**UNISON NPS/CRC News** 

**22 June 2018**

**JUSTICE SELECT COMMITTEE SLAMS TR**

The Report of the Parliamentary Justice Select Committee on TR published today bears out UNISON’s long standing position that Transforming Rehabilitation has failed and needs to be replaced. Here is what the Committee says in its Report:

*The Committee is unconvinced that TR can ever deliver an effective or viable probation service. The Ministry of Justice should initiate a review into the long-term future and sustainability of delivering probation services under the models introduced by the TR reforms, including how performance under the TR system might compare to an alternative system for delivering probation.*

UNISON gave evidence to the Committee and is very pleased that the Committee listened to the views of UNISON members who work for both the National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Companies. The responses which members made to our survey on the impact of TR were very influential and hard hitting. Thank you to all members who took part; your views really made a difference. Quite rightly, none of the criticism in the Committee Report is of the work of probation staff. We all know the blame lies with the Government.

The Committee was worried about how low staff morale has sunk in both the NPS and CRCs. They were also extremely concerned at the barriers which the split in probation has created between colleagues who previously worked together in Probation Trusts.

The Report recommends that the Ministry of Justice must initiate a review into the long-term future and sustainability of delivering probation services under the models introduced by the TR reforms, including how performance under the TR system might compare to an alternative system for delivering probation.  In other words, the MOJ is being asked to come up with other models to run Probation properly again. The Justice Select Committee has called for the findings of the review to be published by 1 February 2019.

**PROBATION REVIEW**

Anticipating the outcome of the Justice Select Committee Report, HMPPS has already started on what it is calling a Probation Review. UNISON is meeting with HMPPS officials next week to find out more about this.

We will, of course participate in the Review on members’ behalf, and we naturally hope that the MOJ will carry out the Review impartially. There is obviously a risk that the MOJ will try to retain some of the discredited status quo.

**UNISON’S RESCUE PLAN FOR PROBATION**

UNISON is proposing the following rescue plan for Probation to replace the failed and failing TR experiment. We will consult members on these proposals during the Probation Review:

1. The Probation Service to be re-unified
2. The CRCs to be brought back into public ownership upon termination of the existing contracts
3. The re-creation of local public sector delivery bodies for Probation; size and boundaries to be agreed
4. All NPS work in England to be transferred into the new local delivery bodies
5. In Wales, the Welsh Government to consult all relevant stakeholders on the appropriate structure (s) for a publically owned and democratically accountable Probation service
6. The abolition of Her Majesty’s Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS)
7. Police and Crime Commissioners, or Elected Mayors where they exist, to be given full democratic accountability and funding for the delivery of all Probation services provided by the new local public sector delivery bodies
8. A guarantee of no compulsory redundancies for staff in NPS and CRCs and the protection of pay and conditions via a national collective agreement with the employers.
9. Funding from the Treasury to provide for the reconstruction of Probation in recognition of the failure of the TR experiment, including money to reform probation pay and conditions

The last four years have shown conclusively that the Ministry of Justice cannot be trusted with the future of Probation. The creation of Her Majesty’s Prisons and Probation Service is a device to swallow up Probation into the Prison Service; the HMPPS Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) plan shows this to be true. The recent botched privatisation of night waking cover in NPS approved premises indicates that Ministers and officials at the MOJ have learnt nothing from their mistakes over TR. Probation is just not safe in their hands.