

Probation (SCOOP)

Last update: 1 Jul 2025

Latest Bulletins

GMB/SCOOP Bulletin July 2025

Posted on: 1 July 2025

Dear Colleagues,

A very short bulletin this month on behalf of Janet Marlow, National GMB/SCOOP Representative

Pay talks

We are still involved in pay negotiations with the employer and as soon as we receive a full and final offer it will be put to the membership via an indicative ballot.

Representation

Jan Marlow, the National Representative, is still away from work. We wish her well with her treatment and a speedy recovery.

In the interim advice can still be sought from myself. Members may be put in contact with officials from their branch or Regional Office. When contacting either me or your branch please try to include your membership number for speedy referral.

George Georgiou

National Officer Public Services: Acting GMB/SCOOP Representative

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Posted on: 14 May 2025

This is a Joint Bulletin sent out by Peter Brandt and Janet Marlow

National Representative Update

Peter will be leaving the National Representative role on 31st May 2025 and Jan will take up the role on the 1st June 2025. He would like to say farewell to all the members of the Union and to thank you all for your support.

A brief message from Jan that she is excited to be taking up the role of the National Representative though she has no illusions about the responsibility she carries in representing the membership; especially at such a critical time, i.e. impending pay talks and the impact of the Rademaker Report. Jan knows these are just two of the various concerns the membership will have and will provide a more detailed overview of her background in the next Bulletin. Jan looks forward to meeting members on an individual basis and collectively.

Jan is very keen to thank Peter for his support, both as a member and in the handover work he has undertaken to help her prepare for this role. Jan knows she speaks for the other union representatives and the membership, in how diligently Peter has represented GMB SCOOP and the dedication and integrity in which he operates. Peter will be missed and Jan's aim is to continue the excellent contribution and difference he has made.

Rademaker Report

The long awaited report by Jennifer Rademaker (HMPPS Professional Standards Review: A review into policies, practice and procedures – bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation and HMPPS response) was published on 6th May at a launch event where both Jennifer Rademaker and Lord Timpson Minister for Prison, Probation and Reoffending were key note speakers. The recommendations in the report have been accepted in full by HMPPS and there is a shared commitment by the employers and Trade unions to work together to stamp out unacceptable behaviour and change the culture of the organisation.

[HMPPS Professional Standards Review – GOV.UK](#)

Operation Protect



The joint unions sent out an update last week to all members. You should already have received this.

Pay Talks

We are about to enter into shadow pay talks pending the spending review announcements.

We are keen to use the talks to explore the parameters of what HMPPS can offer and to get as many business as usual matters out of the way so that we can focus on pay. The other Joint Trade Union Communication you will have received sets out the unions' case for paying pay progression promptly in the 1st April for qualifying staff. We see this as part of the agreement made between staff and the employer when the CBF was launched.

Personal Support

Peter will be deleting all correspondence that he has had with members when he leaves the role at the end of May unless you have specifically asked him to keep the data and to hand it over to Jan. If you would like the information he holds on you passed over to Jan, you will need to let him know before Thursday 22 May 2025.

Peter Brandt

Janet Marlow

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

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GMB/SCOOP BULLETIN May 2025



Posted on: 1 May 2025

National Representative update

Jan Marlow will take up the role of National Representative on 1st June 2025. We have been liaising about the handover of duties and Jan has been able to attend a number of Joint Union meetings. I know that



members will support her as well as you have supported me over the last 3 years. Thank you.

Operation Protect

We are still working with Napo and Unison under the joint banner of Operation Protect, the aims of which are

- A strategic workload reduction programme
- A safe workloads and case allocation system
- High quality supervision with enough supervisors to support staff properly
- An employer pledge to prevent workloads above capacity
- An employee care agreement to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of staff

We held a very productive joint meeting at the beginning of April with really strong attendance from all 3 unions. Thank you to all members who attended.

Pay talks.

We are shortly going to commence pay talks with the employer. They are still waiting for the publication of the Civil Service pay remit. However, we are working hard to separate out business as usual activities regarding pay from the pay talks so we can focus on getting a suitable pay rise for all members.

Personal support

I will be deleting all correspondence that I have had with members when I leave the role at the end of May unless you have specifically asked me to keep the data and to hand it over to Jan. If you would like the information I hold on you passed over to Jan, you will need to let me know before Thursday 22 May 2025.

Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

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Joint TU Pay Update April 2025

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Posted on: 11 April 2025

PAY CLAIM

Back at the end of December 2024 we advised members that we had submitted the following pay claim for 2025:

- One year claim
- 12% increase on all pay points
- 12% increase on all cash allowances – e.g. London Weighting, Geographical Supplements etc
- An increase in the minimum salary to be no less than £15/hour
- The conversion of the current Regional Reward and Recognition funds into a single fund for staff retention purposes, to be the subject of collective bargaining.

Unfortunately, pay talks have been delayed on account of uncertainty over when the government is going to tell the civil service what it can spend on pay rises this year. This announcement is not expected before May. These delays are a negative consequence of the Probation Service being part of the civil service.

As soon as we have more news about when pay talks are likely to start, we will let members know. We understand how vital it is for members to get a decent pay rise this year, and how important it is for HMPPS to demonstrate that it values its staff by offering a decent, inflation-proofed pay award for 2025.

GETTING YOUR INCREMENT ON TIME?

Back in December last year we alerted members to the fact that the civil service way is to hold back paying staff their annual pay increment (moving up your pay band once you have done your CBF) until after the pay award for the year in question has been settled; albeit with back pay of the increment rise to 1 April. Outside of the civil service, by contrast, public sector workers get their increments paid on time.

The unions insisted to HMPPS at the end of last year that any delay to you getting your increment was unacceptable and asked HMPPS ensure that you got your increment on time on 1 April, and you not have to wait months to get what you are due.



Unfortunately this is not going to happen in April, but, following our representations on members' behalf on this issue, HMPPS has been in discussion with the Cabinet Office to see whether it is possible to make payment of this year's increment for eligible staff as close to 1 April as possible and not have to wait until pay talks have been concluded.

The unions are continuing to press for this outcome and hope that there will be better news to come on this shortly.

NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

Once again this year, the lowest Probation pay point was overtaken by the National Living Wage on 1 April. This shows just how poorly HMPPS is paying staff on pay band 2.

At the end of last year the unions asked HMPPS to delete the lowest pay point of pay band 2 on 1 April 2025 and to move the staff concerned onto the next highest pay point. This is what we achieved for members on the lowest pay point last year as part of the re-opened pay talks which concluded in October.

HMPPS has said that this issue can only be resolved for 2025 as part of this year's pay talks. Low pay must be resolved once and for all in the Probation Service, so that the lowest pay point does not get overtaken every year by the National Living Wage!

That is why the unions have asked for a £15/hour minimum salary as part of our pay claim for 2025. The scandal of low pay cannot go on.

OVERTIME EXTENSION SCHEME

The unions said at the time that the overtime scheme was extended to pay bands 4 to 6 that this should be made permanent. So we are pleased that HMPPS has got approval from the Treasury to extend the scheme again, post 31 March, due to on-going operational pressures. As we said at the time, the likelihood of these pressures disappearing anytime soon is vanishingly small.

The overtime extension scheme covers England and Wales and Regions should not be gatekeeping the scheme or denying staff reasonable access to it. If you think you are being unreasonably denied access, contact your local trade union representative.

FAIR UNSOCIAL HOURS PAYMENTS

At last HMPPS has begun constructive talks with the unions over changing the way that staff have to claim unsocial hours payments, to make it easier and fairer for staff to be paid this allowance. We hope to have more news for you on this shortly.



Ian Lawrence, General Secretary Napo

Ben Priestley, National Officer UNISON

George Georgiou, National Officer GMB/SCOOP

GMB/SCOOP BULLETIN March 2025



Posted on: 25 March 2025

Welcome to New Members

Welcome to you if have recently joined the union. Thank you for your commitment to the work we are doing to safeguard the interests of our members and the Probation Service.

National Representative Hand Over

We have yet to fix the date for the handover of the National Representative role to Jan Marlow. We will of course let you know as soon it is fixed.

Joint Trade Union Operation Protect Meeting

The joint union side will be holding a webinar for all union members on 3rd April 2025 between 12:30 and 1:30 to discuss the current capacity crisis and workforce shortage in Probation. To join simply use the link below.

Joint Union Meeting Thursday 3rd April 2025 12:30 to 1:30

Probation Capacity Meeting

You will have seen from previous joint union communications that we are working with the employers to reduce the workload of all members of the Probation Service. We are acutely aware that there is a long way to go to get the workload and staffing resource matched and that it is important to break down examination of the workload by grade and role so that we do not simply replicate the WMT and so we can look at the work of all staff and not simply those who carry a caseload.

Pay Talks



We are shortly going to commence the next round of pay talks. We have previously circulated the joint union pay claim which is the amalgamation of the demands of the three recognised unions. However, any further evidence or asks that you want to send will help in our arguing the case. Anything received will be treated with confidence.

Personal Support

Over the last three years I have supported a considerable number of members either in formal processes or through informal support. I have kept information on those cases as sometimes members have returned at a later date to either continue a process or for something new but related. What I have in my files will be known to the individual members as it is information you have sent me yourself, draft letters or documents and a contact log so I can keep track of cases. I propose to delete the folders when I leave the National Representative role unless you ask me to return the documents to you, or to forward the information on to Jan.

Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

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GMB/SCOOP Bulletin – January 2025



Posted on: 29 January 2025

Dear Member, please find here link to the latest GMB/SCOOP bulletin update.

[scoop-bulletin-jan-2.pdf](#)

Probation Pay Claim 2025



Posted on: 17 January 2025

Dear Member, please find here details of the Probation Pay Claim 2025



GMB/SCOOP Bulletin January 2025



Posted on: 6 January 2025

This Bulletin

This bulletin will reference a number of activities that are being undertaken at the beginning of the year. You will be sent a series of emails from me.

GMB SCOOP National Representative Role.

You will shortly receive an extraordinary bulletin asking for nominations for the National Representative role and the selection process that we will follow. I have enjoyed the role immensely and hope I have made a difference to the members that I have supported and to the standing of the union, but I feel it is now time to move on to another role and to facilitate a smooth handover.

Sentencing Review

Thank you to all those who contributed to the Sentencing Review submission. The submission is undertaken by completing an online questionnaire. I have compiled our submission into a single document that will be circulated to all members. It is possible for individual members to make their own submission via the portal. A link to the page is here: [Independent Sentencing Review 2024 to 2025: Call for Evidence – Page 1 of 5 – Ministry of Justice – Citizen Space](#)

The deadline for submissions is 9th January 2025.

Review of all Job Descriptions.

The unions will shortly work with the employers to prioritise the job descriptions that need reviewing to fulfil the employer's commitment to have undertaken a review of all job descriptions following unification. Whilst GMB/SCOOP has collective bargaining rights for those in Bands A to D, I am also able to represent members of all grades and am actively supporting a number of members who believe that their current roles are not accurately described or were promised a review of their Job description which have yet to occur. The roles that we are looking at are:

- SOSM or Deputy head of PDU



- Head of Corporate Services
- Head of Extremism
- Health and Justice Partnership Manager
- Head of Service

If you believe that your role needs urgently reviewing, that your current Job Description is not fit for purpose or there is an element of your work that is not accurately represented please let me know and I will add it to the list.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all members a peaceful and Happy New Year and thank all our colleagues who were on duty over the Christmas period.

Peter Brandt

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GMB/SCOOP Bulletin December 2024



Posted on: 2 December 2024

Welcome to new members.

As ever, for some members this will be their first bulletin. Thank you to all members who have recommended GMB/SCOOP to their colleagues. It is a testament to you all that the union continues to grow month on month.

Sentencing Review

I remind you that we have two webinars set up for you to have your say on the representation that you wish GMB/SCOOP to make on your behalf regarding the forthcoming sentencing review. The sessions



can be joined via the links below.

[GMB SCOOP Sentencing Review Webinar 2-12-2024 at 10:00am](#)

[GMB SCOOP Sentencing Review Webinar 9-12-2024 at 3:00pm](#)

GMB SCOOP National Representative Role.

It has been confirmed that the funding for the role of GMB/SCOOP National Representative has been agreed for the year 2025/26.

In March 2025 I will have been in the role for 3 years. There is no defined time limit to the role but for me I think 3 years is about right. Therefore it is my intention to return to my region in 2025 (subject to ongoing negotiation with the region) and I am now canvassing for a replacement for me.

The post is a full-time secondment. It is interesting and at times demanding. Two main features of the role are recruitment and representation and there a number of forthcoming issues that will need to be addressed during 2025 including:

- Submission to the Sentencing Review and the management of any proposals arising from it.
- Pay negotiations.
- Review of all roles as part of the Job Evaluation process.

The person who replaces me will have the opportunity to contribute to those processes.

The post also involves

- Maintaining the GMB/SCOOP membership database
- Responding to Annex As
- Supporting individuals
- Lodging disputes
- Attending meetings with the employer and ministers on a vast range of subjects
- Working with the other recognised Trade Unions.



I cannot recommend this role enough. It is extremely interesting and puts you right at the heart of defining and delivering the Probation service and defending the terms and conditions of your colleagues. It is a chance to do something different and play a pivotal role in the development of the service and an important part in supporting colleagues.

It is a unique position; it allows for flexible and autonomous working and affords the chance to undertake some very rewarding work. Whilst there is some travel required most work is undertaken online.

At all times you will be supported by a full time GMB National Officer.

If you are interested in this role please contact me for a confidential informal conversation.

In the event that there is more than one person interested an indicative ballot will be run.

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GMB/SCOOP Bulletin November 2024



Posted on: 11 November 2024

Dear Colleague

Welcome To New Members.

For some of you this will be the first time you have received a bulletin. If so, welcome to GMB/SCOOP.

Pay Claim

The Employers have advised us that they will have to wait for the details of the forthcoming spending review before they can commence detailed negotiations with us on pay. However we are keen to press ahead with our claim and are currently working with NAPO and Unison to build a joint claim for all Probation Staff.



Meeting with the Minister

The three probation unions met with Lord Timpson, the Minister of State for Prisons, Probation and Reducing Reoffending, at the beginning of the month. We had an open, frank conversation about the pressures faced by the Probation Service. We were clear that the service, like the Prison Service, is facing unprecedented pressure that affects staff and we want similar levels of urgency brought to bear to address this – pay and workloads in particular. We were also clear that whilst we thank him and his colleagues for bringing forward the October pay revalorisation, we cannot wait for long before we see the next rise in pay.

We also pointed out that the Probation Service is in the unique place of offering reasoned professional advice to courts to promote the use of community disposals thus turning down the flow of people into Prison and relieving the pressure on the system.

He said he was very keen to work with the unions to look at in part how technology can be used to free up time for Probation Staff to work with those we supervise face to face and that he'd like to have more meetings with us in the near future.

Bail Information Service Dispute

The Unions have been in dispute with the employer over the Bail Information Service scheme. We all support the development of such a scheme and the role that Bail Information can play in reducing unnecessary remands to custody and keeping people engaged with their local connections in the community. The scheme originally envisaged employing approximately 150 staff in Prisons and the Community on Prison terms and conditions. We saw this as an attack of Probation terms and conditions and the fact that information provision to the Courts is an act enshrined in statute to the Probation Service.

During the dispute we have secured that approximately 100 jobs that were to be on Prison terms and conditions will now be on Probation terms and conditions. We continue to work with the employer regarding the outcome of the Dispute.

Probation Definition

In 2019 a definition over which roles in HMPPS were to be on Probation terms and conditions and which were to be on Prison terms and conditions was developed. This was never communicated with the Unions. It was discussed during a Dispute early this year. Since then, we have been actively engaged with the employer in redefining which roles are to be on Prison terms and conditions and which on Probation. This work is ongoing, but we see an essential part of the definition work and the Bail Information Service dispute as preserving the identity of the Probation Service

Personal Support



As ever, I am here to support members as they go through HR processes. The earlier I am involved the better we can prepare for the process. Please feel free to get in touch and we can always have an informal chat. A lot of issues can be resolved early at a low level to the member's satisfaction.

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GMB/SCOOP Bulletin October 2024



Posted on: 1 October 2024

Dear Colleague

Welcome To New Members.

Again, we have had new members join GMB SCOOP, welcome to the GMB and I hope you enjoy this month's bulletin. Please continue to spread the word about GMB/SCOOP membership and its benefits to your colleagues.

Pay Negotiations.

Thank you to all those who joined the calls to discuss what you would like to see in the pay claim. It is clear that we need to see significant improvement for those at the top of their pay scales and that the alphabetic grades, for whom GMB/SCOOP has recognition rights, must see an uplift that reduces the real terms pay cut that has been created over the last 14 years.

Napo and Unison received feedback from their members and then a joint Union claim will be constructed which may be circulated to members of all the unions.

Back Dated Pay Revalorisation

I have received questions about the backdating of the pay revalorisation and what the impact of the areas that are still under discussion will be. All staff whose pay was due to be revalorised on 1st October will have that implemented from 1st April 2024 and will receive the back pay due from that date. Some spinal points were not due to be revalorised on 1st October. An outstanding issue has under discussion relates to the definition of overtime and how it is implemented. We have sought clarification from the



employers about this and understand that the issue of the local PDU budget should not factor into whether the overtime is granted or not.

