest risk offenders require the greatest multiplicity of interventions. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that it is with this cohort that the largest gains could be made by greater use of competition, addressing complex and multiple needs. In view of this, it is critical that the right interventions are delivered and successful outcomes are achieved.

Thirdly, the consultation paper outlines a number of services that should remain under the control of the public sector. As previously discussed, there is clearly a rationale for court services to remain under public sector control and, in any event, it would require primary legislative changes to allow such services to be commissioned. However, for all other probation/offender management services, commissioning to alternate providers should be considered. With proper protocols and effective commissioning there is no reason why contracted providers could not also be made responsible for assessing risk, determining levels of offender management, participating in supervision and management decisions about MAPPA cases, and resolving breaches and recalls. Providers could be held responsible and accountable by the commissioning trust and subject to scrutiny by Her Majesty's Inspectorate, which would ensure fair standards were suitably monitored and upheld.

**Q2. What arrangements will best enable Probation Trusts to take effective action against offenders who breach their sentence in cases where they do not directly manage the offender?**

This question typifies the likely confusion that would emerge if the current proposals go forward as envisaged. If breaches are separated from the delivery of services, this will impact adversely on the efficacy of the sentence. The private and voluntary sectors should

be enabled to enforce the legal components of the orders they are supervising, and be held accountable for doing so. If an organisation is committed to working with offenders, challenging their behaviour and reducing crime, they need to have the appropriate enforcement mechanisms at their disposal. Punishment is part of working with an offender, but this needs to be sufficiently balanced against the other purposes of sentencing such as reparation and rehabilitation. Connecting these components goes some way to connecting the key principles of justice to what happens in practice. This is already the case with some existing commissioned services, for example private providers who manage electronic monitoring also manage offenders who breach these orders. The recent inspection demonstrates that where there were problems in delivering prompt enforcement action, the cause 'often stemmed from a lack of clarity over who was the responsible officer'.<sup>5</sup> The crucial issue here is ensuring that there is a seamless process between interventions and their enforcement, and the most consistent way to manage this would be via the same provider. Indeed, dividing these responsibilities between the provider and the probation trust will add to the complexity and expense of enforcing orders to national standards.

### **Q3. What is the best approach to competing the management of prisoners released into the community on licence?**

As with the delivery of community sentences, Nacro believes that the approach to competition for the management of prisoners released on licence must have a clear focus on reducing risk to the public. It is imperative to ensure seamless delivery of services inside prison, through the gate, and in the community and that providers are able to act swiftly and appropriately should an offender break the conditions of their licence. Irrespective of who delivers these services, systems must be in place to secure public protection. These systems must be negotiated with commissioners, and supported by national standards, to ensure that they are consistent and proportionate.

With regards to competition in relation to the management of prisoners released on licence it is fundamental, therefore, that commissioners use the opportunity that the competitive process offers to work with providers to design seamless provision of offender management into service delivery, connecting responsibility for public protection and reducing reoffending between prisons and providers who work with offenders in the community. The reoffending rates of those released on licence must be closely monitored, and prisons and providers who work together to deliver results for this cohort must be adequately rewarded. To achieve the best results for offenders who are released on licence, it is crucial that preparations are made pre-release, that as much as possible is done to ensure the public are protected, and that offenders are given the best opportunity to make a clean start in the community. Where provision is disjointed and offender management is patchy, the likelihood of reoffending is increased. This should be addressed by ensuring that commissioning processes work in a more joined-up way with the prison estate to create a transition from prison to community that is as smooth and co-ordinated as possible. There is also potential for probation commissioning to sensibly overlap with local authority and healthcare provision, enabling practice to truly focus on end-to-end provision in the community. This is considered in more detail in question 4.

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<sup>5</sup> HMI Probation (2012) *It's Complicated: The management of electronically monitored curfews* London: HMI Probation p.8

The outlined proposals exclude the management of higher risk offenders from the competitive process. This, however, is likely to result in large-volume contracts of lower-level offenders who require minimal support and interventions. As outlined in question 1 an offender often zigzags across risk categories over time. Restricting competition in relation to offender management will not only hinder the opportunity for joined-up provision that an opened market will bring, but will also complicate the public protection responsibilities of those providers contracted to deliver lower-level offender management services. In essence it will fail to impact on reoffending rates and it is important that this is considered when making final decisions about designing the best approach to competition for offender management services for prisoners released on licence.

