

MAJOR SCRUTINY REVIEW: RE-OFFENDING

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Douglas Mills
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Improvement, Partnerships & Community Safety
Officer Contact(s)	Nikki O'Halloran/Nav Johal, Central Services
Papers with report	Appendix A: Re-offending Working Group Final Report

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To receive the Re-offending Working Group's report providing recommendations which seek to build upon the Borough's approach and strategy in dealing with the issues related to re-offending.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The Hillingdon Sustainable Community Strategy
Financial Cost	There are no direct cost implications arising from this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	External Services Scrutiny Committee
Ward(s) affected	All

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet welcomes the report of the Re-offending Working Group and accepts the recommendations of the Working Group report as reflected below:

1. commend the work carried out by Blue Sky to engage re-offenders into employment. In addition that Cabinet supports the proposal that the Council's lead in Reed in Partnership liaises with the Council's Anti Social Behaviour & Investigations Services Manager and the coordinators of the Community Payback Scheme to make links with organisations that work with re-offenders, so that referrals could be made to Reed to seek employment.
2. supports the proposal that the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Housing be asked to ensure that Housing officers continue to identify more private landlords that are prepared to lease suitable properties to ex-offenders.
3. agrees that improvements could be made in the services offered to those offenders with mental health issues and perpetrators of domestic violence. The Cabinet asks that the Hillingdon Reducing Re-offending Strategy Group work with CNWL and Hillingdon's

Domestic Violence Co-ordinator on how this service could be improved and this be reported back to the Cabinet Member for Improvement, Partnerships and Community Safety.

4. supports the proposal that offenders who receive a sentence of less than 12 months and those on community orders should have access to the same services and support as offenders who receive sentences of 12 months or more. The Hillingdon Reducing Re-offending Strategy Group be asked to investigate the gap in this service and work towards reducing this, and report back to the Cabinet Member on options for multi agencies to improve this.
5. agree that the Working Group conveys its findings to the London Probation Trust and draw their attention to the suggested increase of the Drug rehabilitation supervision order from 6 to 9 months to allow for effective treatment to be given. In addition the effectiveness of drug testing on arrest be reported back to Members. Subject to its success, consideration be given to lobbying for additional Government funding to continue the work.

Reasons for recommendation

The recommendations are aimed at building upon the work currently undertaken by the Council and partner agencies in relation to re-offenders and the services offered to them. An improved service will contribute to improvements in residents' wellbeing and ensure that residents are protected as much as possible from crime, anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol misuse and behaviour harmful to the environment

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject some or all of the Re-offending Working Group's recommendations.

Policy Overview Committee comments

External Services Scrutiny Committee comments are included in the final report. At the meeting on 28 March 2012 the External Services Scrutiny Committee reviewed and agreed the Re-offending Working Group's Final Report.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. The Re-offending Working Group was set up by the External Services Scrutiny Committee to review, improve, recommend and formalise Hillingdon's arrangements for addressing re-offending. This review focused on over 18 year olds.
2. The review considered the support services provided for re-offenders and how re-offenders are made aware of procedures and advice that is available to help them. Current procedures needed to be reviewed to ensure that services available are not overlooked.

3. The aim of the review was to review and recommend improvements to local arrangements to address re-offending in the Borough. The Working Group sought to look at: establishing the expectations and concerns of residents' about re-offending and ensure that these are reflected in local service standards; how education and training in relation to re-offending for probation and prison professionals can be improved; what information, support and advice is available to those that may need it and how can this be improved; and how can people who have re-offended get more involved in their communities and play a positive role in society.
4. Working Group Members were aware of the need to not raise expectations too high. This, along with suggestions for improving the support currently available, was considered when devising the recommendations.
5. The review took place between November 2011 and January 2012 and was presented to the External Services Scrutiny Committee on 28 March 2012 for its endorsement before submission to the Cabinet.
6. Relevant officers have been contacted and are happy to progress and follow up the recommendations within the report.
7. The Committee's report (attached) gives full details of the review.

Financial Implications

At this stage, there are no direct financial implications relating to this report. Any further developments and improvements of these services could have costs attached but it is not possible to estimate the impact this will have on service budgets until further work on proposals has been completed.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The Committee's recommendations will provide a springboard for the Council to take those steps necessary to improve support offered to re-offenders. This in turn will contribute to improvements in residents' wellbeing.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

The Committee took evidence from residents, officers and experts as described in the attached report.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and confirms that there are no immediate financial implications arising from accepting the recommendations above. However, there are indirect costs and service provision implications if some or all of the proposals are progressed further. Any financial implications resulting from these would be subject to appraisal within the MTFP process once plans for such service improvements are further developed.

Legal

Legal Services work closely with Council Departments to ensure that the Council meets all its statutory obligations in relation to those convicted of criminal offences. There are, however, no specific legal implications arising from this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.