Change Is Constant.

We have come to the end of the formal stage of the OneHMPPS project, and I am particularly keen to hear from any members who feel that they have been negatively treated by the process or are not clear of their role or T&Cs in the new structure. We know that previous unification and harmonisation processes have left staff feeling that they are not clear about their employment position following the closure of the project.

Personal Support

As ever, I am here to support members as they go through HR processes. The earlier I am involved the better we can prepare for the process. Please feel free to get in touch and we can always have an informal chat. A lot of issues can be resolved early at a low level to the member's satisfaction.

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GMB/SCOOP News Bulletin



Posted on: 2 September 2024

Dear Colleague

Welcome to new members

Again, I'd like to welcome the new members for whom this is their first Bulletin. We have had several existing members retire and leave the service, but their ranks have been replaced by new members. Please continue to spread the word to colleagues about the benefits of being a GMB/SCOOP member.

Pay negotiations April 2025 onwards

The employers have advised that they would like to start to schedule these or at least to get some initial discussions underway.



Normally the Unions put forward a joint pay claim which triggers the discussions. Both Napo and Unison have conferences in the Autumn where they will determine what they would like in the claim. We don't have a conference or a pay committee so I have established a series of calls that members can join to discuss what we want in it. The dates are: -

GMB Pay Claim Discussion Tuesday 10th September 12:00 to 1:00

GMB Pay Claim Discussion Thursday 19th September 12:00 to 1:00

GMB Pay Claim Discussion Wednesday 25th September 12:00 to 1:00

Please save a time slot and click on any of the links to join.

I would like to know what you would like to see in a pay claim. A percentage pay rise? What other pay related issues would you like to see included. For example:

- Bands A to D are currently excluded from claiming overtime, should we ask to this to change?
- What action would you like to see for those at the top of their scales?
- What is your view on Market Forces supplements or geographical allowances?
- Are there any other allowances that need reviewing?

If you are unable to join, but have a view, you can always contact me directly for a chat or send me an email. I look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Brandt **National GMB/SCOOP Representative**

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Manchester Rally, Far Right Riots, Minimum Service Levels



Posted on: 7 August 2024

Dear Colleagues,



Please click link below to read this bulletin.

[gmb-scoop-bulletin-06.08.2024.docx](#)

GMB/SCOOP BULLETIN July 2024



Posted on: 5 July 2024

Dear Colleague

Welcome

Firstly, Welcome to new members. It's good to see more people electing to join the union.

Indicative Ballots

We recently held indicative ballots to ascertain your views on a number of issues. The ballot has closed, the turnout across SCOOP was 28% and the results are as below.

- Would you be prepared to take action, **up to but not including strike action**, over the refusal to reopen the Pay deal? – **Yes 83%**
- Would you be prepared to take action, **up to and including strike action**, over the refusal to reopen the Pay deal? – **Yes 47%**
- Would you be prepared to take action, **up to but not including strike action**, over the lack of meaningful reductions in workloads for all staff? – **Yes 74%**
- Would you be prepared to take action, **up to and including strike action**, over the lack of meaningful reductions in workloads for all staff? – **Yes 42%**
- Would you be prepared to take action, **up to but not including strike action**, over the disbanding of the DSOU? – **Yes 51%**
- Would you be prepared to take action, **up to and including strike action**, over the disbanding of the DSOU? – **Yes 17%**



NAPO and Unison have not yet published the results of their indicative ballots. Once they do, we will consider where we have a consensus and what the next steps will be and what GMB SCOOP will do. However given the low turnout of our ballot it is unlikely that SCOOP will pursue this matter any further.

Probation Reset, ECSL and HDC4

Over the last few months, we have seen substantial changes to the work required of staff as a result of the Reset initiatives, ECSL and HDC4.

I would be grateful for any feedback on the net result of these changes. We know that the initiatives impact staff grades differently, so any reduction of the reset is not necessarily going to compensate for the additional work brought about through the early release initiatives. Most notably the only clear measures that exist for the organisation are through the Workload Measurement Tool against those who hold cases. We do need measures for our grades of staff.

We do get presented with data but any that you have that you can share would help build a picture of the compound effect of all the changes.

Meeting with the Lord Chancellor

The unions were recently offered, at his request, the opportunity to meet with the Lord Chancellor. However the meeting could not be fitted into his schedule and did not take place. We anticipate that we will be re-offered a chance to meet with the Lord Chancellor in the near future – whoever it may be!

The identity of the Probation Service

The OneHMPPS project continues and we are working hard to maintain the vision that this is restricted to a restructure of the HQ function and not a merger of the Prison and Probation services into a single entity. One example of where we are doing this is challenging the creation of the Bail Information Scheme which was originally going to be staffed by people on Prison Terms and Conditions. We believe that the provision of information to the Courts is a role that is restricted to the Probation Service in legislation and so are taking steps to ensure that it remains so. We are also working with the Employer to address and sharpen the definition of the Probation Service in order to protect it when generating new roles and Job descriptions.

Informal advice

As the national SCOOP representative I am often contacted by members seeking advice. I welcome this and happy to discuss any issue faced by a member and offer information, advice and guidance. Members have found it helpful to look at their position from a different perspective and examine possible employer responses and outline a way forward.



This could include how to undertake a formal HR process or simply to let the matter rest. The feedback I get is that these conversations are helpful. I am also able to use anonymised examples, with the members permission, to see if issues are predominantly local or if there is a national issue that needs to be drawn to the employer's attention. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like a conversation.

Peter Brandt **National GMB/SCOOP Representative**

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GMB/SCOOP Bulletin May 2024



Posted on: 8 May 2024

EXTRAORDINARY GMB/SCOOP BULLETIN

This bulletin accompanies the press release that was published earlier today on the GMB website.

The release can be found by following the link below:

[Latest News | GMB Union](#)

The text of the press release is reproduced below:

A prisoner release scheme which could see many inmates released months early has been branded 'shambolic'

From 23 May, certain prisoners across 84 jails in England and Wales will be eligible for early release – up to 70 days prior to the end of their sentence.

The scheme is an extension of the End of Custody Supervised License (ECSL) which was launched last year to ease the capacity crisis which has seen the prison population soar to nearly 88,000.

GMB Union and the Senior and Chief Officers of Probation (SCOOP) have long criticised the scheme.

George Georgiou, GMB National Officer representing SCOOP, said:

"This is nothing but short-term thinking from the Government."



"We have repeatedly pointed out if you are going to put more people in prison for longer you will need more prisons – otherwise when the prisons get full you will have to release prisoners into the community and there simply aren't enough Probation Staff to supervise them.

"We have a workforce crisis in probation with ridiculously high vacancy rates, staff shortages and pay not keeping up with inflation.

"This shambolic ECSL scheme is an unmitigated failure and has not only been extended without Parliamentary scrutiny but represents an increasing risk to public safety."

It speaks for itself. The ever increasing attention on the prison overcrowding position and the additional work that is being passed on to our already over stretched staff is not tenable. The risks posed to the public by people being released 10 weeks early from their custodial sentence is increasing.

We have asked for worked examples of what sentences will actually be served in custody and those have not yet been supplied to us.

The model of releasing people early through ECSL has not been able to address the rising prison population and so there is no evidence that this new extension to the scheme will do anything but push the problem down the road for a few weeks forcing already overstretched Probation to staff to pick up the pieces.

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GMB/SCOOP BULLETIN April 2024



Posted on: 29 April 2024

Candidate's Election for the GMB Central Executive Council Elections 2024.

You should have received your voting pack from Civica. Please remember to read the candidate statement and cast your vote.

Operation Protect.

We will be holding our next Joint Union update about Operation Protect on Tuesday 30th April at 1:00pm. Below is the link to join.



We will update members on where we have got to and next steps.

Rally in Sheffield 17th May 2024

The 3 Probation unions are holding a rally in Sheffield on Friday 17th May as part of the ongoing Operation Protect Campaign. The event will be held between 12:00 and 2:00 outside Sheffield City Hall – S1 2JA. Please come along in your lunch time to support us. Ask me if you need more details.

Membership Cleanse.

I am still receiving confirmation of members roles and contact details. It is important that if you have not yet confirmed your membership to me that you do so urgently. GMB is made up of autonomous geographical regions that do not align with probation regions. I am also working with GMB to ensure that your local region has your correct details. It is possible that members have moved within a Probation Area but this would entail a move between branches. It is also possible that some members have a work address in one area which is different to the GMB region in which they live.

Meetings.

We recently met with Amy Rees and Phil Copple to discuss pay issues, the Probation reset measures, workload, the application of the sickness policy and the very high levels of sickness due to stress and anxiety. I shall keep you informed as the talks progress.

OneHMPPS.

The One HMPPS project continues and the Unions continue to have concerns about both the project as a whole and the measures which are being applied to staff during the transition. If you have been negatively affected by them please contact me.

Individual cases support.

It is of note that my work in supporting members has increased over the last 12 months. A recurring theme is the rigid application or misapplication of policy which causes considerable distress to the individual, and when challenged often results in the challenges being upheld. I have spoken to several people who have found this process very distressing and it has led to a loss of confidence in the organisation being able to manage them fairly and with the procedural justice that they would expect.

If you are in a similar position please feel free to contact me for support, and if you are managing an HR process please look to use the policies and discretion that are open to you to support our staff.

Job Evaluation appeals.



We have a number of applications in process to have roles re-evaluated. There is a lot of work being undertaken in this area at the moment. If you feel that your role is not at the correct band or grade please contact me to discuss.

Personal

This April sees me starting my third year secondment to the National Representative role. When I applied for it I had no definite end date in sight, nor do I know what I will do next. I intend to use this year, in part, to fully define the role from my experience with a view to handing over at some point in 2025, subject to the HMPPS confirming that the role will be funded again in 2025 to 2026. There is no indication that it will not be funded.

If taking on the National Representative role is something that you'd be interested in please feel free to contact me for an informal chat.

Peter Brandt **National GMB/SCOOP Representative**

peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk 01935 316 090 – Mobile number 07526 998740

Re-Open The Pay Award!



Posted on: 17 April 2024

Dear Member,

Please click the below link to read the latest Probation Service Joint TU bulletin:

[jtu-28-2024-re-open-the-pay-award.pdf](#)

Model Letter To MPs



Posted on: 20 March 2024

.....MP

(via email)



POSTAL ADDRESS

(to include to ensure MP knows you're in their constituency or you will not get a response)

Date:.....

Dear.....

Probation Workload Crisis

I work as a..... for the Probation Service and live in your constituency. I am writing to raise my concern over the workload crisis which is affecting my colleagues and I at work.

In 2014, the government split up a successful Probation Service run by 35 Probation Trusts; privatised half of it and centralised the rest as part of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ). This was called Transforming Rehabilitation, and it was a total disaster.

10 years on, Probation continues to suffer the fallout from these botched reforms. Staffing shortages – the result of private sector downsizing and MOJ salary cuts – remain in many probation functions. These are made worse as experienced staff leave due to burnout and new inexperienced staff get thrown in at the deep end without proper supervision because of managerial overload.

The Probation unions, Napo, UNISON and GMB/SCOOP launched their 'Operation Protect' workloads campaign last year and have been trying to work with the MOJ on a strategic workload reduction programme. Earlier this year talks produced some potentially promising proposals to scale back non-essential probation work as part of the Criminal Justice Bill now before Parliament.

However, just when we thought we were making progress, the latest government knee-jerk reaction to the prison capacity crisis has heaped yet more unplanned and un-resourced work on probation staff like me. The announcement on 11 March that the prison early release scheme would see prisoners released 35 days before the end of their sentence has thrown all the unions' careful work up in the air.

The additional work heaped on the Probation Service by the latest change to the early release scheme was not planned or catered for in any way by HMPPS. When Prison fails, probation staff are instructed to pick up the pieces with no thought to our capacity, the safety of those we supervise or community safety.

I come to work every day to give my best to people on probation and to victims. My colleagues and I want to protect the wider community from harm, but excessive workloads and poor handling of the prison numbers crisis are hampering everything we do.

(Please insert your own experiences of your workload here)



I would like to ask you to raise my concerns with the Secretary of State for Justice and ask him to do more to tackle the workloads crisis in Probation and to stop making undeliverable demands on probation in response to the prison capacity crisis. If you would like further information, then you can contact at my union.

(If you would be happy to meet your MP in person then please add this here)

I look forward to hearing from you/meet you to discuss in more detail (*amend as*)

Yours sincerely,

GMB/SCOOP Bulletin Feb 24



Posted on: 27 February 2024

New members.

Our membership continues to rise and I welcome those who have joined the union since the beginning of the year. We try to send out bulletins about once per month updating members about what has been going on.

Retiring members.

Many long serving Probation staff have indicated that they will be retiring at some point this year. I wish them all the very best for the future and thank them for their work in the Probation Service during their careers. Our work is often unsung but each and every one of us contributes to keeping people safe from harm and making our communities safer.

Membership Cleanse.

I have sent out a specific bulletin asking members to confirm to me their role and their preferred contact method. If you have not yet replied to me, or if you have not received an email from me thanking you for your reply please do so in order for me to ensure the membership list up to date.

Also if you know of a colleague who has joined GMB and does not receive this bulletin please ask them to email me so I can update the list.

Meetings.



In January we had a meeting with Edward Argar MP, Minister for Prisons, Parole and Probation, where we briefed him about our concerns about pay, workloads and the OneHMPPS project. He appeared to be receptive to what we had to say and asked for regular meetings going forward.

We also had an away day with Amy Rees and other senior leaders in the Probation Service and again were able to put forward our requests and concerns and subsequently we have had further meetings looking to further discuss various points raised.

OneHMPPS.

The OneHMPPS Project continues. Our concern is that the identity of the Probation Service will be subsumed by that of the Civil Service and the Prison Service. The restructure will mean that roles will be defined as coming under Prison Service terms and Conditions rather than Probation Service terms and conditions. An essential part of the work we are undertaking is to review the tight definition of what constitutes a Probation Service role. If members have any examples of roles that they feel should be Probation Service T&Cs but are being created, using, or moved to, Prison Service T&Cs please let me know asap so that we can challenge them.

Operation Protect.

On Friday 23rd February 2024 we held our second joint union membership webinar where we discussed Operation Protect. It was well attended, though for some, I know the invitation came at an inconvenient time. The items that we covered were as follows:

- Pay
- Workload Data
- Mitigation of Excessive Workload
- Unpaid Work Supervisor / Group Ratio
- Workload Measurement Tool Extension
- PO/PSO/PQiP Role Boundaries
- Workload Caps
- Span Of Control

We also listened to testimony of staff of all grades about their workloads and the stress it causes.



If you were not able to attend and want to catch up with me please let me know and I can either have an individual call with you or arrange a GMB webinar for members to come together.

Individual cases support.

We have been successful in supporting a number of members who have either been subject to an HR Process or witness to one. Each of the members has had an opportunity to work with us to establish their position, what their desired outcome is and to rehearse how they want to approach the meetings. What is clear is the earlier we can support members the quicker we can identify a route to resolution and give them confidence in their position. I clearly cannot go into any greater detail here but would urge all members to consider getting in touch should they have any concerns.

Job Evaluation appeals.

The unions were successful in a joint appeal for the grading of the VLOs. Our VLO members were satisfied with the outcome. We continue to seek to set the appropriate date from which the regrade will be paid.

We also have two other groups of members who are seeking to have their role grading reviewed. Those are the Deputy Heads of PDUs and Heads of Corporate Services. We will continue to support any member who believes that their role is not correctly graded or was appointed to a role using a proxy Job description with the promise that it would be reviewed in the future.

Peter Brandt **National GMB/SCOOP Representative**

peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk 01935 316 090 **Mobile number:** 07526 998740

ONE HMPPS DISPUTE – UNIONS SECURE IMPORTANT CONCESSIONS



Posted on: 18 December 2023

Introduction and background:

Napo, UNISON and GMB/SCOOP decided to enter a formal dispute on the One HMPPS programme on 4th October 2023. This was due to a combination of developments as set out below and followed earlier notice by way of a Pre-Dispute letter to senior Probation Management.

The unions lodged this dispute in line with the established Probation Service National Disputes Resolution Procedures. This was in respect of differences relating to the introduction, roll-out and overall inadequate arrangements for the consultation machinery used for One HMPPS.



It was our collective view that One HMPPS represents a significant change programme, with the potential to have a very real impact on our member's Terms and Conditions if the programme goes ahead within the proposed design model.

We had also concluded that the new layer of management being established via the creation of the Area Executive Directors would result in unnecessary bureaucratic control over the Regional Probation Directors. This has raised significant alarms bells because of the impact it will have on the Probation Service and specifically the detrimental consequence for probation's identity within a prison centric initiative.

Grounds for the dispute:

This centred on seven principle areas:

1. Failure of the employer to offer a One HMPPS Implementation Agreement
2. The lack of meaningful engagement through the use of Annex A's
3. The impact on the existing collective bargaining machinery
4. The consequences of One HMPPS for the jointly owned Probation Job Evaluation Scheme
5. The refusal failure by the employer to agree a pause on One HMPPS
6. The threat to the integrity of the Probation Profession.
7. The absence of an Equality Impact Assessment

Failure of the employer to offer a One HMPPS Implementation Agreement

The unions had repeatedly asked for an Implementation Agreement to ensure the protection of our members terms and conditions and to provide assurances on our specific collective bargaining arrangements within One HMPPS. Up to the meeting of the Disputes Panel this had been refused by the employer.

