



PBNI Probation Board
for Northern Ireland



CORPORATE PLAN 2020-23

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FOREWORD FROM BOARD CHAIR



SETTING THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION

PBNI's Corporate Plan 2020-23 builds on the principles set out in the Programme for Government and Outcomes Delivery Plan including – the need for joined up working, the need to focus on what we are achieving rather than what we are doing; and the need to use evidence and research to improve outcomes for all communities.

Our plan sets the strategic direction for the Probation Board for Northern Ireland over the next three years. It has been developed following a far reaching public consultation process. During the consultation we met with stakeholders from government, criminal justice, the voluntary and community sectors, staff, service users and communities.

There were a number of important themes captured in the consultation process. Consultees highlighted the importance of intervening as early as possible in order to address the causes of crime.

Research shows that children who suffer multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as having a parent in prison, experiencing domestic abuse, substance misuse, or mental ill health in the household, are more likely to be imprisoned.

Strategic Priority 1 highlights the importance of PBNI working in partnership to provide early intervention and prevent individuals becoming involved in criminality. This priority also provides an opportunity for PBNI to develop its work in relation to restorative practice.

Consultees also highlighted the important role probation plays in delivering a problem solving approach in particular to tackle domestic abuse and substance misuse. This work will continue under the framework of Strategic Priority 2.

Many of those we met with during this consultation process highlighted the need to use evidence, research and best practice to ensure the organisation is effective. At the same time the Board must provide assurance that the organisation is delivering efficient and value for money services. Our 3rd Strategic Priority will be the catalyst for this work.

Any organisation is only as good as its people and staff played a key role in this consultation process. This Board wants to ensure there is a culture where staff wellbeing and learning are at the forefront of what we do and the actions to achieve that will sit under Strategic Priority 4.

Consultees including service users, staff, partners and political representatives all told us of the importance of building awareness of the key role probation plays in creating safer communities. Under Strategic Priority 5, PBNI will focus on building awareness and confidence in the work of probation as the lead organisation responsible for rehabilitation in the community.

The strategic priorities outlined in this plan enable PBNI to be collaborative, innovative and transformative. This will in turn enable staff to help reduce reoffending, reduce the number of victims of crime and help keep communities safer.

DALE ASHFORD
CHAIR OF THE PROBATION BOARD

FOREWORD

FROM PBNI CHIEF EXECUTIVE



DELIVERING THE PROBATION SERVICE

This plan aims to build on the strong foundations which have been laid in developing effective probation practice in Northern Ireland over recent years.

Staff within our organisation including social work qualified probation officers, probation support officers, psychology staff, community service staff, administrative staff and those in specialist corporate functions all have one aim – changing lives for safer communities.

Our organisation has undergone a period of modernisation, including estates, IT and workforce, to ensure our staff are enabled to deliver front line services effectively and efficiently in local communities.

We have a body of skilled practitioners who apply sound, professional judgement to deliver services to all communities. Those services include the supervision of orders and licences, assessing and managing risk, providing interventions and programmes and delivering a service to victims.

We are, however, not complacent and continually review new research, evidence and feedback from sentencers, service users and practitioners in order to ensure we are providing the best possible service.

As crime trends change and the nature of offending changes so too has our practice.

Staff are dealing with many individuals who have mental health problems or experienced some form of trauma in their lives.

We have therefore trained all of our staff on trauma awareness and have embedded trauma informed practice within the organisation. This work will continue over the next Corporate Planning period.

Many of those subject to probation supervision have serious addiction problems. 76% of people under probation supervision in Northern Ireland have an alcohol or drug-related problem. There is a well-established link between drugs, alcohol and crime and one of the most significant factors that influences whether someone will reoffend is their use of drugs and alcohol. In the last six months we have developed another partnership with the community and voluntary sector to provide bespoke rapid regional addictions services to people under supervision across Northern Ireland.

The rise in reported incidents of domestic abuse is concerning. PBNI will continue to work collaboratively and in partnership with health and justice colleagues in addressing this issue.