#### **Q4. How can we best ensure that greater competition for probation services enhances local partnership arrangements, such as Integrated Offender Management?**

Commissioning bodies, however they are configured, must ensure that the services they commission are properly integrated with relevant services commissioned elsewhere eg, police and crime commissioners, local authorities and health commissioning boards. Key weaknesses at present are exemplified by liaison and diversion services for offenders with mental health problems and in the management of offenders in the process of transition from prison to the community. A lack of support at this crucial time heightens the risk of reoffending. Lessons can be learned from examples of good practice, such as the Social Impact Bond in Peterborough prison, where new provision was carefully stitched into existing services.<sup>6</sup> Engaging a range of providers in offender management must be supplemented by engaging the community by bringing in local businesses, community groups and ordinary people.

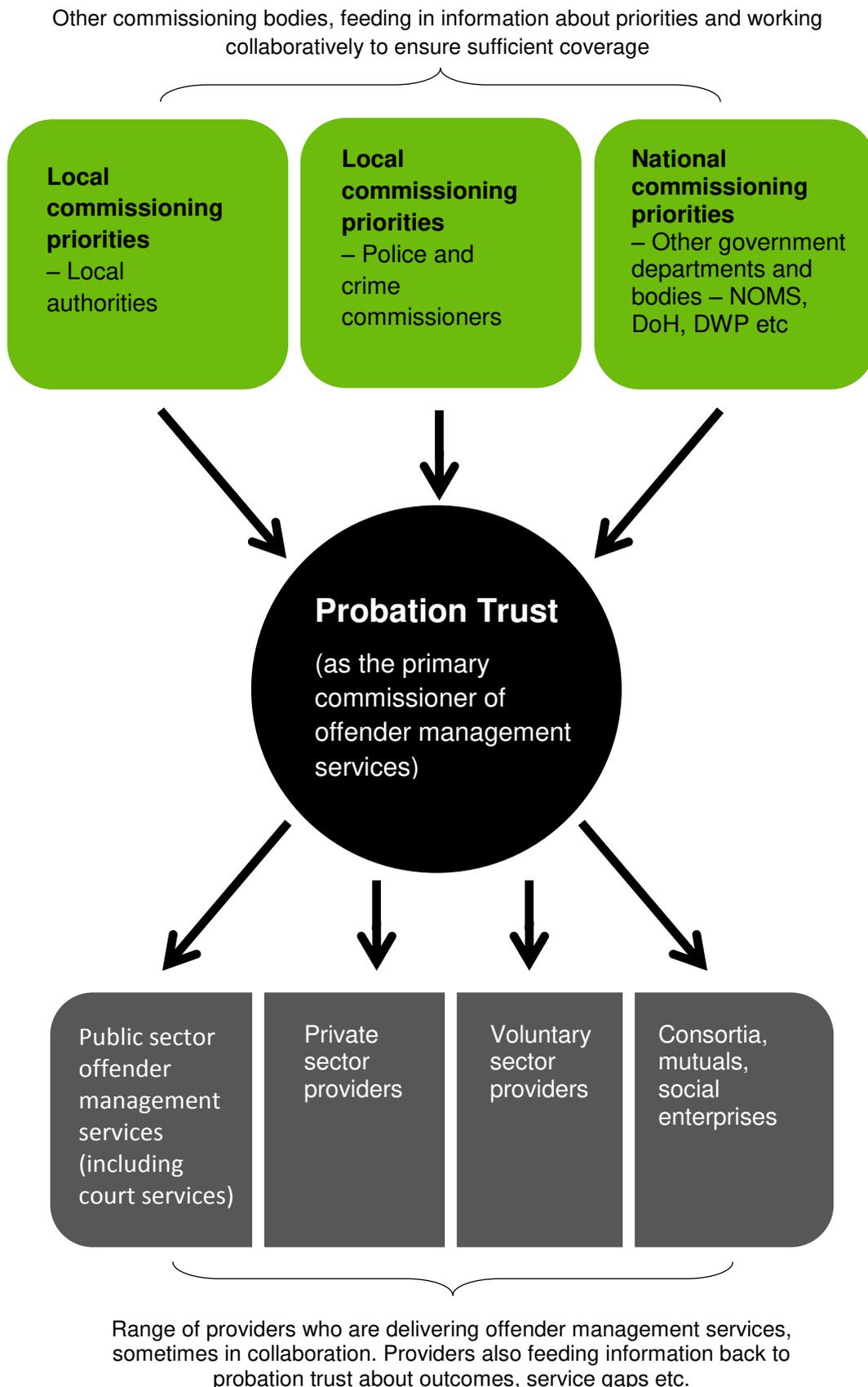
As currently operated, not enough people know about the work of the probation service, not enough people get involved, and the work that is done on community penalties and managing offenders does not impact on victims or the wider community. This suggests that offender management services are too insular and do not always reach their true potential in narrowing the gap between the offender and the community. It is in this gap that reoffending takes place, predicated on mutual hostility, fear and misunderstanding. Much more could and should be done to a) involve ordinary people (as mentors, volunteers, employee outreach schemes); b) engage employers and social enterprises (in creating work placements, apprentice schemes and real jobs); c) explore the potential to 'mainstream' restorative approaches; and d) link community payback to hard-edged community problems such as crime and community safety.