The lack of meaningful engagement through the use of Annex A's

The Probation Trade Unions have maintained from the outset that the use of Annex A's is not sufficient to allow for meaningful consultation without an overarching Implementation Agreement to support the consultation process. We demanded a review of this system so that we could be confident that the operational changes resulting from the One HMPPS Programme will be enacted in a way that provides



cast iron assurances to our respective individual members, as well as the necessary safeguards for the Probation Unions ability to challenge future developments.

The impact on the existing collective bargaining machinery

The Probation Trade Unions stated that so far, we had not been given the required reassurances that the introduction of the Area Model would not result in the undermining of the established collective bargaining machinery for the Probation Service.

The consequences of One HMPPS for the Job Evaluation Scheme

The Probation Job Evaluation Scheme is a nationally agreed collective agreement between the Probation Service and the Probation Trade Unions. With the freedoms that were proposed under the One HMPPS programme for the Area Executive Directors in terms of recruitment and grading of staff, we believed that this provided the potential to undermine or circumvent this agreement.

The failure by the employer to agree a pause in the One HMPPS programme

The unions had sought a pause in the intended enactment date of One HMPPS, so that we could achieve better understanding of how the creation of another tier of senior management in the form of Area Executive Directors would in any way alleviate the enormous workload and staffing pressures being faced by our respective members.

The threat to the integrity of the Probation Profession

Feedback from our members since the announcement of One HMPPS suggested that to many, One HMPPS looked increasingly like a plan to subsume Probation into the Prison/MoJ-centric HMPPS meaning that it's unique identity will be lost forever. Our fears being substantiated by the trend which illustrates how Custody and Licence work is becoming the sole preserve of the Prison Service with Probation involvement being increasingly limited to supervision within the community and decreasing involvement with the overall client journey through the justice system.

Most importantly, we expressed our view that 'One HMPPS' represented a clear barrier to the trades unions joint campaign to see the Probation Service eventually moved out of HMPPS and restored to our communities.

The trade unions, having recently held a major discussion following the ground-breaking announcement by the Chief Inspector for an independent enquiry into the state of the Probation service, the explained that Probation needed to have the space to stabilise and recover post-reunification.

Under these circumstances, the trade unions believed that we were obliged to formally oppose the One HMPPS programme at the same time as seeking to protect our members interests, and continuing our



campaigns to see the service restored to a community based organisation with the requisite resources and authority to engage with partner stakeholders and providers to make a lasting impact in reducing reoffending, as opposed to Probation being treated as an adjunct to Prisons.

The absence of an Equality Impact Assessment

Throughout the discussions with HMPPS, the trade unions have regularly asked for sight of equality data showing how One HMPPS will impact on staff in terms of career opportunities that properly reflect the diverse composition of the workforce, or the potential to redress the lack of progress for staff within the protected characteristic groupings.

Dispute Panel Outcomes

The Disputes Panel eventually convened on 22nd November and their conclusions are reproduced in full below:

HM Prison & Probation Service

Kim Thornden-Edwards

Chief Probation Officer

Date: 24th November 2023

Jim Barton, Leeanne Plechowicz, Ben Cockburn, Neil Richardson, Peter Brandt and Giulia Matrigiani

Dear Jim, Leeanne, Ben, Neil and Peter and Giulia,

JTU51-2023 One HMPPS

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Chair of the One HMPPS Dispute Panel held on 22nd November 2023 in accordance with the Disputes Resolution procedure. I would firstly like to thank you for your attendance, the comprehensive case summaries you provided and the constructive spirit within which proceedings were conducted throughout.

NAPO, UNISON and GMB SCOOP, as the combined Probation Trade Unions (TUs), lodged a dispute on 4th October 2023 on the grounds set out below. The panel took both sides through the desired outcomes which were outlined in the TUs case summary.

i. Failure to Offer a One HMPPS Implementation Agreement



The panel acknowledge that a draft agreement had been shared with trade union colleagues who have expressed concerns about perceived omissions. The panel is of the view that rapid, joint work should now take place to reach agreement on content and specifically recommends:

1. A revised Implementation Agreement to be shared with the TUs before the end of December 2023 at the latest.
2. Document title to be changed from 'Approach' to 'Agreement'.
3. The Implementation Agreement to be explicit about the unaffected structures and processes e.g., the JNC, and the boundaries of the JES.
4. Agreement to include specific and explicit identification of where the AEDs and Chief Probation Officer sit in the JNC process and HMPPS governance.

ii. Lack of meaningful engagement through the use of Annex A's

The panel noted concerns related to transparency and the lack of meaningful consultation raised by Trade Unions. The panel noted that the programme's approach in using Annex A's as the mechanism for consultation is the correct approach, and that engagement had been extensive on the management side. The panel accepted that the volume and frequency of Annex A's has been significant and had at times felt uncoordinated and rushed with very short deadlines. The panel recognised the need for the opportunity to reflect on the contents of each of the Annex A's and their totality.

The panel recommends that the programme gives further consideration to a reduction of the burden on Trade Unions, which should specifically include:

1. Strategic oversight of Annex A's and/or batching into programmatic themes.
2. A 28-day minimum consultation for each Annex A.

iii. The Impact on the Existing Collective Bargaining Machinery

The panel noted the TU concerns and considered this element will be covered by the proposed revisions to the Implementation Agreement.

iv. Consequences of One HMPPS on the existing Probation Job Evaluation Scheme:

The panel acknowledged the issues outlined but considered this process was outside the scope of One HMPPS and therefore out of scope of this dispute. However, the panel recommend further work is



undertaken to further clarify the boundaries and to build transparency, to maintain the integrity of the national agreement. The business will work within existing procedures towards providing the necessary information on new job creations, their distribution and associated terms and conditions to address all queries.

v. Failure to Agree a Pause in the One HMPPS Programme

The panel recognised the reason for pace and the legitimacy of the deadlines, but we refer to the above proposal on Annex A's to allow sufficient time to reflect on the proposals. As a result, the panel is recommending that the programme is not paused.

vi. Threat to the Integrity of the Probation Profession

The feedback received from the Trade Unions made clear the perception that One HMPPS may erode the unique identity of Probation through being subsumed into the larger prison service. The panel acknowledges the trade unions' commitment to protecting member's interests and their vision for the future of the Probation Service, but also noted the counterview from Wales that the probation voice and influence has remained distinct and strong whilst operating as the precursor to the One HMPPS area model. Whilst this area is complex and tangible recommendations and actions are difficult, the panel is recommending that all parties work together to ensure a balanced narrative on community cases and pre and post release work. There should be an examination of any examples TU colleagues provide where the probation identity is not distinct in order to agree how to ensure future improvement and clarity on the nature of probation delivery and key community stakeholders.

vii. Absence of the Equality Impact Assessment

The Panel are content that the programme's approach was sufficient and robust as Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) have been submitted for each Annex A and will be updated iteratively.

If for any reason the above recommendations are unable to resolve the dispute, the next step will be ACAS conciliation. As you may be aware, conciliation is a process which is led by a neutral experienced resolution professional which can usefully assist both sides in finding a mutually agreeable resolution.

This process will allow both parties the opportunity for fresh discussion in this neutral forum. I will keep this final resolution until the dispute is then deemed closed. The attached link to the ACAS site provides further guidance: [Collective conciliation | Acas](#).

All parties agree that every professional endeavour should be made to resolve disputes within a reasonable timeframe. The expectation is that all disputes should be resolved within three months of the date of being raised. Should they not be resolved at this point the disputes resolution panel may agree to the dispute being classed as expired and a new dispute would need to be registered if the party who raised the original dispute still seeks resolution.



Yours sincerely

Kim Thornden-Edwards

Chief Probation Officer

HM Prison and Probation Service

Next Steps

Whilst the Probation Unions have not secured all of our objectives, it is clear from the foregoing that our representations have had a significant impact. The concession of an enforceable Implementation Agreement will provide the means to protect and promote your interests whilst we maintain our principled opposition to the One HMPPS programme that will do nothing to address the very real problems being faced by our members.

Further talks are scheduled with the employer to explore how the Dispute Panels findings can be implemented in full, and further communications to members will be issued at the earliest opportunity.

This outcome again illustrates the value of trade unions and the efforts that we make on behalf of our members.

Ian Lawrence

General Secretary, NAPO

Ben Priestly

National Officer, UNISON

George Georgiou

National Officer, GMB/SCOOP

December GMB/SCOOP Bulletin



Posted on: 8 December 2023

Welcome



Welcome to our new members It is good to see more colleagues joining the Union. Please continue to spread the word amongst colleagues.

This year in numbers (so far)

89 Annex As as part of the Business as Usual process were consulted on.

20 Annex As part of the One HMPPS Project were consulted on.

46 members received individual support

Meeting the Lord Chancellor

We met with the Lord Chancellor earlier this month and it was clear that he was interested to hear what we had to say about reforming Probation to reduce workloads. He was well informed about the pressures facing the Service both because of the existing workload and additional pressures that come about from the prison overcrowding situation. A joint statement will be agreed as result of that meeting and will be sent out shortly.

OneHMPPS Dispute

I represented GMB SCOOP members as part of the unions' side presenting to the OneHMPPS dispute panel. Once communication from that meeting has been agreed we will issue a further statement.

OneHMPPS restructure

GMB SCOOP has a number of members who have been placed in roles in Headquarters or other functions in the MoJ and are being impacted by the OneHMPPS project, or other restructures that are going on. Some members may feel they are being placed in a difficult position as they are unsure of how the process will impact on them. Please feel free to contact me in confidence if you are in such a position so we can raise the questions on your behalf, anonymously if you prefer.

Possible future governance models for the Probation Service

Thank you to all those who have responded to my request for suggestions or comments regarding the above. It is already clear that there will be no clear consensus on any one single model as across the countries the Probation Service operates with different local stakeholder governance structures such as traditional county boundaries, more localised unitary authorities, Metropolitan areas, Police Service boundaries etc. It is also clear that there are reservations about any governance structure that places the probation budget alongside any other bigger budget such as the Police and Crime Commissioners or Councils with both the potential to increase local spending powers whilst risking the autonomy of the



Probation Budget. GMB SCOOP members are in a unique and authoritative place to provide advice on any potential model and I welcome your ideas on any of the above.

Competency Based Framework

We have been presented with data and it is reassuring that nearly all staff who require a CBF document in place have one. It is not too late to do a quick check if one is in place for you and all eligible staff in your teams.

Diversity data

When presented with equality impact assessments on how various changes could impact on staff from any minority grouping there is always the caveat attached that it can only draw on data where colleagues have supplied it in SOP. For us to have as full a picture as possible of any potential disadvantages posed by a change it is helpful to have as much data as possible. We encourage members to complete as much of the diversity data as they feel comfortable sharing with the organisation.

You Asked/We did.

Working from the Office 60% of the time

We have raised this question as several GMB SCOOP members have working from home as their base or work remotely from the rest of their team and so attending any local office would not serve any purpose as far as meeting with their immediate colleagues more informally. It is clear that this initiative is a civil service wide target of 60% and for some staff that means all of the time in their place of work and others less than 60%. We have been assured that this directive will not override existing contractual terms nor require token attendance at a potentially overcrowded offices. If pressure is brought to bear on you we would encourage you initially to have a conversation with your line manager and if this does not resolve the matter satisfactorily please contact me.

Grievance Process

We continue to seek a change in the grievance process so that when a staff member is interviewed as a witness about a matter, they are at the very least informed when that matter is concluded so they are not left worrying that a further HR Process will be instigated against them.

Retaining Accrued Pay bands

We continue to press for a change in policy so that once a person has accrued a higher pay band whilst acting up, they return to that pay band if they are subsequently appointed to that role, especially following a return to their substantive role.



Pay review for members on legacy Terms and Conditions.

We continue to press the employer for a formal review of the pay of members who elected to stay on their legacy terms and conditions. We would like the time of this review, which should be annual, to be fixed and for the Unions to be involved in the review.

As this will probably be the last bulletin of the year I would like to wish you and yours a peaceful end to the year and hope that 2024 brings you all

happiness and peace.

Peter Brandt **National GMB/SCOOP Representative**

peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk 01935 316 090 ???? Mobile number 07526 998740

GMB/SCOOP News Bulletin



Posted on: 16 November 2023

Meeting the Lord Chancellor

On 13th November, we met with the Lord Chancellor, Alex Chalk MP, and discussed several issues including workloads, pay, OneHMPPS and Sex Offender Units. In particular we sought his support to reopen pay talks given the ongoing cost of living crisis and the relatively low pay award given to us last year.

On OneHMPPS we highlighted our concerns about the effect of the Probation Service being subsumed into the Prison Service and the consequences for our terms and conditions of service, bargaining machinery and the different nature of the Probation Service not being recognised by the Civil Service.

We will be presenting our case against the OneHMPPS Project to a Disputes Panel in the week commencing 20th November and we will update members after our case has been heard.

Probation Reset Meetings

Following the previous extraordinary GMB SCOOP Bulletin we received several suggestions to reduce workloads that we presented to employers. Thank you to everyone who submitted ideas. They really helped shape the narrative.



Some of our ideas would require legislative change and would therefore take a long time to bring about any measurable workload relief, but we believe they should be considered as part of defining the Probation Service as the delivery of rehabilitation in the community. Other policy changes could be implemented more speedily but would need clear organisational responsibility and not simply displace work by requiring additional business processes to be completed prior to ceasing other activity.

We will keep you advised.

Annex A process: Thanks for Your Support

I have previously advised that when the employer seeks to make a change the unions are formally consulted and give feedback via a form called the Annex A. We are receiving a lot of these at the moment related to what could be best described as Business As Usual processes. Many of them relate to the OneHMPPS restructure, others relate to Safer Working Practices, Attendance Management Policy, Community Payback Manual and MAPPA Disclosure.

The Annex As about OneHMPPS mostly relate to the movement or restructuring of the Directorates.

Where I can readily identify members who may have some interest in the Annex As I can share the documents, on an embargoed basis, so that you get a better understanding of how you want GMB/SCOOP to respond. Thank you to all the members who have contributed to the feedback process already. If you are aware, through your day-to-day activity, that there is going to be a change or refresh of a process please do not hesitate to get in touch so I can see if there are any live Annex As that you could contribute to or ask that an Annex A is created if applicable.

Local Meetings

Some areas have already started to hold their own local meetings to discuss matters that they feel need addressing. I am more than happy to assist you in setting up your own meetings. I am prohibited from sharing the membership list with other members, but there is nothing stopping members getting together themselves and forming a group. I can facilitate this by emailing out to all members in your region asking if they would like to form a local group. Some regions are looking at working together to provide support and advice to each other.

You Asked/We did.

Grievance Process

We continue to seek a change in the grievance process so that when a staff member is interviewed as a witness about a matter they are at the very least informed when that matter is concluded so they are not left worrying that a further HR Process will be instigated against them.



Retaining Accrued Pay Bands

We continue to press for a change in policy so that once a person has accrued a higher pay band during an act up period, they return to that pay band if they are subsequently appointed to that pay band having reverted to their substantive role.

Pay Review for Members on Legacy Terms and Conditions.

We continue to press the employer for a formal review of the pay of members who elected to stay on their legacy terms and conditions. We would like the time of this review, which should be annual, to be fixed and for the Unions to be involved in the review.

Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

Formal NNC Dispute On 'One HMPPS'

+

Posted on: 11 October 2023

JTU52-2023

Unions register formal NNC dispute on 'One HMPPS'

At last week’s engagement meeting with HMPPS management, the Probation trade unions announced that they would need to carefully reflect on the disappointing outcomes and the worrying lack of clarity that has emerged from the consultative process so far, and that we would be revisiting our position of a pre-dispute.

Since then, the unions have met and discussed a number of other concerns and have now decided to formally register a dispute under the NNC Dispute Resolution Procedures. This was submitted to the Head of HMPPS Employee Relations on the 4th October 2023.

Why are we in this position?

The unions have repeatedly asked for a Implementation Agreement to ensure the protection of our members terms and conditions and assurances on our specific collective bargaining arrangements. We have also asked for a pause in the implementation of 'One HMPPS' so that we can better understand how



the creation of another tier of senior management is supposed to help alleviate the enormous workload and staffing pressures being faced by our respective members.

Additionally, we have also pointed out that the recent call by the outgoing HM Inspector of Probation for an independent enquiry into the state of the Probation Service is a major development in our joint campaign to see the service eventually moved out of HMPPS and restored to our communities. We believe that 'One HMPPS' represents a clear barrier to this and that what Probation needs is time to stabilise and recover post-reunification.

Next steps

As we have pointed out in our detailed letter to senior probation management which elaborates on these and many other areas of disagreement, the fact that we are in formal dispute will not prevent us maintaining dialogue and trying to understand the huge amounts of information that is being sent to us, so we are not ending the engagement process.

In due course, a NNC Disputes Panel will meet to consider evidence from the Probation Trade Unions. Our aim here will be to do all we can to protect the interests of our members by securing high level commitments across a range of areas including future collective bargaining and career development for our members.