The financial environment that probation and all public services operate in continues to be a challenging one. As Accounting Officer I and Senior colleagues have worked closely with the Department of Justice to ensure that our budget enables us to deliver our priorities. That work with the Department will continue over the next Corporate Planning period.

This plan enables us to focus on our core work and allows us to continue with the development and roll out of some of the problem solving justice initiatives additionally funded by the Department of Justice. We will maintain a focus on delivering quality services across all our work. Going forward we will use our research, evidence and data to equip staff to continue their work of changing lives for safer communities.

CHERYL LAMONT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

PBNI commenced its formal consultation for the 2020-23 Corporate Plan on Tuesday 13 August 2019 for a period of 12 weeks. The formal consultation closed on Thursday 31 October 2019. We worked hard to be as inclusive as possible and used innovative ways to consult and engage with more stakeholders than ever.

HOW WE CONSULTED:

- Wrote to over 300 stakeholders providing consultation document
- Launched consultation on PBNI social media channels
- Highlighted consultation at annual Probation Seminar
- Gave interviews to local media about the consultation
- Held 30 one-to-one meetings with key stakeholders
- Held a round table event with political representatives
- Received 16 formal written responses
- Held four staff engagement events
- Held four service user events
- Met with trade union representatives
- Held an event with the Retired Association of Probation
- Met with PBNI Victims Reference Group





THE ROLE OF PROBATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The Probation Board is involved at all stages of the criminal justice process. It works in Courts providing pre-sentence reports to assist Judges to make decisions. It works in communities supervising sentences that must be served in the community. It works in prisons, preparing prisoners for release subject to licences. It also works directly with victims of crime through the Victim Information Scheme.

All probation officers are social work qualified staff, professionally trained in the assessment and management of risk and registered with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. They are enabled and supported by psychology staff, probation services officers and corporate staff across specialist functions in HR, finance, IT and communications.

PROBATION WORKING WITHIN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2017-20

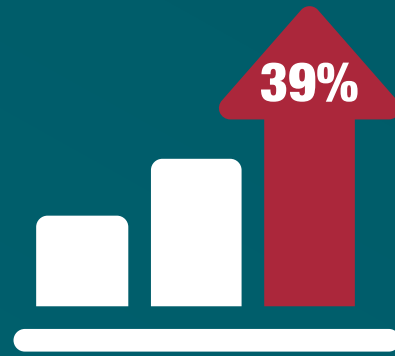


OVER THE COURSE OF THE LAST STRATEGY WE:

- Developed and delivered an innovative mobile Graffiti Removal Scheme as part of PBNI Community Service in partnership with Belfast City Council.
- Introduced an online registration service for victims of crime in November 2017 and increased the number of victims registered with the victim information scheme by 39%.
- Established Service User Forums to improve service delivery and give those who have offended and victims an opportunity to feedback on probation practice.
- Developed and implemented an Estates Strategy which has included providing new and modern office spaces in Coleraine, Downpatrick, and Omagh.
- Developed and implemented a Workforce Modernisation Strategy to ensure we have a business model which is effective and efficient. This has included the development of new Practice Standards. Clear, consistent standards are the platform for sound professional judgement. The standards provide this platform by detailing the minimum requirements for practitioners at the key stages of our work with people who have offended.
- Reduced staff sickness by 30.5% in 2018-19.
- Provided funding to the Community and Voluntary sector for a range of interventions to support people moving away from reoffending.



- Secured funding from the transformation fund and developed our award winning mobile phone app 'changing lives' to help promote desistance from crime.
- Made significant progress in delivering a new case management system and modernising our IT infrastructure.
- Played a key role in the development of the Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme which was launched in March 2018 in the Londonderry Court area. The scheme allows judges to refer suitable offenders, who must accept that their behaviour is harmful, unacceptable and needs to change, onto a therapeutic behaviour change programme.



Increased the number of victims registered in the schemes by **39%**.