In a reformed system, the probation trust, as the commissioner, would act as the linchpin which connects providers and creates the environment for joined-up working. The commissioning trust would collect data from providers to inform future commissioning decisions and to ensure that providers were held accountable for the services they delivered. This is outlined in the diagram on the next page.

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<sup>6</sup> Disley, E et al (2011) *Lessons learned from the planning and early implementation of the Social Impact Bond at HMP Peterborough* London: Ministry of Justice

## Commissioning structure for offender management services



**Q5. What would be the right balance between commissioning services at local and national levels and how can we best achieve that balance?**

Striking the right balance between local and national commissioning should be achieved by making intelligent decisions based on realising the maximum reduction in reoffending across different geographical areas and with different cohorts of offenders. These commissioning decisions should prioritise the arrangements that will achieve this whilst ensuring the best value for money.

For some services where national consistency is a priority, eg, approved premises and electronic monitoring, national commissioning would be the most appropriate route. For these types of services, commissioning on a large scale will ensure the desired level of coverage to a standard specification. This level of commissioning is specifically appropriate for high volume and undifferentiated services, as well as for high cost interventions that are very specialist. However, for other interventions the priority lies in ensuring that there is a genuine community involvement, with services specifically tailored to meet local need. For these services, it is imperative that they are based on a local model of delivery to ensure the best outcomes for local communities. This logic would translate into national services being commissioned by NOMS and local services being commissioned as appropriate by local authorities, police and crime commissioners and probation trusts.

**Q6. What are the main issues in separating the Trust commissioner role from the provision of competed services? How can these be best resolved?**

Attempting to separate the role of probation trusts into two separate strands, as both the provider and the commissioner of services, is inherently problematic. The initial proposals outlined in the consultations are confusing, and fail to adequately address the practical application of the split. The difficulty with implementing the compromised purchaser/provider split as outlined in the consultation will be that this confusing internal relationship could undermine commissioning priorities and detract from the local strategic role. The internal 'ethical walls', as currently seen in NOMS to distinguish between commissioner and provider roles, may not be achievable within the probation service, as it is an entirely different sort of organisation with a significantly different ethos and history. There is no culture of ethical walls or of commissioning on a large scale, as at the centre of NOMS. In the aftermath of the Offender Management Act 2007, there has been no significant shift by probation trusts to commission out more probation services, and in fact nearly all commissioning targets were missed. The implications of this for voluntary sector involvement are significant. Research indicates that the combined investment in voluntary and community sector delivery across prison and probation has never risen above 5% of total operational expenditure.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, in health a purchaser/provider conflict of interest resulted in the simplification of primary care trust responsibilities to focus solely on commissioning. This has been translated into the future responsibilities for Clinical Commissioning Groups.

An alternative model for probation would be to separate out the role of trusts as a distinct commissioner of services. This is the simplest way to ensure that there is a notable shift towards a large-scale commissioning process. Existing probation trusts could be divided into two separate organisations, for example 'X' Probation Trust would be the commissioning

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<sup>7</sup>Clinks (2011) *Clink's Response to Modern Commissioning* London: Clinks

body and 'X' Offender Management Services would be responsible for providing those services that needed to remain under public sector control (namely court-based probation services) and could bid for additional services if they wished. This alternative model would also create fewer, larger trusts. But these trusts would become expert commissioners and best placed to make informed decisions about the required provision for their localities. It would be very clear to the public, the courts and to offenders what each body was responsible for, and this would be the best model to achieve real change.

This alternative model would also be better placed to ensure proper accountability. A commissioning trust would be able to hold all providers fully accountable and would be able to intervene should any serious problems or issues arise with providers, whether public, private or voluntary sector providers. In addition the commissioning trust would be accountable to local authorities and policing and crime commissioners for outcomes and value for money. It is vital that there is a suitable degree of public accountability and that the public has confidence in commissioning trusts to take control and provide reassurances when applicable. If probation trusts were principally commissioners, they would be better placed to deliver this assurance.