Meanwhile, the unions will maintain our principled opposition to 'One HMPPS' and step up our campaigning activities towards the key objective of seeing the Probation Service restored to our Communities and working with partners and stakeholders more effectively than will be possible within a prison-centric One HMPPS.

More news will be issued to members once we have finalised the necessary procedural aspects after having lodged the dispute.

Ian Lawrence – General Secretary Napo

Ben Priestley – National Officer UNISON

George Georgiou – National Officer GMB

GMB/SCOOP News Bulletin



Posted on: 11 October 2023



Welcome to new members!

Please continue to promote the Union to colleagues. It seems that I am a bit of a broken record, but again we have welcomed new members to the Union. More latterly these are coming through the recommendation of other members.

Local Meetings

We have several members who have offered to be links with the probation regions and I have had an initial meeting with a number of them to see how we can better engage to get member feedback on national issues, resolve local issues more quickly and map out which issues are considered local but are happening in more than one region. GDPR prevents me from sending out membership lists, however there is nothing at all to prevent members contacting each other and arranging your own meetings if you are happy to share your details.

GMB Political Fund Ballot

This year we will be running the all-member ballot for our Political Fund. Laws, introduced in the 1980s state we are required to renew the Political Fund every ten years.

The Political Fund is the union's campaign fund, it's what allows us to have a strong industrial and political voice and it allows our members to speak to politicians directly and have their voices heard at every level of politics.

The ballot will run from 11 October to 1 November, with the result announced on 6 November. As a union, we will be campaigning for a **YES vote**, to keep the Political Fund!

Workload Campaign "Operation Protect".

We have now held our second all union call to update members on the work of Operation Protect and it was well attended. All three unions are keen to promote that this is joint Union campaign to address workloads for all staff in the Probation Service especially as much focus is given to the Workload Measurement Tool which only accounts for a proportion of staff. Additionally, our concern is that as activity is promoted to address excessive workloads for one group of staff it can necessitate additional tasks for other grades of staff. Please consider how you can incorporate Yellow, the colour of the campaign, into your work in a professional way.

One HMPPS.

This month sees most of the AEDs take up their new roles. We are concerned that the drive to bring the Prison Service and the Probation Service together into one organisation will lead to a view that the Probation Service is effectively the aftercare part of the Prison Service. The Probation Service has a long



history of delivering sentences in the community and through the Unpaid Work scheme helping individuals make amends to their community.

CRC 6-month increment.

This continues to be a live issue for the ex CRC staff who may have missed being paid their 6 month incremental rise following appointment or regrading. If you feel this applies to you then we will have an update on the work undertaken and what you need to do coming shortly.

Individual support.

We have had some more cases resolved to the satisfaction of our members as we continue to advise and support them through HR Processes. I am here for a call at almost any time and will respond quickly if you need support. We can support individually and also see if an issue is occurring more widely and needs to be addressed on a national basis. A number of matters can be talked through and resolved quickly at a local level.

You asked / we did!

Dress Code

Last month I told you that we were challenging the Dress Code requirements for Probation staff and this month I can confirm that on 26th September it was announced that the Dress Code document was suspended with immediate effect.

Grievance Process

We continue to seek a change in the grievance process so that when a staff member is interviewed as a witness about a matter they are at the very least informed when that matter is concluded so they are not left worrying that a further HR Process will be instigated against them.

Retaining Accrued Pay bands

We continue to press for a change in policy so that once a person has accrued a higher pay band during an act up period, they return to that pay band if they are subsequently appointed to that pay band having reverted to their substantive role.

Pay review for members on legacy Terms and Conditions.

We continue to press the employer for a formal review of the pay of members who elected to stay on their legacy terms and conditions. We would like the time of this review, which should be annual, to be fixed and for the Unions to be involved in the review.



Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

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01935 316 090 Mobile number 07526 998740

Joint Trade Unions Member Bulletin



Posted on: 30 August 2023



22 August 2023

JOINT UNION BULLETIN ON GEOGRAPHICAL SUPPLEMENTS

As part of the three year pay award starting in 2022, the employer insisted on removing local market pay supplements, or known as Market Forces Supplements, that were in place for certain grades in some areas. The Probation unions warned this was a bad idea that would exacerbate the already high staff shortages in those areas and, not surprisingly, this is exactly what has happened.

As we could see the impact of the loss of market pay supplements on members and the worsening crisis, Napo, UNISON and GMB/Scoop, submitted a claim earlier this year for pay supplements. The claim covers all Probation Service staff working in Kent, Buckinghamshire (including Milton Keynes), Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Essex, Hampshire / Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Suffolk, Surrey, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

We know how huge increases in the cost of living, with wages that have nowhere near come close to keeping up, have caused a big impact on Probation staff's living standards.

We have been pleased that the employer has accepted that there is a real issue and has responded positively, in principle, to our claim, although we obviously share our members frustration on the progress being made towards remedial action.

We all accept that high living costs and staff shortage 'hot spots' occur in other parts of the country. We are working with the employer to progress our claim and will provide further evidence as it develops which suggests that additional areas should be considered for receipt of geographical supplements.

As part of the response to our claim, the Probation Service has agreed to set up regional meetings with the unions to hear the views of staff to examine the case for these. We will keep members updated as this work progresses.



Ian Lawrence
General Secretary
Napo



Ben Priestley
National Officer
UNISON



George Georgiou
National Officer
GMB/SCOOP

Joint Trade Union Member Bulletin

GMB/SCOOP – NEWS BULLETIN



Posted on: 12 June 2023

Welcome to new members



Once again we have new members joining the union. Welcome to all those who have recently joined.

Membership list refresh.

I have received several emails with confirmation of details and additional email addresses. If you have not yet returned your confirmation, please do so. In July I will build the new mailing list from those who have confirmed their details.

If you do not, you will continue to be a member of GMB, but I will remove you from the mailing list. I am happy for you to simply reply that there has been no change and I will update the list accordingly. If you cannot find your membership number I can send you the one I have on file for you.

Programmes Restructure and potential consequences for Sentence Management.

We continue to work with Napo and UNISON over the Programmes restructure, especially at the moment, the single facilitator role. We are concerned that when such a change in colleagues' terms and conditions is proposed that all the activities currently undertaken are included in the Job Description. We also remain deeply concerned at the lack of specialist provision for working with those individuals convicted of sexual offences that will occur after the restructure.

One HMPPSVoluntary early Departure scheme

The scheme has been launched for colleagues who currently work in HQ. A number of members have raised question about their own circumstances. My advice to date has been that if you are interested in leaving the organisation under this scheme then you must put in an expression of interest. There will be a sift based on eligibility which may later preclude your departure, but unless you do express an interest you will not progress to the next stage. An expression of interest is not a binding commitment to leave the organisation and should not impact on your future career should you decide not to leave. Remember the closing deadline is 2359hrs on 26 June 2023.

Workload Campaign "Operation Protect".

As I have previously mentioned the three unions are working on a joint Workload campaign called Operation Protect. There will be a subsequent extraordinary bulletin when we launch the campaign on 26th June, the 2nd anniversary of the unification of the Probation Service.

There will be a number of ways to take part in the campaign and support all our colleagues whatever their role is.

Harmonisation and secondary Transfer



We have a diminishing number of members who transferred into the HMPPS or MOJ, who may or may not have elected to opt onto the Probation Service terms and conditions, who have yet to land properly in their role and on the correct terms and conditions. We continue to talk to the employers about these members. If you are in such a position please do get in touch and we can take your case forward.

***You asked / we did* Salary on promotion after previous period of acting up**

A recent grievance raised by a member has shown an inconsistency in the way new appointees to higher grades are treated. It is possible to put a business case in to recognise a candidate's previous experience if they are a new appointee to the organisation, but if the person remains in the organisation and has previously held an acting up post it cannot, even if that is to match their previous pay band. We are seeking a policy change on this matter.

Peter Brandt **National GMB/SCOOP Representative** peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk 01935 316 090 Mobile number 07526 998740

GMB/SCOOP – NEWS BULLETIN



Posted on: 24 May 2023

Welcome to new members

I know I say it every month but again in this bulletin I can say we are welcoming new members. Please continue to spread the word about GMB/SCOOP and its associated benefits.

Local Meetings and building solidarity

I now have volunteers to be an immediate link in the following Probation Regions: Wales, Greater Manchester, West Midlands, East Midlands, East of England, South West and Kent Surrey & Sussex. If you would be interested in being a local contact in your region, please let me know. I am shortly to arrange a call for the local reps to get together. I will set up another round of local calls for each region for all members as well. But please don't wait for me to set up meetings. If you want to set your own up at a suitable time for you then please go ahead and I will come along.

Regional JCC

I have asked to be included in the invitation list for the regional JCCs and to get a copy of the minutes. I will not routinely attend but am more than happy to do so should you have any issues that you want raised at your regional JCC.



Programmes Restructure and potential consequences for Sentence Management.

We continue to have concerns about the location of work with people convicted of sexual offences and where that area of specialism would be held should the programmes restructure go ahead. We were able to attend most of the review workshops looking at how this cohort of people under our supervision, along with other cohorts who are vulnerable or have protected characteristics, be safely included in the proposed programme curriculum.

One HMPPS

This project is still progressing. We have fed back that the regional approach with devolved budgets has been tried before without success and therefore we question what will be different this time. We are concerned that we are currently hearing of different pilots across the regions and differing rates of pay for some roles. We believe that this model threatens our national collective bargaining arrangements.

Workload Campaign

In a bulletin at the end of last year I said that I wanted to start a campaign looking at workloads for all staff. Since then we have had a number of meetings with the senior leaders and the Minister where this matter has been raised. We continue to work on this matter acknowledging that there is no short term easy fix but we are concerned that on a daily basis our colleagues are being injured through excessive work demands, and the number of days lost to ill health appears to be rising.

Loss of experienced staff and early promotion

I am aware that whilst there is a narrative that we are recruiting high numbers of PQiPs, which is to be welcomed, there is a view that they are simply replacing experienced Probation Officers. We have been asked for examples where staff are being promoted to SPO roles very early in their career. Without prejudice to the individual staff members experience I would be grateful if you are aware of any cases. I do not wish to know individual's names just the region.

CBF

It has been raised with me that some staff have been asked to include reference to Targets in their CBF document. It has been confirmed that CBF should not be target related. CBF is purely for staff to demonstrate competence and progress through their points in their pay scale.

There are no objectives to set, it is backwards-looking, and the focus is on staff capturing competence examples from everyday tasks and activities rather than an aspirational level of performance. The outcome is a decision on annual pay progression through the pay points in their pay band

Short Videos



I have been asked to start to make short videos of 20 to 30 seconds in length. What subjects would you like to see covered in them?

You asked / we did

I was asked about the potential inclusion of Targets in the CBF document. I was able to raise that quickly with the CBF leads and the clarification is in this bulletin.

Peter Brandt National GMB/SCOOP Representative peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk Tel No:- 01935 316 090 Mobile:- 07526 998740

WHY WE OPPOSE 'ONE HMPPS'



Posted on: 3 April 2023

Attached to this bulletin you will find the full text of a letter which the three unions have sent this week to HMPPS setting out why we are so opposed to 'One HMPPS'. In summary we are against the proposals because:

- Probation does not need another change initiative
- Probation's identity and independence is weaker now in HMPPS than at any time post TR, and both will decline further if the One HMPPS proposals are implemented.
- The creation of 6 HMPPS Mega Regions in England will damage Probation relationships with local statutory partners, take probation further away from service users and ride roughshod over devolution of services to local democratic control.
- The proposal to create an Area Executive Director role for each Mega Region will create an expensive and unnecessary layer of civil service bureaucracy at a time when the front line is screaming for more resources.
- The priority for Probation, its service users, our members and communities is the future of Probation, not the future of HMPPS.

WHAT WE ARE CALLING FOR INSTEAD

Instead of bringing the Probation Service into scope of One HMPPS, we are asking HMPPS to:



- Decouple the review of the cost and function of HMPPS as a non-delivery, non-frontline agency from the future of the Probation Service.
- Reinvest the savings at HMPPS HQ in the Probation front line
- Retain and strengthen a standalone Probation function within HMPPS
- Reinstate the Director General Probation role
- Reinstate line management of Regional Probation Directors by the Chief Probation Officer
- Retain the current Probation Service Regional Structure
- Undertake a detailed demand management review of the work of probation to align function with available staffing capacity, including a review of the relevant legislation
- Guarantee the job security of all current Probation Service staff
- Review whether the existing Probation Service pay and conditions package is fit for purpose in light of the continued staffing crisis and failure to close the recruitment gap

UNIONS LODGE DISPUTE OVER UNSOCIAL HOURS PAYMENTS

The unions have lodged a dispute with the Probation Service on the following grounds:

- The current system for claiming unsocial hours for periods of annual leave is overly onerous on staff and the required management oversight and sign off does not subject the claims to any checks or safeguards.
- There is no basis for the employer re-claiming the annualised Un-Social Hours payment from UPW staff for the period of April 2022 to October 2022, as consequence of implementing the recent three year pay award. We had reached agreement with the employer that guaranteed that affected members would not suffer such deductions, which the employer has reneged upon.

We want a system which is easy for members to claim their unsocial hours. We will update members on the progress of the dispute.

UNIONS LODGE GEOGRAPHICAL SUPPLEMENT CLAIM



The unions have lodged a claim for geographical supplements to replace the market forces payments which were withdrawn by the Probation Service as part of the three-year pay award.

The claim is for the following:

- **The highest Geographical Supplement rate 1 – £4,045 per annum** in 2023, to be applied to all staff working in the counties which border Greater London. These are Berkshire, Buckinghamshire (including Milton Keynes), Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent and Surrey.
- **Geographical Supplement rate 2 – £1,910 per annum** in 2023, to be applied to all staff working in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Oxfordshire, Suffolk and Sussex.
- **Geographical Supplement rate 3 – £ 955 per annum** in 2023, to be applied to all staff working in Norfolk.

Geographical supplements apply to all staff in the geographical areas concerned, not just certain staff as was the case with the market forces payments.

JTU09 –2023

Jim Barton

Executive Director

HMPPS Change SRO

(By e-mail)

29 March 2023

Dear Jim,

One HMPPS

Thank you for your letter of 15 March concerning the above. The joint unions respond as follows. We do so in on the basis of the information given to us to date, and in the absence yet of any published business case for the One HMPPS proposals.

We are implacably opposed to the One HMPPS proposals for the following main reasons:



1. **Probation does not need another change initiative.** In 2014 the government embarked on the totally disastrous TR programme which, despite our warnings, was pursued to the point of near destruction of probation. Reunification in 2021 has not yet bedded in, and HMIP reports since that time have consistently told HMPPS leaders that the service is still on its knees. Probation needs a period of stability to put right the damage of TR, to resolve its workloads crisis and to get on with the day job.
2. **Probation's identity and independence is weaker now in HMPPS than at any time post TR, and both will decline further if the One HMPPS proposals are implemented.** TR began this process – successfully destroying the independent professional leadership of Probation by abolishing the role of Chief Probation Officer. This was followed by a creeping mission in NPS over recent years to remove key probation functions from probation line management. First Approved Premises and now Interventions have been taken out of the regional probation management line and redesignated as HQ Directorates.

More recently, the senior line management of Probation has been effectively dismantled in the last few months, presumably to lay the ground for One HMPPS. We can see this in the following developments and proposals:

1. The abolition of the separate DG Probation and DG Prison roles
2. The removal of the line management responsibility of the Chief Probation Officer for the Regional Probation Directors
3. The unilateral attempt at removal of the Chief Probation Officer as chair of the Joint Negotiating Committee
4. The demotion of Regional Probation Directors, as Regional leaders, under the proposed role of Area Executive Director

We objected to the abolition of the DG Probation, but to no avail. If One HMPPS goes ahead, there will in effect be no separate probation line management left at all. How would probation be able to assert its strategic and operational priorities under the One HMPPS model with no direct probation line management chain?

We also object to the proposed removal of the Chief Probation Officer as chair of the JNC. This action is not within the gift of HMPPS, as we set out below. We ask that you rescind this proposal immediately.



In the absence of any line management responsibilities for probation, or responsibility for leading for HMPPS at the JNC, it is unclear what impact or influence the diminished role of Chief Probation Officer will have within the proposed One HMPPS structure. We would be grateful if you could let us see the job description for the Chief Probation Officer going forward, as well as the original JD for the role when it was first established.

- 1. The creation of 6 HMPPS Mega Regions will damage Probation relationships with local statutory partners, take probation further away from service users and ride roughshod over devolution of services to local democratic control.** The proposal to compress the existing 11 Probation Regions and Wales, which are coherent in geographical and administrative terms, into 6 new HMPPS Mega Regions and Wales flies in the face of all logic. We can only assume that this is about saving money for HMPPS by cutting regional administrative and managerial roles and their costs from the probation budget. These roles are essential. As HMIP has pointed out, administrative and managerial staff are as much part of the front line as any other staff working in the Regions.

Probation is a local service which depends on close working relationships with statutory partners: local government, YOTS, police forces, courts and the health service. TR began the dismantling of local partnership working and local accountability, and it looks like One HMPPS aims to complete the mission. This will be a disaster for probation, its service users and the communities which rely on probation to keep them safe.

We will defer to Police and Crime Commissioners and elected Mayors in respect of their views of the Mega Region proposal, but how such huge regions facilitate the ability of local democratic leaders to influence the service is beyond us.