- Developed and delivered a new programme in partnership with Women's Aid within the Western Health and Social Care Trust area. This is aimed at males over 18 who have demonstrated the potential to be abusive within relationships and whose children are assessed as at risk by Social Services.

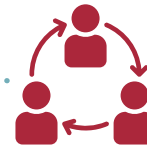


- Developed the Enhanced Combination Order (ECO) and rolled it out to three court areas. The Order has been evaluated by NISRA and Ulster University with very positive outcomes. The number of custodial sentences of 12 months or less, made by courts involved in the ECO pilot, decreased by 20.7% between 2015 and 2017. Nine in ten service users agreed that the programme had helped them address their offending behaviour and they were unlikely to commit a further similar offence. The Enhanced Combination Order won the prestigious Confederation of European Probation Award for Rehabilitation in the Community in October 2019.
- Played a lead role in the development of the Substance Misuse Court which was launched at Belfast Magistrates' Court in April 2018. The court adopts an alternative approach to tackle the root causes of offending behaviour and aims to reduce reoffending and substance misuse among participants and to facilitate their rehabilitation.





- Developed a new project called 'Aspire' that works with marginalised young men aged 16-30 at risk of becoming involved or further involved in criminality and supports them to resist negative influences. It is part of the NI Executive programme of work which was established as a result of the Fresh Start Agreement. This project has been evaluated and found to be a 'highly worthwhile and effective programme for service users who very much value the support it provides'. The Aspire Team won the 2019 Social Work Award for Adult Services.





PBNI'S AIM, VISION AND VALUES

OUR AIM

PBNI's aim is:

*'changing lives for
safer communities'.*

OUR VISION STATEMENT

We will lead in the reduction of reoffending by tackling the root causes of offending behaviour and rehabilitating people.

We will be collaborative and transformative to reduce the number of victims of crime and build safer communities.

OUR VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our organisational values are key to our way of working and outline how members of the public, service users and staff can expect to be treated when engaging with PBNI. Our values are supported by guiding principles. Our values act as the foundation for our principles. Board members and staff also adhere to the 'Nolan principles of public life' which are the basis of the ethical standards Board members and those employed in probation are expected to adhere to.



VALUES

Respect - We will treat everyone with respect and dignity at all times and value diversity and differing viewpoints.

Integrity - We will act in a way that engenders trust with all. We will be honest in what we say and do.

Openness - We will encourage people to speak up and make suggestions about practice and we will be open about our decision making.

Accountability - We will be accountable for our decisions and actions.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Recognising and encouraging people's capacity to change - We believe all people, given the right circumstances have the ability to transform their lives.

Partnership and Collaborative Working - We value partnership and collaboration across statutory, community and voluntary sectors and where appropriate the private sector.

Equality and Diversity - We recognise, understand and respond to peoples unique needs.

Professionalism of Staff - We will carry out our role professionally adhering to professional standards and do our jobs effectively.

CURRENT LANDSCAPE



CRIME PATTERNS AND TRENDS

Overall the trend for reported crime has continued to reduce over the last five years. We know that NI remains a relatively safe place to live. In 2018/19 however there was an increase in reported crime of 3% when compared with the previous year. We also know that the nature of crime is changing.

INCIDENTS MOTIVATED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE AND HATE

There were 31,682 incidents with a domestic abuse motivation recorded by the PSNI in 2018/19, an increase of 6% on 2017/18 and the highest level recorded since the data series began in 2004/05. All policing districts showed an increase in domestic abuse incidents.

In 2018/19 the PSNI recorded 1,124 racist incidents, 865 sectarian incidents, 281 homophobic incidents, 100 disability incidents, 56 faith/religion incidents and 33 transphobic incidents. The total number of hate motivated incidents increased by 2% from 2,400 in 2017/18 to 2459 in 2018/19.

