

Reducing Reoffending in the North East: Improving Joint Working between Prisons and Local Authorities

1. Attached to this report, as Appendix A, is a schedule of the 43 recommendations from this ANEC/NOMS report with comments against all of the recommendations attributed to local authorities and against some of the others.
2. As previously discussed, the sheer number of recommendations and the aspiration that released prisoners as a group should be prioritised are challenging in the context of increasing reductions in resources in general and management capacity in particular.
3. The Association of North East Councils (ANEC) Elected Mayors and Leaders Board approved the report in principle, subject to discussion with Community Safety Partnerships.
4. The issues were discussed with representatives from NOMS and ANEC at the Stockton Reducing Reoffending and Harm Group on 30 August, and the following key issues were identified:
 - (a) the need for a focus from NOMS on issues affecting Stockton immediately, including staffing levels within the Drug Recovery Wing at HMP Holme House (which relates to recommendation 28) and recent difficulties in securing prison representation at the Stockton Group, plus the recent decision by Prisons to reduce their level of contact to Integrated Offender Management schemes;
 - (b) the control role of the proposed regional Reducing Reoffending Forum, which Ron Hogg, PCC for Durham & Darlington, has agreed to chair, and the need to resource it for more than 12 months if it is to make progress on more than a few of the recommendations.
5. In general the Stockton Council position is that we are prepared to participate in this further attempt at regional co-ordination, and we will be glad to pick up any good practice which can be brought in at nil or very low cost, but we are not in a position to take a leading role in significant pieces of new work.
6. It is RECOMMENDED that the report be noted.