- 1. The proposal to create an Area Executive Director role for each Mega Region will create an expensive and unnecessary layer of civil service bureaucracy at a time when the front line is screaming for more resources.** What makes HMPPS think that these roles, which failed in previous reform attempts when they were called Regional Offender Managers (ROMS) and then later Directors of Offender Management (DOMS), are going to work this time? All the historical evidence tells you that this is a failed concept. If you have evidence to the contrary, we would be grateful if you could let us see it. We make the additional point that inserting another senior civil service managerial level will make it harder, rather than easier, to forge links with much more locally based statutory partners.



2. The priority for Probation, its service users, our members and communities is the future of Probation, not the future of HMPPS. We recognise that HMPPS is under pressure to justify its existence and must reinvent itself to save the MOJ money. As a non-delivery, non-frontline agency we understand that you are under pressure. However, we do not believe that the removal of an independent probation function is a price worth paying to keep some form of HMPPS afloat.

At a time when HMIP is regularly reporting the crisis in probation staffing and its impact on service delivery, the introspective work on One HMPPS is at best a distraction and at worst fiddling while Rome burns.

Here is just one recent example of what His Majesty's Chief Inspector for Probation said about the service in the recently published 'Offender Management in Custody – Post Release (**March 2023**):

Probation services face several challenges, including a significant shortage of staff. On average, probation regions have 30 per cent fewer practitioners than they require to carry out resettlement work with prison leavers. This situation is compounded by shortages of probation services officers and administrative staff. As a result, there is insufficient capacity to build relationships with prisoners before they are released, or to complete timely referrals for housing support.

In February 2023, following an inspection of the East Midlands Region, HM Chief Inspector wrote to the Regional Probation Director in the following terms:

There is acknowledgement that staffing levels (18 per cent vacancies, according to SOP data, although, as noted previously, the region disputes this figure) are not able to deliver a service to required expectations consistently. There is also an acknowledgement that this brings risks to the outcomes from regional service delivery.'

'The unease around the relationship between staffing levels and practice was shared by regional staff. Of those who responded to our survey, almost two thirds of them felt that the workload was unmanageable and only 12 per cent thought that staffing was sufficient.'

'Particular gaps in staffing, such as within the quality team (78 per cent vacancy rate) and unpaid work team (45 per cent vacancy rate), also had a negative impact on corresponding activity during our PDU inspections.'

We could go on, with many more HMIP examples, but if these warnings are being heard in high places, One HMPPS is not the right response.

Instead of putting time, energy and resources into the future of HMPPS, the government should be seeking to better address demand management and resourcing for the Probation Service. Our members are at breaking point over unsustainable workloads. We need action to address this to protect our both



our members and community safety. The money which is being spent to deliver One HMPPS would be better spent on the probation front line.

1. Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC)

In your letter you claim that One HMPPS: *'...will not change the existing JNC Framework and the collective bargaining agreements that are in place.'*

However, HMPPS has already decided to unilaterally change the JNC chairing arrangements without the agreement of the unions. The JNC constitution is very clear that the committee will be chaired by the HMPPS Executive Director of the Probation Service; the role which subsequently became the Chief Probation Officer.

Clause 14 of the JNC constitution sets out:

This constitution will be kept under review by both sides. Any changes can only be made by mutual agreement at JNC level.

We therefore expect the employer side chair to continue to be discharged by the Chief Probation Officer. Your proposals to remove the Chief Probation Officer as employer chair of the JNC further reinforces our strongly held belief that probation is being effectively written out of decision making and influence in One HMPPS.

1. An Alternative Vision to One HMPPS

As joint unions we warned that TR would not work. It went ahead. It failed. We warned that privatising AP double waking night cover would not work. It went ahead. It failed. We warned that OMIC would not work. It went ahead. It failed. There is a pattern here.

This is our warning that One HMPPS will not work for probation. If you go ahead with it, it will not work to turn probation's fortunes around. It may succeed in more limited terms to redefine the role/size of HMPPS and to justify its existence going forward, but there is nothing here to help probation, which is our priority.

So instead of bringing the Probation Service into scope of One HMPPS, we ask you to do the following please:

- Decouple your review of the cost and function of HMPPS as a non-delivery, non-frontline agency from the future of the Probation Service.



- Reinvest the savings you are being asked to make at HMPPS HQ in the Probation front line
- Retain and strengthen a standalone Probation function within HMPPS
- Reinstate the DG Probation role
- Reinstate line management of Regional Probation Directors by the Chief Probation Officer
- Retain the current Probation Service Regional Structure
- Undertake a detailed demand management review of the work of probation to align function with available staffing capacity, including a review of the relevant legislation
- Guarantee the job security of all current Probation Service staff
- Review whether the existing Probation Service pay and conditions package is fit for purpose in light of the continued staffing crisis and failure to close the recruitment gap

1. Information Requests

We have asked for the following information to enable us to better understand the One HMPPS proposals:

- Existing operating costs of the Probation Service
- Existing operating costs of the Prison Service
- Existing operating costs of HMPPS HQ
- Proposed operating costs of the Probation Service under One HMPPS
- Proposed operating costs of the Prison Service under One HMPPS
- Proposed operating costs of the HMPPS HQ under One HMPPS
- Cost of the One HMPPS re-organisation programme, with external management consultant costs identified separately
- Business case for One HMPPS



- One HMPPS risk register

The unions look forward to receiving this information, and to taking the matters raised in this letter forward in discussion with you and colleagues as a matter of urgency.

Your sincerely,

Ian Lawrence Ben Priestley George Georgiou

General Secretary National Officer National Officer

Napo UNISON GMB/SCOOP

Cc: Kim Thornden-Edwards, Chief Probation Officer

Francis Stuart, HMPPS Head of Employee Relations

GMB/SCOOP – News Bulletin



Posted on: 17 March 2023

Welcome to new members

And again, I would like to welcome new members who will be receiving this bulletin for the first time. Our membership is steadily growing, mostly through word of mouth from existing members. Please do talk to any of your colleagues who are not a member and promote the union.

Timing of Bulletins

You will no doubt notice that there is no fixed point in the month that I send these bulletins out. I try to get one prepared each month, but you will appreciate that in the ever changing world of probation there is always a new pressing issue or a matter that we are about to go into discussion about. I hope this timing is about right for you.

One HMPPS

The unions spent two days in Petty France discussing the One HMPPS project. This was not formal negotiation or consultation but a chance to talk about the proposals and for us to ask questions about



them. At this stage we are waiting for more information relating to questions that we asked and so I will not go into any specific details.

What is clear is that the One HMPPS project is one of a number of initiatives that are in progress at the moment which could affect our members in HMPPS. We are aware that the phrase “One HMPPS” has been used in connection with other programmes and are seeking clarity on the scope of the One HMPPS project.

Operation Safeguard update

Operation Safeguard itself appears to have had quite a low profile in the Probation Service as it relates to accommodating individuals in the Police cells for the first night.

However, when it was first raised in the context of prison overcrowding, it became clear that additional measures would be brought to bear on the reduction of the prison population. To date the initiatives that have been published are the review of the Executive release of recalled prisoners and the potential extension of the period of HDC from 4.5 month to 6 months. If the latter is approved by Parliament there will be an increase in requests for HDC assessments in June, July, and August, when the Probation Service is traditionally under pressure due to staff annual leave.

There will also be a pressure on Probation staff to secure accommodation for those individuals who do not have a suitable address to be discharged to. All of this is potentially uncoded and unresourced work. Please let me know of any issues that you find in your area that arise from these new requests.

Service reforms and potential consequences for Sentence Management.

You will see from a Joint union statement that we are continuing to engage, with but also resist, the proposed changes to the Programmes structure. What is apparent is that the HMPPS structure is extremely complex, no doubt prompting the One HMPPS project, with multiple departments and work streams. Of concern to us is that each project appears to have the ability to draw its own parameters and so existing work can either be omitted from a review or be moved else whereby default. The removal of the specialist staff who work with people convicted of sexual offences is a clear example of this. Experience tells me that this work invariably falls back to the sentence management teams, often with no additional resources.

You asked / we did:

- Stand by payments: We are continuing to raise the issue with the employers re standardised use and definitions of Standby.
- Vouchers for those on Tier 2 standby over Christmas. I have written to the RPDs asking that they consider giving vouchers to those staff who were on call over the Christmas



and new year period when the Approved Premises estate gave vouchers to their staff. Some have indicated that they have given vouchers and other have not. It is ultimately the RDPs decision whether to do so.

- Pensions. I was asked to provide more information to members about the Probation Pension scheme. I would strongly encourage all those who have yet to do so to register with the Greater Manchester Pension Fund www.gmpf.org.uk. They have a number of drop in sessions and provide a wealth of information. Please look there in the first instance and if you think there is anything more bespoke that you need let me know and I can ask them if there is anything that they can provide for Probation staff.
- Specific Job description for Deputy Heads of Service. I am working with a group of members who are currently working to the Senior Operational Support Manager (SOSM) job description and feel that this does not reflect their day to day activity. We will be working with HMPPS to get this reviewed. If any other members are in the Deputy Head of Service role would like to be included in the messages and consultation about this matter, please get in touch.

Kind Regards,

Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

GMB/SCOOP – NEWS BULLETIN



Posted on: 28 February 2023

Welcome to new members

Yet again I would like to welcome new members to the union. Please remember to talk to colleagues who are not a member of the Union and promote it to them. The more members we have the stronger our voice and the more I can represent the views of the senior leaders of Probation.

Hearing your voice.

I have now held a number of local meetings with groups of members and was at the senior leader's conference in Cardiff, where I have the chance to catch up with a few members. Next year I hope to hold a more formal meeting.



The key messages I am receiving relate to the volume of work that is expected of managers in the service and the real concerns about the loss of experienced staff from teams, with examples being given from all of the regions of teams with the majority of staff with less than 2 years' experience and the numbers of PQiPs in each team without the experienced staff to provide the support and mentoring that they require.

I am also hearing of the stress caused to members and their staff about the fear that they have on a daily basis that they have missed some key action relating to either a staff member or person under supervision or a change in practice or policy and that this will be discovered by a subsequent investigation.

It was also good to hear colleagues feeling free to talk about their concerns and seeing other members talk to them about their own experiences and that they were able to support each other in that way. I would ask that we all remember to make time to have that call with colleagues to check out how they are. I know that being a senior leader can be quite a lonely experience dealing with complex confidential staffing issues and other colleagues have similarly expressed that feeling of aloneness.

Operation Safeguard update

We have received a couple of briefings about the use of Police cells as part of Operation Safeguard. It is clear that the pressure on parts of the prison estate is quite demanding and is unlikely to end in the short term.

It is likely, that as work is undertaken to either promote the use of community sentences or move through the prison estate, that work will increase for the Probation Service. We do not expect any pressure to be brought to bear on staff to do anything that could compromise public safety such as the imposition of a high level of threshold for the assessment whether to recall, a lack of scrutiny of HDC accommodation or reduction of level of risk in OASys to facilitate moves through the prison categorisation process. Phil Copple has given his assurance that public protection will remain paramount throughout and that no such pressure will occur.

Meetings

The unions held a second meeting with the Minister, Damian Hinds, where we repeated our concerns about the number of change activities that are being undertaken at the moment and the need to maintain stability and the desire to work with the employer to seek resolution to the very complex problem facing the Probation Service at the moment. Following on we held a second meeting with Kim Thornden-Edwards and Kilvinder Vigurs specifically to address our concerns about the pressures faced by staff in London. GMB will work jointly with NAPO, Unison and the Employers to identify realistic approaches to address these issues, recognising that there are no easy solutions that could be quickly implemented. Also, we recognise that a number of pressures, for example the supervision of cases on PSS, that would need primary legislation to change if they are to be removed, and so are not within the gift of the employer; but could be looked at should the government wish to change the legislation. All suggestions would be gratefully received to better inform our work.



You asked/we did:

- Stand by payments: We are continuing to raise the issue with the employers re standardised use and definitions of Standby.
- One HMPPS changes and how it affects our members. We continue to ask for clarity on how the One HMPPS project will impact on staff. You can see that we are working hard to understand the total impact. I understand that this was gone into in greater detail at the senior leaders' conference. It would be good to hear your personal feedback to inform the position GMB SCOOP takes going forward.
- Vouchers for those on Tier 2 standby over Christmas. We have asked and continue to chase the decision to award vouchers to some staff on duty over the Christmas and New Year period and not others. We believe this to be unfair and if one group is to get vouchers, all should. I now understand that this is a decision that could be taken by the RPDs. I have written to them all asking that they pay the vouchers to the Tier 2 staff on call and have had a mixed response. I am happy to pursue with your RPD if they have decided not to pay the voucher. Can you let me know if you would like me to do so.

Individual representation

I have reviewed my records and have supported over 20 individuals to date with a range of matters. Please feel free to get in touch if there is anything that you think I can support you with, if only to talk through the options that you are weighting up. Please don't think you are alone.

Kind Regards,

Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk

PAY PROBLEMS NEED RESOLVING



Posted on: 28 February 2023

The Trade Unions are currently engaging with the employer over concerns around sessional pay, the deduction of the annualised unsocial hours payments from the pay award between April and October of 2022, and the onerous and complicated method of claiming unsocial hours for periods of annual leave.



SESSIONAL PAY BELOW NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

The Trade Unions have discovered that there is a disparity of sessional pay rates between Regions with some Regions paying less than the National Living Wage of £9.50/hour! This is of course unlawful.

We believe that we have already got a negotiated rate for the job and that sessional pay should reflect the negotiated rate and be consistent across England and Wales. We are currently working to ensure that anyone who has been paid sessional pay below the Living Wage receives the appropriate remuneration, including any back pay owing.

The Trade Unions are also committed to ensuring that all existing sessional staff are offered contracts of employment, through either an annualised hours contract or dual contract (for current employees), that will see them benefiting from remuneration at the rate for the job they undertake, plus entitlement to annual leave, sick pay and unsocial hours payments.

UNSOCIAL HOURS ANNUALISED HOURS DEDUCTIONS

Unpaid work staff will be aware that the Probation Service had initially misinterpreted the Staff Transfer and Protections agreement and had been paying some staff both the pay protected annualised unsocial hours payments they had previously enjoyed with their CRC and also unsocial hours claimed via SOP for the same periods of work.

However, the unions had reached an agreement with the Probation Service that these overpayments would not be deducted from future salaries, because members had double claimed in good faith with encouragement from the employer. We believed that this agreement was evidenced in a letter from the Probation Service dated 26/05/2022.

Unfortunately, the backdated 2022 pay award saw many UPW staff suffer large deductions from their expected pay packets as a result of the employer deducting the overpayments for unsocial hours which they had previously encouraged staff to claim. The employer has a different interpretation of the agreement that we had reached in May of last year.

This issue is currently at the Joint Negotiating Committee, which is the forum where your National Trade Union leads meet with the Chief Probation Officer, Directors of Operations and the Director General to agree terms and conditions of employment and negotiate on issues of concern or dispute. We will keep staff updated with any future developments.

UNSOCIAL HOURS CLAIMED DURING ANNUAL LEAVE

The Trade Unions have challenged the current method of claiming unsocial hours when staff are on annual leave. We believe that paying staff a monthly 7.693% payment, and then using the pay calculator, is not only onerous and overly complicated, but also that this system simply doesn't give staff the money when they want it.



We believe that this complex and time-consuming process should only be used when people work irregular hours and should not be used for salaried staff subject to regular shift patterns.

We are also aware that the existing flawed process has been inconsistently applied across England and Wales and that some staff have not been paid the unsocial hours which are due on their annual leave going back 5 years.

The Trade Unions have produced a set of principles to govern the payment of unsocial hours that we would like to see actioned as a matter of urgency:

- General principles governing the definition of regular earnings should apply, to claiming unsocial hours as per national terms and conditions
- Staff should be entitled to all their regular earnings, including unsocial hours, when on periods of annual leave, special leave and sickness
- The process used should be consistent, transparent, and equitable for all full time/part time salaried staff who are required to work unsocial hours as part of their normal working week. Separate arrangements should apply for MHC and annualised hours
- Unsocial hours payments should be claimed retrospectively via SOP
- Unsocial hours payments should not be withheld, spread out or drip fed
- Rota'd shifts and their respective value with regard to unsocial hours premium payments should apply during periods of annual leave, special leave and sickness
- Staff should not claim excess hours (overtime) and unsocial hours for the same shift
- Regular excess hours payments (overtime) should apply during periods of annual leave, special leave and sickness

GMB SCOOP: Response To The Recent HMIP SFO Reviews



Posted on: 30 January 2023

GMB SCOOP notes the content of the two most recent Serious Further Offence reports published by HMI Probation. GMB SCOOP's membership comprises most of the Senior and Chief Officers of Probation. We



offer our condolences to the families and friends of the victims of these horrendous murders.

We note that there are several recommendations to improve practice in the improvement plan which if implemented we hope will serve to improve the quality of our work.

As stated, the Probation Service is experiencing a long-term staffing and workload crisis with some teams and regions well below the numbers of experienced staff required to manage caseloads safely.