TABLE 1: PSNI RECORDED CRIME BY OFFENCE 2014/15 TO 2018/19(PSNI STATISTICS WWW.PSNI.POLICE.UK/INSIDE-PSNI/STATISTICS/POLICE-RECORDED-CRIME-STATISTICS/)

OFFENCE	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	% change 17/18 to 18/19
VICTIM-BASED OFFENCES						
TOTAL VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON OFFENCES	34,281	35,714	33,357	34,155	36,472	+7%
TOTAL SEXUAL OFFENCES	2,729	3,030	3,150	3,434	3,547	+3%
TOTAL ROBBERY OFFENCES	880	732	653	577	639	+11%
TOTAL THEFT OFFENCES (INCLUDING BURGLARY)	35,444	34,129	31,001	30,220	30,687	+2%
TOTAL CRIMINAL DAMAGE OFFENCES	19,830	20,511	19,487	18,278	17,660	-3%
OTHER CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY						
TOTAL DRUG OFFENCES	5,048	5,549	5,416	6,444	7,106	+10%
TOTAL POSSESSION OF WEAPONS OFFENCES	772	921	890	999	1,064	+7%
TOTAL PUBLIC ORDER OFFENCES	1,447	1,468	1,215	1,097	1,008	-8%
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY	2,746	2,872	2,845	2,916	2,812	-4%
TOTAL RECORDED CRIME - ALL OFFENCES (excluding Fraud)	103,177	104,926	98,014	98,120	100,995	3%

PBNI CASELOAD



The top four offences recorded by persons on PBNI Caseload in March 2019 were Violence Against the Person, Drugs Offences, Theft and Sexual Offences.

Of the PBNI caseload at 31st March 2019 (4,552), more than three quarters of orders being supervised (3,551, 78%) were allocated to PBNI teams in the community, with the remainder in custody (1,001, 22%).

In terms of the main types of community order under supervision; the number of people on Probation Orders under supervision has increased by 10% from 1,288 at 31st March 2018 to 1,415 at 31st March 2019.

At 89%, males account for the vast majority of those on the PBNI caseload at 31st March 2019, with females accounting for 11%.

However, the number of females on the caseload continues to increase and currently numbers 452, up 11% compared to the previous year.

PBNI assessed those people who started an order in 2017/18 and found that more than half of new starts were deemed to have an offending related problem in the following areas:

- Alcohol or Drugs (76%)
- Emotional wellbeing (63%)
- Family and Personal relationships (59%)
- Employment, Education and Training (51%)



**ALCOHOL
OR DRUGS**
76%



**EMOTIONAL
WELLBEING**
63%



**FAMILY AND
PERSONAL
RELATIONSHIPS**
59%

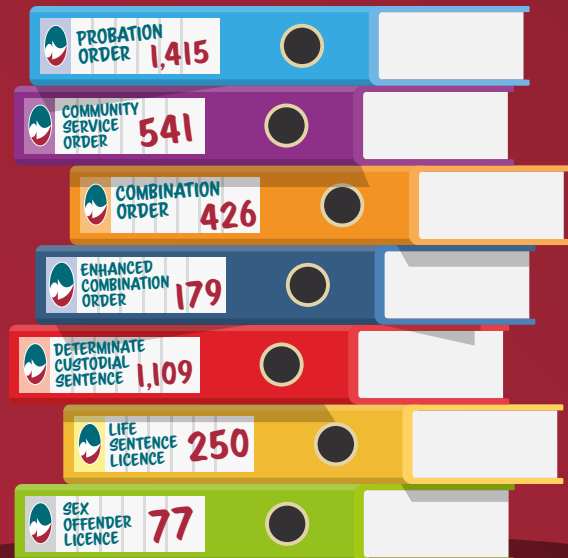


**EMPLOYMENT,
EDUCATION AND
TRAINING**
51%

PBNI carries out direct work with victims through the Victim Information Scheme. To date the Victim Information scheme has worked with approximately 2232 victims. Of these registered victims, 78% were victims of sexual or other violence or families who have suffered a bereavement. Approximately 66% of those who register already knew the person who committed the crime in their case.

Since 2007 PBNI staff have, in response to victim requests, facilitated approximately 89 restorative interventions including cases of death by dangerous driving, manslaughter, murder, attempted murder, rape, hijacking, robbery, intimidation and grievous bodily harm.