#### **Q7. How can we support Trusts to develop the commissioning and procurement capability they will need in the future?**

Effective commissioning is determined by two key principles: understanding need and focusing on outcomes. For commissioning trusts to be effective it is essential that they follow these principles, allowing providers to shape delivery and innovate, in turn leaving space for trusts to focus on procurement capability.

To become fully informed and experienced commissioners, trusts need the right personnel to undertake this development process and this transition to their new principal role as commissioner. In recent years, probation trusts have taken notable steps forward. However, developing this type of capability has been gradual and piecemeal. Trusts often focus on service design and strategic commissioning which hinders their ability to develop procurement expertise across the trust.

A clear focus on commissioning will also enable trusts to explore a variety of procurement models. For example, instead of relying on the traditional procurement model based on a competitor dialogue, there could be a shift towards health sector models based on co-design and dialogue, and in the long term towards due diligence models as used in industry. By evolving commissioning processes to match local service need, trusts can provide the creativity needed to introduce innovative services which have a substantial impact on reducing reoffending in their locality.

#### **Q8. How can we best ensure that the specific needs of women offenders are taken into account in commissioning services?**

The needs of women offenders are distinct in a number of ways. The types of crime that women commit, their motivations for committing crime and their experience of the criminal justice system are often markedly different from that of their male counterparts. For these reasons, commissioners must ensure that appropriate services are provided to address their specific needs. There have been some notable successes in the provision of women's

services in the wake of the Corston Report,<sup>8</sup> particularly the establishment of women's centres that provide various avenues of support to women who come into contact with the criminal justice system.

However, this issue should also be seen in the context of commissioning services for minority groups more generally within the criminal justice system. The key to getting this right, and ensuring minority groups are properly acknowledged within the commissioning process, is to make sure commissioners have a comprehensive understanding of local need. To do this, they need good quality information, research and data about the needs and priorities of minority groups, and the services that can best meet their needs. The systemic changes we suggest would go some way to achieving this.

The main difficulty in commissioning services for minority groups is facing the challenges posed by economies of scale. By the nature of being a minority group, these individuals are more geographically dispersed and therefore harder for commissioners to reach through mainstream channels. There is also the potential that probation trust commissioners will initially be overwhelmed by the volume of offenders they are dealing with, and as a consequence the specific needs of women and other minority groups may be overlooked. However, as trusts become more sophisticated in their commissioning, they should be better able to take account of minority groups and the services they commission should reflect this. Another way to address the difficulties posed by economies of scale is to consider national commissioning, as this has the potential to ensure suitable provision is available and to keep costs down and make better use of the voluntary sector, which has the required reach and expertise to work closely with these minority groups at a local level.

It is important that any reforms of probation services do not neglect the need for specific interventions, not only for women but also for Roma/gypsy and other ethnic minorities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender perpetrators and victims. For example, same sex domestic violence has been subject to significant academic study. However, there is a paucity of systematic interventions available nationally for use in addressing domestic violence behaviour in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender offenders or protecting victims in same sex relationships.

**Q9. How can we best encourage and support small and medium sized enterprises and the voluntary sector to participate in competitions to provide probation services?**

Firstly, a key business risk to the voluntary sector is the pace by which any transformation of offender services takes place. Many charities have already spent considerable time and resources on gearing up for the demands of a competitive market predicated on payment by results and will continue to do so if they can see the potential for a return on this investment in the form of strategically significant outsourced opportunities. For this reason it is imperative that the momentum for reform is maintained and that new commissioning arrangements are put in place as quickly as possible. If momentum is not sustained, this will be at the expense of a sector which offers so much in terms of offender, family, peer, business and community engagement.

Secondly in a world where commissioning is based on delivery against outcomes, there needs to be a better articulation by the voluntary sector, and a clearer understanding by the

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<sup>8</sup> Corston, B (2007) *The Corston Report* London: Home Office

government, of the unique contribution charities make to the reduction of reoffending and other outcomes associated with reoffending. This has implications for the way in which the sector relates to the government and vice versa, and the need for commissioners and providers to work together to arrive at a clear and evidence based understanding of how the voluntary sector could and should impact positively on outcomes. This could and should inform the development of national and local commissioning priorities and service specifications, and enable voluntary sector organisations to collaborate on the one hand and compete on the other from a position of strength with other service providers.

Finally it is important that the government facilitates an effective and vibrant market which encourages open competition on the one hand and successful collaboration on the other. This demands a form of partnership working on a whole new level and a scale which has not been experienced before. This has implications for the systems and protocols for collaboration and information exchange, as well as the development of entirely new governance processes. It also calls for new leadership behaviour within and across all three delivery sectors and between commissioners and providers of services.