We welcome the new recruits to the service but are concerned by the number of experienced staff who are leaving. Each recruit requires considerable time in finding suitable cases for them to hold, to be trained and mentored and have their work quality assured and countersigned. This is done by Senior Probation Officers and experienced practitioners. Whilst we have seen the increase in trainee Probation Officers (PQIPs), until very recently there was no uplift in Senior Probation Officers. Typically, a Senior Probation Officer should lead a team of between 10 to 15 full time Probation staff and so for each cohort of 1500 new recruits there should have been an increase of between 100 to 150 Senior Probation Officers. This has not happened. Where new Senior Probation Officers are appointed, they necessarily come from the already stretched and depleted pool of experienced Probation Officers.

Work related stress accounts for approximately 43% of the working days lost to the service. For a probation staff member to actually seek medical support and get signed off as unfit to work is a difficult personal decision as we all want to work hard to undertake our job to the best of our ability reducing further offences and encouraging individuals to change their lives to become productive and positive members of our communities. There are inevitably staff in work today whose health and effectiveness is compromised by their workload and lack of support.

GMB SCOOP sees staff shortages, high workloads and a loss of experienced staff as one of the biggest threats to the Probation Service. We are campaigning for

- all the published recommendations to be implemented
- an increase in establishments
- improvements in pay, terms and conditions
- a comprehensive plan to reduce work related stress
- support staff in the workplace
- all grades to have an equitable and achievable workload

The responsibility for the crimes committed by individuals sits fully with them. For them to be supported and managed safely in the community those entrusted with the task need to have the capacity to



undertake full risk assessments, coordinate with others involved with their supervision and develop plans to be put in place should the risk of harm to others increase.

We urge all Senior and Chief Officers of Probation to assist in this endeavour.

GMB/SCOOP – NEWS BULLETIN



Posted on: 20 January 2023

New Years Honours

For members who have not already noticed we are pleased to announce that Will Jones received an MBE in the New Year's honours list. The citation was "Lately National Officer for the GMB Senior and Chief Officers of Probation Trade Union. For Public Service". Will worked hard both in the Union representing Staff and through his career in Probation. It is well deserved.

Welcome to new members

Yet again I'd like to welcome new members to the union.

Local meetings

I have started to arrange meetings locally with groups of members. Membership across the Probation divisions varies a bit and so when I do meet with you it would be good to hear your ideas for how we can better engage so that I can better represent your views and how we can promote membership in areas in which we are underrepresented.

Consultations and discussions

The list of subjects that we are in discussion about is still quite extensive so to keep this bulletin comparatively short I will focus on the main issues that we are facing.

One HMPPS. We continue to try to engage with the employer but are having difficulty in getting a clear understanding of the scope of the project. A number of initiatives appear to now be branded as part of the One HMPPS vision without being in the scope of the project. A good example is the Next Generation Programmes project detailed below. Our concern is that the project further embeds the Probation Service in the Civil Service and all the resultant constraints placed upon us with the inevitable statement "That's not the way we do things in the Civil Service" and the lack of recognition that the Probation Service has its own processes and procedure.



The Next Generation Programmes. The proposal appears to be an amalgamation of the programmes delivered in the community to a single programme and the creation of a single group of Band 3 staff who will deliver all of the programmes and structured interventions. The evidence base for this decision appears to be sparse or completely lacking and does not take into account the previous position of requiring the staff who deliver the sex offender programme to be the most experienced and qualified. The stated rationale is that there are too many programmes in HMPPS. There are 21 of which 17 are delivered in prisons and 4 in the community. We are also concerned that under the One HMPPS banner, though not part of the programme, the decision will be to create a single team delivering on both custody and the community as is set out in the TOM for Wales. A final concern is that the creation of a separate, group of staff for which there is no requirement to hold a probation qualifications could at a later date lead to “market testing” or privatisations of this key element of our work.

The 6 month pay increment dispute. The employer maintains that under the 2018 pay agreement and introduction of CBF the right to a pay increment has been removed from those new to the post through new employment or promotion who have been in post for less than 6 months on the first of April. We do not accept that this has been agreed with the Unions. The consequence of this is that those who will not get an increment the following April need not partake in CBF for that year so we will have large number of staff new to post who will not need to evidence their competence. Any PQiP who qualifies after 1 October is be deemed to have been promoted and so not eligible for an incremental rise the following 1 April. Looking the pay deal a PQiP who qualified in October 2022 will remain on the bottom of the pay scale in 2025 as the previous bottom of the pay scale will have been removed. We feel that this is manifestly unfair and a misapplication of the pay progression process and will not contribute to the retention levels that were one of the driving forces for the pay offer made by the employer.

Future location of the Probation Service

We and our sister unions do not feel that the right place for the governance of the probation Service is within the Civil Service and are working with other stakeholders to look at alternative governance structures which places the Probation Service in a more locally accountable position. I would welcome your views and any examples that you might have of potential structures either from within England and Wales or other legislatures that we could look to understand more fully and propose as viable models.

You asked / we did:

- Stand by payments: We are continuing to raise the issue with the employers re standardised use and definitions of Standby.
- One HMPPS changes and how it affects our members. We continue to ask for clarity on how the One HMPPS project will impact on staff. You can see that we are working hard to understand the total impact



- The recording of sensitive staff information in Delius as part of the Home Visits risk assessment form has been raised and we are seeking clarity with the minimum expectation that there is a clear overriding principle that no staff personal sensitive information will ever be required to be stored in Delius, or indeed any information about the staff member other than would be expected to be stored in relation to their professional contact with the individual subject to supervision.
- Vouchers for those on Tier 2 standby over Christmas. We have asked and continue to chase the decision to award vouchers to some staff on duty over the Christmas and New Year period and not others. We believe this to be unfair and if one group is to get vouchers, all should.

Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

Noticeboard Bulletin - 23-06-2022



Posted on: 23 June 2022

Role and Membership

This is my third month in the National Rep role, and I have continued to represent GMB/SCOOP members and meet with senior probation leaders across the country to promote our interests. Please also promote the work of GMB/SCOOP to your colleagues who are not already members. It is through our membership that we increase our influence and design the new Probation Service. I am continuing to review and refresh the membership list to make sure that it is kept up to date. As a result, I have included as many Justice email addresses as possible. Should you not wish us to use your justice email address or wish to have a second email address used as well, please let me know and I will amend our records.

Harmonisation, Pay and Civil Service 25

Work is progressing on three major pieces of work, the first being the harmonisation of staff not yet aligned to probation terms and conditions or roles in the HMPPS or wider MOJ. As you can imagine there is lots of communication back and forth on the exact detail of the offer which hopefully will come out shortly to those affected.

The second big piece of work that we are involved in is the negotiations around pay and pay reform. The employers have received our pay claim we are in the middle of negotiation. The talks are being



conducted jointly with all three unions and we are looking for a fair deal for all staff.

A third major piece of work that will commence shortly is the Civil Service 25 project, looking at returning the civil service to 2016 levels over the next 3 years. We have yet to commence any formal talks with the employers over this matter.

HMIP Reports

We have now had six HMI Probation reports published, the results of which are disappointing, but there are inconsistencies both between and within the reports. We have prepared a response to these which is posted on the GMB Probation notice board.

Whilst the reports acknowledge that the service has come through an unprecedented pandemic and unification, we are concerned that not enough weight is given to the fact that we continued to deliver as good a service as possible at immense personal emotional cost; and many factors relating to staffing levels, vetting etc are outside of the control of the PDU Heads.

We continue to be consulted on policy and strategy changes and critically respond as appropriate. Individually we are also supporting a number of members and responding to queries as they arise. June is Pride month, and we hope members had a happy and peaceful June and we are proud to stand by each and every one to live our lives as we wish without fear of harm or prejudice.

Please feel free to share this bulletin with your colleagues. If they are not members, they can simply join online at <https://www.gmb.org.uk>

Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk ☎ 01935 316 090

GMB/SCOOP – NEWS BULLETIN



Posted on: 21 November 2022

Welcome

Once more I can welcome new members to GMB/SCOOP. Please spread the word with colleagues who are not members, as the more members we have the greater our voice.

Local Liaison

I intend to start to hold local meetings with members on a probation divisional level to see if we can begin to build more local links for support. I have already had a volunteer from the Wales Division to become a link between members and myself. This will allow us to look at themes across divisions and build solidarity.

Campaigns



Stress and mental health

I am working on the issues of stress and anxiety in the workplace. This is described in several ways in our reporting, and I am really concerned that the reported rate of sickness at the September Health and Safety meeting, due to a cluster of symptoms relating to anxiety, depression and stress, was 101,954 days lost and stood at 43% of all reasons staff were away from work for the previous 12 months.

This is a big threat to the Probation Service in terms of days lost, harm caused in both the short and long terms and for recruitment and retention.

The HMIP reports show workload and staffing levels to be a major contributory factor to this.

We have asked that this issue be raised and addressed as a matter of urgency with a very clear plan from the leadership as to how this will be addressed urgently.

Any information that you may have to support this campaign would be welcome and of course treated anonymously.

Annex A consultations

We are also currently in consultation over the following:

- Asymptomatic Covid Testing
- Consultation on Administrative Controls Process for Public Sector Exits
- Community Sentence Management Policy Framework
- CMS guidance
- Core Capability Framework
- HMPPS Equalities Action Plans
- Next Generation Accredited Programmes
- Prioritising Probation
- Resilience Support meetings
- Exclusion from Working with HMPPS



- Workload Measurement Tool
- Remote Working Overseas
- New temporary Health and Safety role in UPW
- Professional Registration
- Covid Sickness management
- Public Oral Hearing guidance
- Working with staff with terminal illnesses.

Local organisation and communication.

You asked / we did

- I have been asked about the expectations of the standby role as there appears to be inconsistent practice across the regions. It appears to be a much bigger issue as there is a lack of clarity about the application of several additional duties or payments. We are collating these to take back to the employers. Any information you can share on how standby is rewarded in your region would help us consolidate our argument.
- I have had it fed back to me that the One HMPPS changes have been presented as not affecting anyone at PDU level or below. This has formed a part of GMB's discussion with the employers on the need for clear guidance and clarity of message, on the assumption that the message will be interpreted and communicated differently across the regions. We are still awaiting clear responses to these requests.
- The recording of sensitive staff information in Delius as part of the Home Visits risk assessment form has been raised and we are seeking clarity with the minimum expectation that there is a clear overriding principle that no staff personal sensitive information will ever be required to be stored in Delius, or indeed any information about



the staff member other than would be expected to be stored in relation to their professional contact with the individual subject to supervision.

Personal Support

I am of course available to any member to have a personal consultation with about any concerns that they may have and can offer support and advice, including attending meetings with them if required. If I don't know the answer, I can always find out who does, and I can also direct members to other services offered by the union.

Peter Brandt

National GMB/SCOOP Representative

Reports Of His Majesty's Inspectorate Of Probation (HMIP)



Posted on: 1 November 2022

GMB/SCOOP represents the Senior and Chief Officers of Probation. We have been monitoring the 12 reports into the work of the Probation Service published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation HMIP. Two in Wales, two in Kent, Surrey & Sussex, two in East of England, three in the West Midlands region and three in the London region. Between them there are 121 recommendations. The recommendations are targeted at PDU, Regional or HMPPS level. They comprise the following 63 PDU (52%) recommendations, 28 region (23%) recommendations and 30 HMPPS (25%) recommendations.

All the reports were published between January and October 2022 following unification of the sentence management function in Wales in December 2019 and the unification of all services in England and Wales into the Probation Service (which sits within the Civil Service in His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)) in June 2021.

All the reports show a consistent message of low staffing levels and poor quality of assessment for keeping others safe. None of them make for comfortable reading and we will take forward the message that the Probation Service desperately needs improvement

GMB/SCOOP has contributed to HMIP's consultation process on how the performance of the region can best be reflected in the forthcoming reports, but the results need to be seen as failings of the system and



not the PDUs or the staff working within them. They are not autonomous areas that have much say in their function but are at best described as small departments of the Civil Service.

The PDU reporting structure is against two domains: Organisational delivery and Court Work and Case Supervision. Each domain is assessed as Inadequate, Requires Improvement, Good or Outstanding. There is a moderation process in place to represent the lowest score as the overall score within domains.

The **organisational delivery** domain, domain 1, comprises four sub domains of leadership, staff, services and Information and facilities.

Under the Leadership domain 7 PDUs (58%) were assessed as requiring improvement and 5 PDUs (42%) were assessed as inadequate.

Under the Staff domain 5 PDUs (42%) were assessed as requiring improvement and 7 PDUs (58%) were assessed as inadequate.

Under the Services domain 2 PDUs (17%) were assessed as requiring improvement and 10 PDUs (83%) were assessed as Inadequate.

Under the Information and facilities domain 1 PDU (8%) was assessed as good, 10 PDUs (83%) were assessed as Requiring Improvement and 1 PDU (8%) was assessed as inadequate.

The **Court Work and Case Supervision** domain, domain 2, comprises 5 sub domains. Courtwork, Assessment, Planning, Implementation & Delivery and Reviewing.

Under Courtwork 2 PDUs (18%) were assessed as outstanding, 1 PDU (9%) was assessed as good, 2 PDUs (18%) were assessed as required improvement and 6 PDUs (55%) were assessed as inadequate. 1 PDU does not deliver court work.

Under Assessment 2 PDUs (17%) were assessed as requires improvement and 10 PDUs (83%) were assessed as inadequate.

Under Planning 2 PDUs (17%) were assessed as requires improvement and 10 PDUs (83%) were assessed as inadequate.

Under Implementation & delivery 12 PDUs (100%) were assessed as inadequate

Under Delivery and Reviewing 2 PDUs (17%) were assessed as requires improvement and 10 PDUs (83%) were assessed as inadequate.

Outcomes were also assessed on the inspections but were not given a rating. However, if they had been, only 1 PDU (8%) would have been scored as required improvement and 11 PDUs (92%) would have been assessed as inadequate.



Of the 121 recommendations 15 (12%) relate directly to recruitment and staffing levels including a delay in vetting for new staff. This is outside of the control of PDU heads. The lack of staff availability to deliver the service is a direct cause of a number of the other recommendations. 22 (18%) of the recommendations relate to delivering or assessing quality of service and 15 (12%) relate to staff training. 11 (9%) recommendations relate to workload management and prioritisation. It must be noted that all reports comment on workloads with most staff in most reports stating that it was considered unmanageable by the staff in post.

12 (10%) of the recommendations relate to issues with the Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) contract. Under the new model these services are predominantly contracted by HMPPS on a regional basis through the Commissioned Rehabilitative Services contract.

The above examples show that the Probation Service has some deep-rooted systemic problems stemming from lack of trained staff to carry the workload expected of them. This has a compound effect of all staff struggling on a day-by-day basis to allocate work and juggle the commitments expected of them and therefore unable to undertake the quality assurance work which would drive up quality within the service.

The structure of the HMIP reporting process now puts the greatest emphasis on the PDU and the PDU head as responsible for the service delivered. However much of the work undertaken is outside the control of the PDU head as it is managed, contracted, or allocated elsewhere in the Probation Service.

For all staff in the Probation Service these reports are difficult to read as they do not represent the service we wish to deliver. It was in 2011 that the Probation Service nationally won the British Quality Foundation Gold Medal for excellence, the first time a public sector organisation had won it. The disastrous Transforming Rehabilitation programme served to split the service and it was hoped that the unification would see a remedy to the damaged caused by that programme. The lack of investment in staff can be seen as the driving factor behind all these reports.

Programmes TOM And Next Generation – Significant Developments



Posted on: 11 October 2022

Joint statement from Employers and Trade unions:

Following engagement with the Joint Trade Unions, we have agreed to pause on the Interventions TOM and Next Generation workshops and engagement with staff pending further dialog with TUs on the approach. Our planned All Staff Event on October 19th will therefore not go ahead at this time. All other planned workshops and focus groups, including the Job evaluation Scheme (JES) workshops will be put



on pause. We have agreed to reconvene with the TUs in 2 weeks' time at which point we will review our communication and engagement with staff and share our plans with you.

We understand this will be frustrating but we are committed to getting the approach right and as such, please be assured that all decisions on the direction of travel on the future delivery of programmes will be reviewed to ensure any concerns from both the TUs and staff are carefully considered.

Joint Communication – Parole Changes Working Group

In light of the recent changes to parole processes, a joint working group of HMPPS and Trade Union colleagues has been established. The purpose of the group is to reflect on the changes, consider the implications for staff and process, and make further recommendations regarding the transition arrangements and ongoing support for staff. In particular, this will include taking stock of how probation practitioners are viewing the change and ensuring there is an ongoing focus on supporting them with this and providing reassurance about the continuing professional status of their work going forward.

The new group is being chaired by Angela Cossins (Regional Probation Director for the South West) and includes representatives from recognised Trade Unions together with colleagues from the Probation Service and HMPPS.

The group convened for the first time on the 4 October where Angela met with lead representatives from Napo UNISON and GMB Scoop Other colleagues from the Public Protection group, Employee Relations and from the Probation Communications team were also present.

During the opening meeting we considered:

- The terms of reference for the work of the group (which were agreed)
- The recently published guidance on oral hearings
- The changes in respect of the option for public hearings to take place and guidance needed
- Trade Union colleagues' concern regarding the impact on staff of this and the support being put in place

We acknowledged that developing and improving the oral hearing guidance would be an iterative process as the implications of the new rules emerge. During the meeting, Trade Union colleagues were very keen to indicate the anxieties the changes have raised with members/ staff and expressed their desire that the group work jointly through the professional implications of the changes as well as ensure that support for staff is in place. Angela Cossins agreed that these were very important considerations



and would certainly form part of the discussions within the boundaries of the new rules which have been imposed.