SOME OF THE ORDERS AND LICENCES PBNI SUPERVISE AT 31 MARCH 2019





FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCES

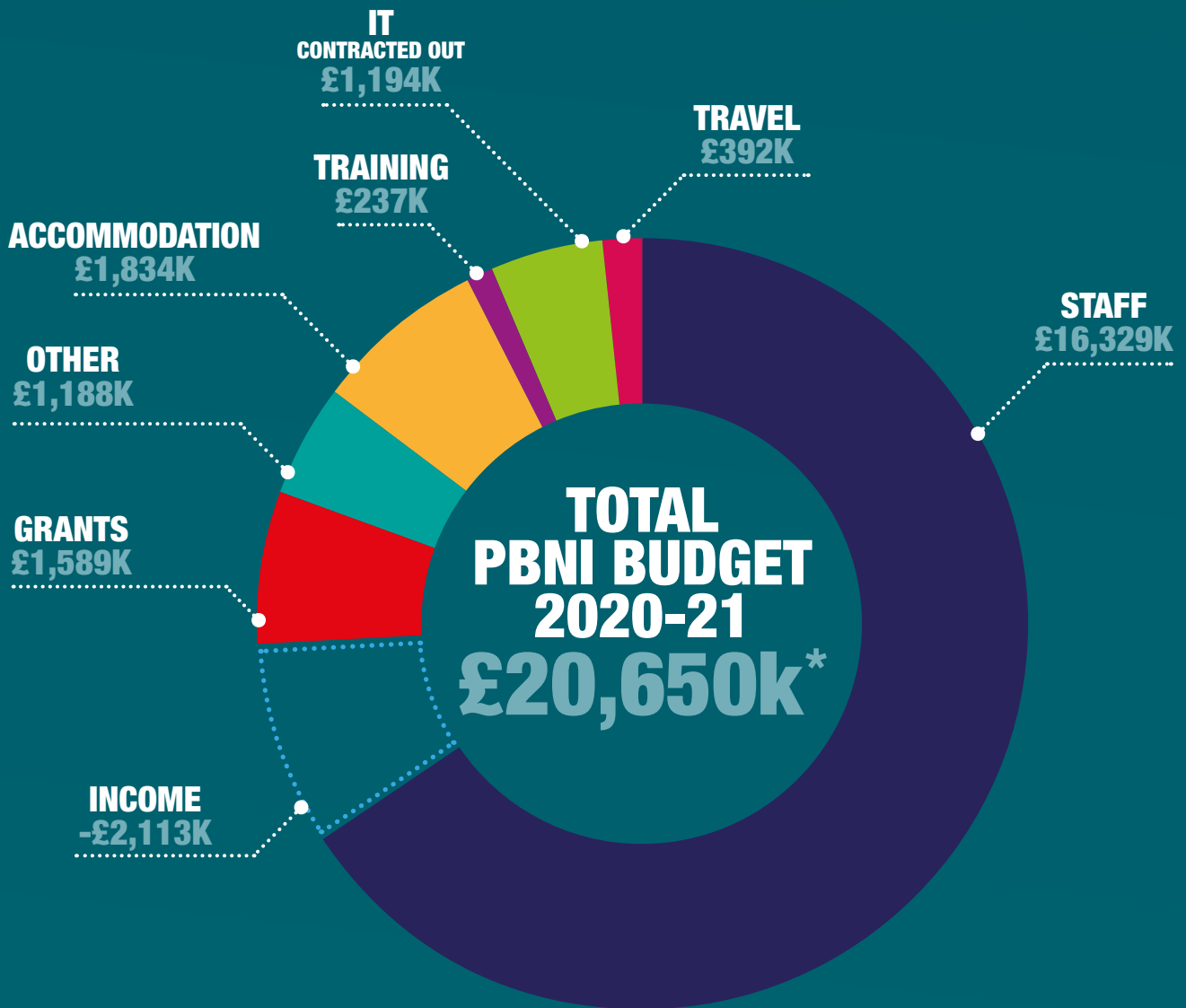
The Department of Justice has approved the following level of resources

YEAR	RESOURCE £000	CAPITAL £000
2020-21	20,650	450
2021-22	TBC	TBC
2022-23	TBC	TBC

Budgets are allocated on a one year funding cycle, funding for future years is unknown and to be confirmed.