The current focus on payment by results, although absolutely right in principle, is creating a market which is dominated by large private sector organisations (who are also Work Programme primes). This is entirely understandable: the nature of the financial risk transfer which the government wishes to achieve through the payment by results model requires delivery through organisations with balance sheets which are able to carry that quantum of risk. Few voluntary sector organisations can do so currently. In a market for justice services dominated by large prime providers, it is easy for the distinctive contribution of voluntary sector and specialist providers to be lost. A new approach to partnership working, which we call for above, is necessary to mitigate these risks, enabling voluntary sector providers to actively engage and compete in the market.

#### **Q11. What are the most effective ways to extend service improvements and innovation through payment by results?**

The most effective ways of ensuring that service improvements and innovations are extended through payment by results are: firstly to maintain, and where possible increase, the pace of change; and secondly for government to facilitate and reward cross-sector collaboration. The concept of payment by results ensures a focus on evidence-based delivery and the achievement of outcomes and this, in turn, should encourage innovation.

It is right that providers of services are paid for the outcomes and the results that they deliver. Payment by results is one of a number of payment mechanisms which focuses attention on the delivery of outcomes and therefore has a relevant and important role to play in policies designed to reduce reoffending and achieve other associated social outcomes. The concern is that the time and complexity needed to get the payment by results mechanisms right may detract from the urgent need for large scale reform of the way in which offender services are commissioned and delivered. Any further delays will have an adverse impact on the ability of providers – particularly in the voluntary sector— to gear up for the risks and demands of payment by results. In addition, there is a need to ensure that the roll-out of services, currently based on a series of localised and relatively small-scale pilots, do not detract from the need to learn lessons about commissioning high value, large volume services over large geographical areas.

**Q14. How might we improve partnership working and local co-commissioning, especially if we have fewer, larger Trusts?**

The provider landscape is made up of organisations which have long experience of working collaboratively. This appears to have increased in recent years with the development of cross-sector consortia. For example, Nacro is currently leading the Offender Health Collaborative which involves a range of charities and academic institutions working together to develop a network of liaison and diversion schemes for people in the criminal justice system with mental health related problems. Nacro is also part of a cross-sector consortium – the Community Justice Partnership – which aims to help deliver the government’s plans to reduce reoffending.

There is no doubt that probation trusts will need to develop their capability to commission services based on evidence of outcomes and joined-up working between providers and other parts of the criminal justice system. This must be predicated on a clear analysis of the local offender profile, an understanding of the prevailing evidence of what works and a detailed understanding of the market. It will also need to be facilitated by government policy which rewards the achievement of these outcomes and which recognises the unique contribution that different sectors bring to the fight against crime, the fear of crime and reoffending.

**Q15. What are the main issues for local authorities and Police and Crime Commissioners potentially becoming more accountable over time for probation services?**

It is well documented that the key to reducing reoffending in local communities rests with more than one statutory body. Under the new commissioning landscape, police and crime commissioners will have responsibility for reducing crime and the fear of crime and accountability for local policing. They will also have responsibility for commissioning services for prolific and priority offenders and for services to drug and alcohol-related offenders. The local authorities will retain responsibility for the provision of education, housing and social services, whilst the clinical commissioning group will commission services in respect of the health and well-being of offenders. The probation trusts with statutory responsibility for reducing reoffending will, as previously discussed, commission probation services.

This calls for joined-up strategies which, in combination, reduce crime, the fear of crime and reoffending in any given locality, irrespective of the individual statutory obligations that each commissioning body holds. This in turn demands real commitment nationally and locally to joined-up working between different government departments and across local commissioning bodies in recognition of the need for interdependence between crime prevention strategies, offender management and resettlement provision. The need for this sort of joined-up working has been debated for many years but has always presented significant challenges in reality. In overcoming these challenges, it is crucial that the prevailing evidence of what works in crime prevention, offender management, and resettlement should become the arbiter for how these strategies are jointly conceived and implemented.

Equally important is the need to build and maintain public and victim confidence in the system by demonstrating with hard evidence that communities are becoming safer and rates

of reoffending are going down. In line with this, it is important that a balance of measures is implemented which includes enforcement, targeted interventions and community engagement, which may be challenging for elected representatives who may be more inclined to pursue policies with a short-term emphasis in the hope of maintaining votes, rather than pursuing an approach that is based on the evidence of what works to reduce reoffending and crime.