Angela Cossins gave the commitment that the organisation will be working at pace to provide full clarity on guidance. On that basis we agreed that the interim guidance staff receive would need to be a living document, subject to improvement. We also agreed that effective communication would be essential to ensure staff are clear about the guidance and what it means for them.

It was also agreed that we would meet monthly and provide a summary of discussions to probation staff after each meeting.

Kind Regards,

Peter Brandt
National GMB/SCOOP Representative
peter.brandt@gmb.org.uk

GMB/SCOOP – NEWS BULLETIN



Posted on: 4 October 2022

Welcome

Yet again I have the opportunity to welcome new members to the Union. Please spread the word with colleagues who are not members, as the more members we have the greater our voice can be heard. The change in Prime Minister and ministerial team and the death of the Queen and the two significant ballots appears to have caused a temporary reduction in consultation with us. I expect the work to pick up swiftly once the new ministers take up their roles.

Pay and Harmonisation Ballots

The results of the two ballots we have run have already been communicated via Joint Statements by the recognised trade Unions. The results were as follows:

Harmonisation offer:	35% accept	65% reject	Offer rejected
Pay offer:	94% accept	6% reject	Offer accepted



Staff who have left the organisation since 1 April 2022 will be entitled to their back pay, however this may not automatically be paid to them. They will need to contact SSCL to request this. If you know of any former colleague in this position, please pass on this advice.

SOS single view in Parole process

We remain in an ongoing dialogue with HMPPS following the legal challenge to the decision by Dominic Raab to stop probation making recommendations in parole reports. At the moment there is little movement from HMPPS on its stated position, but we continue to seek dialogue and change.

Civil Service 25 and One HMPPS

We are now in talks with the employer regarding these two matters, though the most pressing discussion at the moment is the one HMPPS project. Whilst we are communicating, we are not anywhere near any form of negotiation just receiving and clarifying the messages. As you will be aware a number of statements about the scope of the project have been made and we are looking in detail at what those actually mean in practice. A good example of this was one of the original statements made that it would not affect anybody below RPD level, yet on another call, I have had it reported to me, that there is not expected to be any impact at PDU level. If this is the case it will clearly cause concern to our members who operate in the space between PDU and RPDs. Please let me know of any messages you hear or concerns you have, and I can feed those back to get clarity or challenge.

Annex A consultations

We are also currently in consultation over the following:

- Asymptomatic Covid Testing
- Community Sentence management Policy Framework
- Core Capability Framework
- HMPPS Equalities Action Plans
- Next Generation Accredited Programmes
- Prioritising Probation
- Resilience Support meetings
- Exclusion from Working with HMPPS



- Workload Measurement Tool
- Remote Working Overseas
- New temporary Health and Safety role in UPW
- Professional Registration
- Covid Sickness management

Local organisation and communication.

With the expanding membership list, we do have the opportunity to consider how it is best we communicate. I have had a few offers of members for me to consult with on matters of policy and practice, however I am always on the lookout for more. Potentially we could look at where a nominated regional contact would help or if there is an alternative structure. Please let me know of any concerns you may have as I am in a position to talk with colleagues across England and Wales and either feed into ongoing discussion or raise separately as appropriate.

You asked / we did

I propose to add this section to each bulletin to share, as appropriate, requests from members and what we have done about them.

- I have been asked about the expectations of the standby role as there appears to be inconsistent practice across the regions. I have consulted with colleagues in the sister unions, and it appears to be a much bigger issue as there is a lack of clarity about the application of a number additional duties or payments. We are collating these to take back to the employers
- I have had it fed back to me that the One HMPPS changes have been presented as not affecting anyone at PDU level or below. This has formed a part of GMB's discussion with the employers on the need for clear guidance and clarity of message, on the assumption that the message will be interpreted and communicated differently across the regions.

Personal Support



I am of course available to any member to have a personal consultation with about any concerns that they may have and can offer support and advice, including attending meetings with them if required. If I don't know the answer, I can always find out who does, and I can also direct members to other services offered by the union.

Kind Regards,

Peter Brandt
National GMB/SCOOP Representative

Three Year Pay Offer Accepted



Posted on: 26 September 2022

Following closure of the Probation Unions' ballots on the three-year pay offer, the results are as follows:

Napo 66% accept / 34% % reject

UNISON 64% accept / 36% % reject

GMB SCOOP 94% accept / 6% reject

As a result of the respective trade union ballots, the Trade Union Side (Napo, UNISON and GMB/SCOOP) has accepted the pay offer on behalf of members.

Large Number of Members Vote to Reject Offer

Although all three union ballots were in favour of accepting the offer, a third of Napo and UNISON members voted to reject the offer and indicated their willingness to take industrial action to seek to improve it. The ballot outcomes should therefore give the employer and Government no comfort. The offer was seen by many members as falling well short of the original claim that was jointly submitted by the unions. It is inadequate in terms of the current rate of inflation and the huge increases in energy costs that our members face this winter.



Next Steps

The unions have advised the employer of the ballot results and have urged them to do everything possible to achieve a pay out in October salaries. Whilst a majority of members have voted to accept the pay offer, the consultative exercise demonstrates that there are still many issues on which urgent remedial action is required such as:

- Workloads
- Stress
- Further attacks on the Profession by way of the Secretary of State single intervention in Parole Board hearings
- One HMPPS' proposals that represent the biggest threat to the independence of Probation since the ill-fated Transforming Rehabilitation programme.

All of these challenges will require a robust approach by the trade unions going forward. This is why it is important for all staff in Probation to join a trade union. More news on the pay out of year one of the offer will follow as soon as possible.

Noticeboard Bulletin – 30-08-2022



Posted on: 30 August 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Harmonisation

You should have received a ballot pack, as a GMB/SCOOP member who was employed by a former Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) parent organisation, or supply chain organisation, before transferring to the Probation Service on 26 June 2021, or on 1 February 2022 if you previously worked for User Voice, and who is therefore entitled to be balloted by GMB/SCOOP on the forthcoming Probation Service Pay and Conditions Harmonisation proposals.



More info on the offer can be found at the Probation Hub ([Welcome Hub \(hmppsintranet.org.uk\)](https://hmppsintranet.org.uk) and at [Harmonisation Updates – Welcome Hub \(hmppsintranet.org.uk\)](https://hmppsintranet.org.uk))

All 3 trade unions (GMB/SCOOP, NAPO and Unison) are balloting their members to either accept or reject this offer. We make no formal recommendation, but we believe this offer is the best that can be achieved by negotiation and if rejected could only be improved by sustained industrial action by a majority of members of all three Trade Unions.

The ballot opens on Tuesday 30th August and closes at noon on Tuesday 20th September.

Please follow the instructions on the ballot paper.

If you have not received a ballot paper or have any queries please contact: peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk as soon as possible.

Peter Brandt

GMB SCOOP National Rep
peter.brandt@justice.gov.uk
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ADVICE TO UPW MEMBERS MINIBUSES AND COVID RISK ASSESSMENTS



Posted on: 15 August 2022

The trade unions are aware of HMPPS intention to re-introduce the use of UPW minibuses without the modifications necessary to improve ventilation within the passenger compartment.

As part of the exceptional delivery model (EDM), the use of minibuses for transportation of people on probation (PoP) was flagged as a red in relation to the risks of transmission of SARS-CoV. The trade unions worked with the employer to find solutions which would seek to reduce these risks. A general risk assessment (GRA) to mitigate the risks of covid transmission in UPW minibuses was developed and agreed via a partnership working process with the unions. This GRA has continued to be adapted as part of the move away from the UPW EDM. In March of this year further changes were made to the GRA which the unions accepted with reservations.

Following the shift from EDM to normal operations, HMPPS have pushed to get more PoP taking part in unpaid work activities. This has resulted in the original EDM mitigations for minibus use being reduced, a



new proposed version of the general risk assessment (GRA) and vehicle occupancy levels being increased.

HMPPS identified that there were approximately 100 vehicles that did not meet the requirement of the original GRA from March this year for additional ventilation, and subsequently commissioned a joint piece of research from the University of Cambridge & HMPPS Science Unit using one vehicle as an example and making the assumption that all components across the whole vehicle fleet are fully serviceable and delivering optimum performance.

HMPPS are now asserting that this research shows that in certain conditions, all UPW vehicles have sufficient air quality in relation to CO2 levels for them to be reintroduced.

The unions' health and safety advice is that air quality alone does not indicate a reduced risk of covid transmission. At a recent meeting the unions put forward suggested mitigations which the employer has refused to consider but still wishes the trade unions to agree to the modified risk assessment. The unions have on several occasions asked the employer to seek advice from the HMPPS Health and Wellbeing team, who advise on public health matters, on the transmission risk controls proposed for the modified risk assessment, as they did for the original GRA.

The trade unions' request for the involvement of the HMPPS Health and Wellbeing Team was given added weight by the statement in the University of Cambridge/HMPPS Science Unit research paper which states:

"This study does not consider the risk associated with having an infectious person inside the vehicle."

However, at the time of writing no response to this request has been received and instead the employer has said they intend to push ahead with the use of these unmodified vehicles.

Given the concerns and the lack of reassurance that the employer is properly protecting staff from SARS-Cov-2, despite the unions always seeking to engage and seek solutions with the employer, it is therefore with disappointment that we have not been able on this occasion to reach an agreement. The trade unions are not in a position to support the proposed modifications to the GRA which would result in the use of unmodified vehicles being used for UPW without additional mitigation in relation to covid transmission risk.

The unions expect, and the law requires, that employers ensure that (so far as is reasonably practicable) all steps are taken to ensure a safe and health work environment for both employees and non-employees (PoP). This includes considering the short- and long-term risks to health from staff or service users developing COVID-19.

Should HMPPS decide to progress with the use of these unmodified vehicles then we would advise members to discuss any concerns they may have directly with their manager and local union



representatives and request a copy of the specific risk assessment for each and any of the minibuses they are asked to use.

Those who may be at additional risk such as those with an “individual health plan” should request a review of this and pregnant workers who have notified the employer should request a review of their individual risk assessment.

Branches should contact their union health and safety leads for further advice related to individual circumstances and concerns.

GMB/SCOOP – NEWS BULLETIN



Posted on: 9 August 2022

Role and Membership

Again, I would like to welcome the new members to this bulletin. I have a few more senior leaders' events to attend. Please continue to promote the Union to your colleagues and if I'm not scheduled to attend one of your leaders' events and you would like me to, I will ask your RDP again for a slot at a suitable meeting. There are number of benefits individuals and their families can gain from membership, but the most important one is that we can have an informed voice when in discussion with HMPPS. And of course, you have the support of a big union behind you should you need it.

With the holiday season upon us I am prompted to remind colleagues that I am happy to include personal email address in our mailing lists so that you don't miss out on important correspondence should you be away from work, or indeed look forward to GMB/SCOOP Bulletins as light summer beach reading.

Pay Talks

This slot is intended to update on the pay position which is being discussed this week . The bulletin has been sent out early in light of the One HMPPS Announcement.

SOS single view in Parole process

We continue to engage with the centre over the decision taken by Dominic Raab to remove the option for Probation staff to make recommendations in Parole reports and believe that undermines the professionalism of Probation colleagues . We have pointed out that the Job description for a Probation Officer states:



- To provide professional advice and assessment, including written reports to courts, the Parole Board, other criminal justice agencies and partner organisations.

Whilst GMB has a limited membership of people who directly supervise individuals, we will continue to champion the profession that we all work in and will seek to protect the professionalism of the organisation. We recognise that the process was changed within the law, so our challenge now is to continue to defend what we see and best practice and seek for legitimate change where needed.

Harmonisation

We have sent out an extraordinary bulletin to all the members who were employed by Parent Organisations or Supply Chain partners at the point of unification who we think at affected by the harmonisation negotiations. If you are, and have not received a copy of that bulletin, please let me know and I will send you a copy. This will ensure that you are included in the harmonisation ballot. This ballot is limited to only those affected.

Civil Service 25 and One HMPPS

Whilst these two projects appear to be running at the same time and may appear to focus on similar areas of the organisation the Unions have been informed that the One HMPPS project was in process before the Civil Service 25 announcement was made.

Both of these initiatives came as a surprise to the unions and while we have only recently been informed of them, we have not been involved in any negotiations. GMB has made representations with regard One HMPPS as follows:

"GMB is concerned that yet another change is being introduced to the Probation service without a clear rationale other than responding to a government whim. We note that we have not seen appraisal of other options such as move the Probation Service out of the Civil Service onto an alternative structure. We also note from other consultations that it appears this idea has been in circulation for some time, but the unions are only given a few hours to respond.

The document states that "the One HMPPS Programme will also allow us to respond positively and appropriately to cost reduction asks, arising both from our 2021 Spending Review settlement, and more recently from Civil Service 2025." The implication of this statement is that the project was already in motion before the proposed cuts to the Civil Service were announced. This was not referenced to the Unions or staff. In fact, most recent communications have been about extending the rollout of parts of the unification programme, TOM delivery etc due to the staffing shortages and other factors.

The current unification of the service is by no means complete as the TOM, OMIC and staffing levels are nowhere near being consistently delivered. A further change will not inspire staff confidence and will



threaten the very heart of the organisation, namely those individuals who supervise the people subject to supervision. To simply state that “we do not expect structural changes to have an impact below PGD/RPD level; and will engage closely with operational leaders to minimise disruption to the front line,” fails to acknowledge the deep distress and trauma caused to staff by the TR process and subsequent unification. This will be seen as nothing more than the Probation service being subsumed by the Prison service.

We have grave concerns that using the Welsh model as evidence for the changes in England as it fails to acknowledge that Wales operates in a different jurisdiction for some laws and under the Welsh assembly. Neither the financial nor political structure is replicated within England.

It is not clear that the “greater autonomy afforded to the regions to allow them to innovate, and to build upon local networks to best meet the needs of their local cohorts” will be achieved if the Probation service remains within the confines of the Civil Service which seeks to control all aspects of delivery.

The statement “and that we remove any blockers that stop us being more efficient and effective” would imply that these are known and impeding efficiency and effectiveness. It would be helpful if these could be identified and the illustration of how these would be removed by the stated project and why they cannot be addressed in an alternative way.

There have been innumerable instances of how the Prison service policies and processes as implemented through SSCL and SOP have been shoehorned into Probation practice and these provide the greatest impediment to the management of the Probation service. The most recent are the inclusion of the bleep test into the fast track management scheme or the hastily reviewed exclusion policy which was threatened to be taken forwards without the agreement of the Trade Unions. These micro aggressions marginalise and devalue the role of the Probation service on a daily basis.

The Q&A document states “since unification of the Probation services, for the first time all services are operating fully under the HMPPS umbrella”. Whilst this may be correct, they are not “fully operating”. Implementing yet another change is unlikely to allow the under delivering parts of the organisation to achieve their full potential. Any standard change model involves deciding on making a change, implementing it, and reviewing and embedding it. The current change has not yet been fully implemented or reviewed so it is not yet clear what elements need further embedding or replacing. It would be helpful to have sight of any accredited evidence which support such a drastic change so swiftly after the last one.

HMI Probation Inspections.

We have responded to the HMPPS consultation on the future structure of HMIP inspections to get a better picture of how the Regions should be assessed. We broadly welcome the direction of travel as it puts greater emphasis on regional structure of the organisation rather than implying that the PDU head is solely responsible for how the PDU is delivering the service. However, I am keen to hear from colleagues



who have been inspected, or are preparing for inspection, about any concerns that they may have on the current process and the proposed changes. I am happy to take anonymised feedback and present it on your behalf.

Annex A Consultation an invitation to get involved.

I have received some nominations from individuals who are keen to act as subject matter experts on areas of practice but am looking for more. If you would like greater say on how the service is developing please do get in touch.

Direct communication with members.

I have been thinking about how I can supplement the bulletins with more direct consultation. With the arrival of Teams, it is easy to set up a series of meetings that we can attend. I will think on this more as how best to make such events work, the relative size of them and how to ensure that the voice of the senior leaders is captured. We are a comparatively small part of GMB but there are enough of us to make a routine all member Teams meeting potentially unwieldy. Should there be the need for all member calls, rest assured, we can set them up, but it is the more day to day liaison that I am keen to develop. Please send me any observations or suggestions that you have for how we can improve communication.

Individual support for members

I have been approached by a number of members who have wanted the chance to have a private conversation about individual situations. I am more than happy to provide that service. By and large you all know the processes and procedures that apply, but sometimes colleagues just want to have a third party to use as a sounding board. I have also attended a number of informal and formal processes with colleagues who have wanted a bit of extra support and have asked for assistance in preparing for meetings. Where this has worked most successfully is where we have discussed the process that they are in and how they should think about preparing their response and to consider if future representation from the branch is necessary.

Please feel free to share this bulletin with your colleagues. If they are not members, they can simply join online at <https://www.gmb.org.uk>

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Posted on: 8 July 2022

Pay negotiations between Napo, UNISON, GMB SCOOP and senior probation service management have been taking place over the course of June and July. As we anticipated, the discussions have been especially challenging set against the background of the government's punitive public sector pay remit.