The budget allocation in 2020-21 is £20.7m (at time of print). The baseline increased from £16.5m to £19.1m. PBNI received an additional £1.5m in 2020-21 to meet pay pressures and to carry out a range of programmes including Problem Solving Justice initiatives.





*Excludes funding for Aspire and Inspire projects which is anticipated but not yet allocated at time of print.

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS



Our strategy has been informed by the following assumptions:

- The NI Executive and Assembly was restored in January 2020 and a new Justice Minister appointed. PBNI will continue to work closely with the Department for Justice to ensure that our priorities are aligned to the Minister's policy priorities.
- There is likely to be continuing pressure on public sector finances with the attendant implications for service delivery. Uncertainty about budget settlements, and temporary funding for projects inhibits longer term planning. There is a risk caused by the fact that the baseline budget is being propped up with temporary in-year funding for programmes, with no confirmation that funding will be available in future years.
- PBNI is part of the criminal justice system and as such works with a range of criminal justice partners including the judiciary, court service, police service, prison service and youth justice. PBNI also works with health trusts and the Public Health Agency. Likewise, PBNI has built strong partnerships with the voluntary and community sector. A constant theme of PBNI work has been collaboration to help prevent reoffending.
- There is a major review on sentencing being carried out by the Department of Justice. This includes community sentencing which is likely to impact upon the work of probation.



- Problem solving justice continues to be a key part of the justice system. Evidence to date shows that problem solving justice is working and has the potential to improve outcomes for people in NI. PBNI wants to continue its work within problem solving justice and to enhance our work in early intervention with adults in the future.
- There has been an increase in the complexity of cases PBNI deals with and an increase in the vulnerability of service users. This may continue into the future.
- PBNI will consider any impact that the UK withdrawal from the EU may have on probation's role.
- PBNI will continue to develop its partnerships across jurisdictions in particular with probation in the Republic of Ireland, England and Wales.
- Effectiveness of the justice system and issues such as delay will continue to be a priority across the justice system.
- In the UK and across Europe there is a focus on digital justice. The Department of Justice is continuing to work in this area. PBNI has a role to play in this work.
- PBNI will continue to work within Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and local government to make local communities safer.
- The Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland will publish the findings of a strategic, governance and operational inspection in early 2020. This will help inform our business plan objectives in year one of the Corporate Plan.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2020-23

PBNI's priorities for the Corporate Plan are informed by the draft Programme for Government and aligned to the Department of Justice's priorities.

THE PRIORITIES ARE:

Shaping and Influencing Criminal Justice Policy and Practice.

As leaders in rehabilitating people who have offended, PBNI will work to shape and influence criminal justice policy and practice. PBNI would like to see a greater focus in preventing people becoming involved in criminality and early intervention. PBNI will work with partners to take this forward. We know the factors that lead to offending behaviour and we know that in order to effectively rehabilitate people we must deal with those factors.

Therefore, in the coming 3 years PBNI through a range of initiatives will focus on tackling drug/ alcohol related offending; poor mental health; and building opportunities to enhance people's education and employment. We will also work to support and strengthen families. PBNI will also develop restorative practices with adults who have offended. PBNI cannot do this work alone and that is why a partnership approach will continue to be adopted.



Delivering an innovative and problem solving approach to reducing reoffending through partnership and collaboration.

Problem solving Justice is at the heart of the justice Programme for Government delivery plans. PBNI has a key role in the implementation of a number of problem solving justice initiatives including the substance misuse court, the enhanced combination order, and the domestic violence perpetrator programme. PBNI will continue to develop the problem solving work under this priority.

Demonstrating Effectiveness and Efficiency

PBNI will deliver effective probation practice through the supervision of community sentences and licences, through the delivery of assessment reports, through the delivery of risk management plans and through its work with victims. It will enhance its practice over the next 3 years by having a programme of research and implementing the recommendations from inspections and audits of practice. Our focus will be on implementing evidence based practice. Through the governance framework the Board will ensure that the organisation is efficient and that we deliver services that are value for money and making a difference to people's lives.



Valuing and Developing our People

We will develop our people and ensure they are trained and skilled to carry out their jobs effectively. We will create a culture where wellbeing and learning are at the forefront of what we do. We want to empower staff to have the skills, empathy and ability to engage in transformative change. We want to have professional staff across all grades and disciplines and skilled practitioners that can effectively manage behavioural change.

Building Awareness and Confidence in communities about the professional role of PBNI

PBNI will work collaboratively across government and with criminal justice partners, the statutory, community and voluntary sectors to develop a comprehensive engagement and communications strategy which will inform and engage to build awareness of our role in creating safer communities.



ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

- We will measure our success through attitudinal surveys that tell us about stakeholders' experiences of, and attitudes towards PBNI
- We will evaluate the projects we develop
- We will continue to work closely with the Department of Justice in relation to the Programme for Government indicator of **reduced reoffending** and their outcomes based measures.

The annual Business Plan is the delivery mechanism for the strategic priorities. It is published separately to the Corporate Plan giving details, measurable actions and outcomes. The plan allows judgements to be made on progress towards the intent set out in the Corporate Plan. The measurable actions and outcomes will be based on the principle of delivering positive, measurable outcomes. The Probation Board monitors the progress of the Business Plan quarterly. In addition, what actually happened in the delivery of the Business Plan is reported in the Probation Board's Annual Report.



THE ROLE AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE PROBATION BOARD

The Probation Board is an arms-length body of the Department of Justice. It is responsible for securing the maintenance of the probation service and determining the policies and strategic direction required for its delivery. Within this governance framework it also monitors and provides assurances of the service's performance against the Corporate Plan and the supporting annual Business Plan objectives.

The structure of the Board and its representation from across our communities in Northern Ireland provides a level of independence, accountability, oversight and strategic thinking which is to the benefit of probation practice and delivery. This includes a focus on ensuring the delivery of an effective and efficient service to reduce the number of victims of crime throughout Northern Ireland.

The Board meets on a monthly basis and oversees matters of strategic significance. In delivering its priorities and objectives, the Board is accountable to the Minister of Justice. The Probation Service's Chief Executive, as accounting officer, is responsible to the DOJ's Permanent Secretary for the proper discharge of the public funds.

PROBATION BOARD

Board Chair:

Mr Dale Ashford QFSM

Mr Neil Bodger

Dr Jonny Byrne

Dr Kelly Clark

Mrs Judith Gillespie CBE

Mr Dave Wall

Mr Kieran Donaghy

Dr Theresa Donaldson

Mr Paul Douglas

Mr Gearoid OhEara

Ms Patricia Keenan

Mr Max Murray

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Chief Executive is responsible for leading and developing all areas of the Probation Service. The Chief Executive is also the accounting officer for the organisation and has responsibility for overseeing the delivery of the Board's strategic priorities. The senior leadership team are responsible for agreeing annual business plans and delivering on those plans.

Ms Cheryl Lamont CBE

Chief Executive

Mr Hugh Hamill

Director of Operations

Dr Geraldine O'Hare

Acting Director of Rehabilitation

Mrs Gillian Robinson

Head of Human Resources

Mrs Catherine Teggart

Head of Finance

Ms Liz Arthur

Assistant Director – Risk

Ms Gail McGreevy

Head of Communications

Mr Stephen Hamilton

Assistant Director – Urban

Ms Gillian Montgomery

Assistant Director – Prisons

Ms Roisin Muldoon

Assistant Director – Rural

Mrs Ruth McKelvey

Acting Head of Psychology Services and Interventions



PBNI

Probation Board
for Northern Ireland