The unions pay claim was for a multi-year pay deal for the Probation Service effective from 1st April 2022. Among other things, this will need to deliver a significant increase in the value of pay points, an end to pay band overlaps and the creation of a salary structure that addresses the huge pay gap between our members and workers in comparable public-facing professions outside of the Probation Service.

We have been told by the Probation Minister, the Director General and senior management, that improving probation pay is also a top priority, and that they are committed to delivering such a deal.

Yesterday, Napo and UNISON's respective negotiating committees considered a full progress report and provided democratic oversight of the progress made in the talks so far. The view of both committees was that while progress has undoubtedly been made, the parties are still some way apart from finalising a pay offer that unions would feel able to recommend to their members. At talks today the feedback from yesterday's meetings of the Napo and UNISON negotiating committees was relayed to the employer. There are plans for the unions and employer to continue negotiations next week. GMB reps have also considered the progress and are committed to providing a single consistent response with Napo and UNISON.

Next steps

As has always been the case, the Joint Trade Union side will seek to exhaust the negotiating process to try and achieve an offer that we can recommend, but the employer has been left in no doubt that if necessary we will return to test the strong mandate from our members that caused Napo and UNISON to lodge a joint trade dispute earlier this year.

While we are not in that position yet, we are mindful of the growing anger across many sister trade unions over public sector pay policy. This has seen a number of unions commence industrial action or plan for ballots over the coming weeks. The unions will be monitoring the situation carefully and more news will be provided to members as soon as possible.

Previous Bulletins



New Membership Representative



Posted on: 10 March 2022

GMB/SCOOP is pleased to announce that **Peter Brandt**, Head of Service, Bath and North Somerset will be taking over as the National representative for SCOOP from Will Jones on April 4th 2022.

Will is leaving the Service on April 30th 2022 so the responsibilities will be shared during this month.

The full-time secondment agreed with the employer will continue until March 2023, and will be reviewed during the next year.

Peter has provided the following information about himself for members information:



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'I have worked in Probation since 1989 holding a variety of roles. Initially I was a PSO, qualifying as a PO in 1993 and being appointed SPO in 2001. I became an ACO in 2012. In April 2014 I resigned from NAPO and became a member of GMB SCOOP and represented members in negotiations with the CRC. Most recently I have been a Head of Service in a PDU.

My desire from this role is build SCOOP membership, to represent the Chief Officer grade in national discussions and negotiations and also provide individual support as required. The value of the union comes from us standing together to model best practice and to champion the values of the service in which we all work.'

Harmonisation Arrangements for former Parent Organisation staff

GMB/SCOOP welcomes all those former Parent Organisation (PO) staff who have joined GMB as a result of the harmonisation process which commenced at the end of last year.

As you will be aware the three Probation trade unions are involved in negotiations with the employers over arrangements for the transfer of PO staff into the Probation Service. GMB/SCOOP is principally representing those in managerial roles similar to those for whom they have negotiation rights in the Probation Service. For some members there will be an onward secondary transfer to other parts of the HMPPS or MoJ where SCOOP does not have rights but we will be signposting members as to their options.

Only members of one of the three trade unions will be able to vote on the harmonisation proposals and **it is important that anyone who joins GMB/SCOOP notifies Will Jones of their membership number.** If you know of colleagues who have joined but have not passed their details on, please alert them to do so.

The Probation Programme team will continue to hold update meetings for all those involved in the process and the unions will release details of the proposals when able to do so. Will is happy to discuss this with individual members if required.

Voluntary Redundancy

Decisions have been made regarding the second round of VR. The good news is that all staff who applied were successful in their application. They have until March 28th to confirm their decision



following receipt of the financial offer. The notice period will be enacted from March 31st and departures will occur on June 30th.

Pay Negotiations

Pay negotiations for a three year pay deal are under way. This promises to be a challenging undertaking given the issues facing our employers and the restrictions on the Treasury.

The trade unions are very aware of how pay impacts on the recruitment and retention of staff and are committed to ensuring that our employers understand the crisis in case management that ten years of very little movement in this regard has caused.

CBF (Competency Based Framework)

The first year of CBF commences on April 1st and this is relevant for all those who are not at the top of their pay scale. CBF will determine pay progression in April 2023 and it is important that we engage with this as both managers and as staff members ourselves.

Other Current Work

Below is a brief summary of other work currently underway

1. Survey of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Staff
2. Covid Recovery/Winter Planning
3. Modernisation of the Workload Measurement Tool
4. Grievance Resolution Procedure
5. JD and JES for various roles
6. HR Sub Committee



7. H&S Sub Committee

8. Various Pay Issues

Will Jones

GMB/SCOOP Representative

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MEMBERS' SOLIDARITY BRINGS EMPLOYER BACK TO PAY NEGOTIATIONS



Posted on: 12 November 2021

Since the earlier publication of the indicative ballot results rejecting the Government Pay Freeze and derisory 2021-2022 Probation Pay Offer, strenuous efforts have been made to reopen talks on pay with the employer.

The delay has been caused by the need to await the outcomes from the Comprehensive Spending Review which were published last week. Since the round of Union conferences last month there has also been engagement with the new Probation Minister Kit Malthouse and the Director General Amy Rees. Here it has been made clear that our respective members demand their employer resume engagement on the pay claim and the prospects for a multi-year pay settlement.

Latest Position

The fact that talks are now underway again is because of the solidarity shown by members across the three unions in delivering a powerful message – that you have simply had enough of seeing no progress on pay at the same time as workloads being at unsustainable levels.

Three meetings have taken place this week and at Wednesday's Probation Service Joint Negotiating Committee, the unions recorded a strong statement expressing our serious disappointment at the lack of delivery against a whole series of agreements; some of which extend as far back as the 2018 pay settlement. These include:



- The continuing delay to paying contractual incremental pay progression
- The failure to honour the agreement reached on the AP Residential Worker regrading and back pay.
- The lack of progress in concluding the talks on deleting Pay Band 1 and the assimilation arrangements.
- The promise of a Managerial Review which has yet to materialise.
- The Probation Service Pay Manual, which was agreed in 2018, and which is desperately needed to sort out the many pay problems members face
- The continuing difficulties that have been encountered in the Job Evaluation Scheme and the long delay in reviewing certain jobs several years after the E3 restructuring exercise

The nature of pay negotiations means that it is simply not possible to issue daily reports as to progress, but unions are on standby to call their respective Negotiating Committees together at the earliest opportunity.

Trade Dispute and Industrial Action still a real possibility

Despite the welcome resumption of dialogue on pay, these have been difficult discussions against the backdrop of the government's pay freeze policy that is extremely hostile to the public service. We are therefore under no illusions about how challenging it will be to elicit an improved pay offer, if at all.

This means that all unions are continuing with their contingency planning for an industrial action campaign, but as our members would expect, we are at the same time doing all that we can to exhaust all opportunities to make progress.

More news on the pay negotiations will follow as soon as it becomes available.

Noticeboard Bulletin – 31-05-2022



Posted on: 31 May 2022



GMB have published our responses to recent HMIP inspections across the UK, highlighting inconsistencies in the measures used and the recommendations given.

High caseloads and concerns around the workload are endemic in the probation service nationally, with staff consistently telling unions that they are overworked, underpaid, and at breaking point from work-related stress. The fragmentation of the service over that time period naturally led to inconsistencies in delivery still keenly felt and evident in these reports.

GMB welcomes further inspections undertaken, but emphasised the great personal and emotional cost to the staff working in the service undertaking these, in no small part the result of a decade lost to costly, failed privatisation and significant failings in strategic direction and leadership from the MoJ.

[Read the full report here:](#)





Response to HMIP Reports

PETER BRANDT | GMB SCOOP

Referencing PDU Probation Services Inspection Reports:

Swansea Neath Port Talbot (January 22)

Gwent (February 22)

West Sussex (May 22)

West Kent (May 22)

Essex North (May 22)

Probation Practitioner Toolkits Delivery Guidance for Probation Practitioners V.1 (April 22)

UNIONS SUBMIT THREE-YEAR PAY CLAIM



Posted on: 6 May 2022

The three probation unions have submitted the following three year pay claim on behalf of members in the Probation Service:



- A three-year award to cover the 2022, 2023 and 2024 pay years
- An increase in the value of all pay points of 3% above the Retail Prices Index (RPI) of inflation on 1 April 2022, 1 April 2023, and 1 April 2024
- An increase in the value of all Probation Service cash allowances of 3% above the Retail Prices Index (RPI) of inflation on 1 April 2022, 1 April 2023 and 1 April 2024
- Shorter pay bands to allow staff to reach the top of their pay band in a shorter time
- Removal of pay band overlaps
- An increase in the HMRC Fixed Profit Car Allowance

PROBATION NEEDS A PAY RISE

While a wage keeping pace with the cost of living each year would have risen by 42.9% (compound) since 2010, pay in Probation has risen by just 1% over the same period, which means that thousands of pounds have been cut from the value of staff wages.

By 'pay rise' we mean an actual increase in the value of pay points. It is these values which have only gone up by only 1% in the last 12 years for probation staff. Do not confuse your annual increment with a pay rise. Your increment is a contractual entitlement, not a pay rise.

Here is how probation staff compare with their police staff, local government and health service colleagues in relation to actual increases in the value of their pay since 2010:

Probation Staff	1%	
Police Staff	15.8%	
Local Government Staff	14.6%	
NHS Staff	14.2%	



Remember, staff in the police, local government and the health service have had their increments in addition to the pay rises above. It is no wonder that leaving probation for a job in a different part of the public sector has become so attractive.

COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Inflation is currently running at 9% (March 2022) which is the highest level in three decades. For the value of probation staff salaries not to fall back even further, they must at least keep pace with predicted rises in the cost of living, which Treasury forecasts put at 7.4% in 2022.

Staff have experienced an enormous surge in costs over the last year, including:

- A 29% increase in gas bills;
- A 21% increase in petrol prices;
- A 19% increase in electricity bills;
- A 10% rise in the price of buying a house and a 9% jump in rent for a new rental property.

These demands on pay packets will be even greater against the background of the 1.25% increase to National Insurance contributions over 2022/23.

Joint Union Pay Claim 2021 Submission



Posted on: 7 May 2021

The joint unions for probation have submitted their pay claim to the employer.

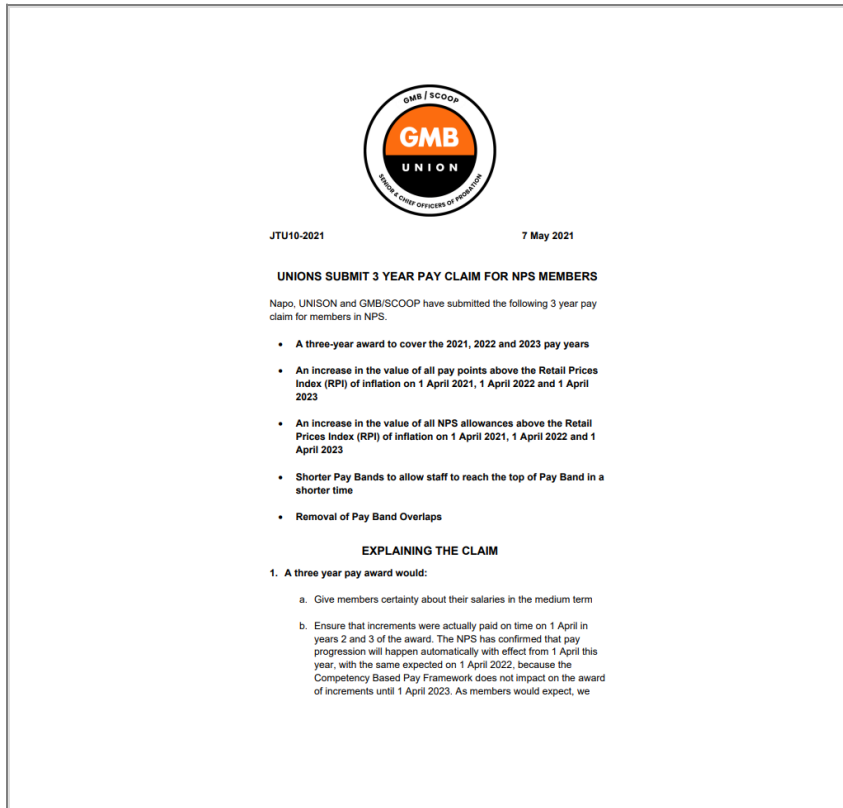
In brief, the claim includes:

- **A three-year award to cover the 2021, 2022 and 2023 pay years**
- **An increase in the value of all pay points above the Retail Prices Index (RPI) of inflation on 1 April 2021, 1 April 2022 and 1 April 2023**



- An increase in the value of all NPS allowances above the Retail Prices Index (RPI) of inflation on 1 April 2021, 1 April 2022 and 1 April 2023
- Shorter Pay Bands to allow staff to reach the top of Pay Band in a shorter time
- Removal of Pay Band Overlaps

Read the claim in full below (pdf):



Pay



Posted on: 29 April 2021

Following lengthy discussions, the April 2020 pay award was settled. This was effectively the pay progression award agreed as part of the 2018 pay deal. It also included a 2% non-consolidated payment to those at the top of their pay scale. Additionally, small reward bonuses were paid to some specific roles in Pay Bands 1 to 5. The bottom pay point was removed from each Pay Band.



These arrangements were back-dated to April 20. It was also agreed that those on Pay Band 1 should be assimilated onto Pay Band 2 and that no-one transferring in from the CRCs in June will do so on Pay Band 1. The negotiations on this last agreement are continuing.

The prospects for the pay deal for April 21 will be challenging. Clearly the Chancellor's statement about a pay freeze will impact on negotiation efforts. However, we have been assured that the pay progression which is part of the 2018 pay deal will be honoured. The unions will be submitting a pay claim for a three-year deal.

Competency Pay Framework (CBF)

Extensive discussions have taken place with the unions since October about the arrangements for the implementation of CBF which again was part of the pay modernisation introduced in the pay deal of 2018. It has been agreed that the current year (April 21 to Mar 22) will be an introductory year and will not affect pay progression in April 22. April 22 to March 23 will be the first year where CBF will be used to assess each employee's appropriateness to progress to the next pay point in the relevant Pay Band.

It is intended for the year 21-22 to be used to trial the CBF so that everyone is familiar with the process and to distinguish it from the SPDR process and its successor). It will also be used to identify issues with the process that can be resolved before the scheme becomes operative in April 22 for progression in April 23. The employers held a launch event on April 8th for NPS and CRC staff. This has been recorded and is available for anyone who may have missed it.

Amalgamation Arrangements

The process for placing ACOs in the new Head of Probation Delivery Units (PDUs) is reaching its latter stages. The process for competitive interviews for PDUs with more than one applicant has taken place. The vacant PDU Heads roles will be/have been advertised.

As members may be aware the roles of Head of UPW and Head of Programmes were evaluated at Pay Band A. However, as a result of union representation it has been agreed to review the Job Descriptions for these two roles with a view to a re-evaluation of the Pay Band. This is currently on-going.

The unions have also been supporting those affected by the proposals for the DSOU's in the amalgamated service, pointing out the significant risk to the delivery of these programmes contained within these proposals:

Other Areas of Involvement

1. Twice weekly recovery meetings



- 2. Equality and Diversity Strategy
- 3. Court work
- 4. Pay Reform
- 5. Approved Premises

Finally, the unions met with the new Minister, Alex Chalk, via Teams on April 22nd. This was an encouraging first encounter and as a former practising criminal barrister he is familiar with the CJ system.

PROBATION STAFF AND COVID19 – JOINT UNION STATEMENT



Posted on: 22 May 2020

GMB/SCOOP (Senior and Chief Officers of Probation) and other probation unions, **NAPO**, **UNISON** are working together to protect Black/BAME members in the National Probation Service (NPS) and in the 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies CRCs) in relation to the increased risk from Covid19 affecting members of Black/BAME communities in the UK.

EVIDENCE OF INCREASED RISK TO BLACK/BAME COMMUNITIES

NHS England confirmed on 7 May 2020* that members of Black/BAME communities are among those groups who are clinically vulnerable to Covid19. They stated:

‘We now know there is evidence of disproportionate mortality and morbidity amongst black, asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people, including our NHS staff, who have contracted COVID-19.’

The NHS has subsequently issued detailed guidance for NHS employers to undertake specific risk assessments of the vulnerability of Black/BAME staff to Covid19 and appropriate action to reduce exposure to, and the risk from, Covid19 for Black/BAME staff.

The police service has quickly adopted the same approach for police officers and police staff.



We therefore demand that HMPPS takes similar action now!

In a recent meeting with senior HMPPS officials, GMB/SCOOP called on the NPS and CRCs to proactively respond to the NHS statement, and follow the NHS risk assessment programme to protect Black/BAME probation staff. We made clear that we expect them to adopt the same approach.

We do not believe that there is time to wait for further research on the risk of Covid19 to Black/BAME communities, which Public Health England is due to publish in a few weeks time.

We need action now to protect our Black/BAME members!

RAISE YOUR CONCERNS WITH HMPPS!

REFERENCES:

***NHS Statement on Increased Risk of Covid19 to Black communities:**

***NHS Risk Assessment Framework for Black staff in relation to Covid19:**

