

## Progress on previous recommendations

Previous recommendation	Action taken and impact	Categorisation	Improvement still required?
<i>From previous Probation Service inspections</i>	<i>Briefly describe action taken and impact</i>	<i>Sufficient progress/ some progress/ no progress</i>	<i>Yes/no If yes, consider repeating the recommendation</i>
Ensure that priorities are communicated clearly to, and understood by, probation practitioners and middle managers	<p><b>Action taken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established monthly staff engagement meetings, including all-staff calls.</li> <li>Implemented one half-day PDD per month</li> <li>Embedded an engagement chat and wellbeing forum to allow staff to give feedback to the head of PDU on issues that were important to them</li> <li>Implemented quarterly middle manager development days to discuss any actions relating to, for example, serious further offences, HMI Probation recommendations, domestic homicide reviews and safeguarding</li> <li>Set up monthly team meetings for managers where priorities were communicated</li> <li>Shared the business plan and links to CBF with staff</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>The PDU business plan was easily accessible and understandable for staff. Most staff were aware of the plan, which had been disseminated via all staff calls, management meeting, teams meetings and PDDs. The business plan had been made relevant to</p>	Sufficient progress	No

	staff by being linked to the appraisal process. The staff engagement chat and wellbeing forum enabled staff to explore new ideas and invited constructive challenge.		
Conduct a strategic analysis into the needs of people on probation and develop a strategy for addressing local diversity issues	<p><b>Action taken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produced a PDU profile report every six months</li> <li>• Used the PDU profile report to examine identified needs in management meetings and take appropriate action</li> <li>• Reviewed the North East caseload profile as required</li> <li>• Ensured staff were represented and involved in women's hubs and other regional initiatives; feeding back information to the PDU as required.</li> <li>• Linked data on needs to the Engaging People on Probation (EPoP) agenda</li> <li>• Used information from EPoP survey to better understand the needs of people on probation</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>PDU profile reports were shared and discussed with the PDU management team before being disseminated more widely within the staff group, through team meetings, team development days and professional development days. We saw some evidence that services were being delivered to address the needs of people on probation. In 58 per cent of cases inspected, services were delivered to reduce reoffending and support desistance. In 65 per cent of</p>	Some progress	Yes

	<p>cases inspected, services were delivered to build on the person on probation's strengths and enhance protective factors.</p> <p>The PDU had a diversity and inclusion action plan that aligned with the regional equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) action plan, PDU delivery plan and regional EPoP strategy. This provided clear, coherent and consistent messaging across action plans enabling a common understanding by staff of the key priorities in relation to diversity and inclusion. This was translating into practice, for example with the creation of the young adult teams in both offices.</p> <p>The PDU had not explored available options for the Regional Outcomes and Innovations Fund (ROIF) to meet the diverse and relevant needs of the people on probation in Gateshead and South Tyneside. However, this was being driven regionally. The regional head of community integration was going to engage with PDU heads to identify projects.</p>		
Improve contingency planning and delivery on medium and high-risk cases	<p><b>Action taken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All practitioners and SPOs had attended the mandated Keeping People Safe events</li> <li>• All practitioners and SPOs had attended or were scheduled to attend to the RCAT peer events during 2025 and 2026.</li> <li>• Monthly PDDs were implemented to address core areas of practice, in line with North East Effective Practice approaches</li> <li>• A development day was held to discuss contingency planning for Probation Reset cases</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact</b></p>	No progress	Yes

	<p>Our case inspection results found that in only 44 per cent of cases did planning activity set out the necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage the risks identified.</p> <p>All but one of the cases inspected were assessed as either high or medium risk of serious harm. Since the last inspection we saw a decline in the quality of some of the work undertaken, especially across practice to keep people safe.</p>		
<p>Ensure that enquiries into domestic abuse and child safeguarding are made on all cases and used to inform assessments of risk</p>	<p><b>Action taken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regionally, a dedicated team of administrators were based within the public protection team, who focused on carrying out all domestic abuse and safeguarding checks</li> <li>This has been placed as a priority focus on PDU CBF for all staff 2024/2025</li> <li>Safeguarding checks workshop delivered to all staff in February 2025</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>Our case inspection results showed that in almost all cases information on safeguarding and domestic abuse was received at the beginning of the sentence. However, the quality of the information was inconsistent. The domestic abuse information received at the beginning of the sentence was insufficient in just under a third of cases and the child safeguarding information received was insufficient in just under half of relevant cases inspected. This meant that the assessment of risk of serious harm was less accurate. For example, not all victims were identified, or the risk towards them was not analysed sufficiently.</p>	Some progress	Yes

<p>Ensure that the interventions necessary to reduce reoffending and risk of harm are delivered in all cases</p>	<p><b>Action taken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders actively responded to information and feedback from the programmes team regarding completions every month and prioritising cases for action.</li> <li>• PSOs delivered toolkits on behalf of POs in appropriate cases</li> <li>• Monitored RAR completions across the region.</li> <li>• Used fortnightly unpaid work report to monitor UPW performance</li> <li>• Improved relationships and links with CRS</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>There were strong relationships with most CRS providers, supported by a regular presence in both probation offices. This positive relationship translated into the casework, with two-thirds of relevant cases being offered CRS.</p> <p>However, sufficient services were delivered to support a reduction in reoffending in respect of family and relationships, lifestyle, drug misuse, thinking and behaviour, attitudes, and finance, benefit and debt in less than half of the cases inspected.</p> <p>Also, in less than half of the cases inspected were sufficient services delivered to reduce risk of harm in respect of accommodation, family and relationships, lifestyle, thinking and behaviour and attitudes.</p> <p>Completion rates for accredited programmes had improved over the last 12 months. The rate for accredited programmes for individuals convicted of a sex offence was 55 per cent, compared with 37 per cent in the previous 12 months. The rate for programmes other than</p>	<p>Some progress</p>	<p>Yes</p>
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	<p>those for individuals convicted of a sex offence was 51 per cent, compared with 35 per cent in the previous 12 months.</p> <p>The percentage of unpaid work requirements with hours outstanding beyond 12 months had nearly halved in 12 months and there had been a reduction in the number of requirements over 12 months without an extension.</p>		
<p>Ensure that sufficient arrangements are in place to effectively oversee the quality of casework by PQiP trainees and PSOs.</p>	<p><b>Action taken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced specialist PQiP managers</li> <li>• Regularly monitored PQiP SPOs direct reports, in conjunction with regional workforce planning, to ensure manageable workloads.</li> <li>• Strengthened the links between PQiP SPO and operational SPOs to ensure PQiPs have ongoing and consistent sources of support in the absence of their line manager</li> <li>• On-site practice tutor assessors and established strong links with the learning and development team</li> <li>• Provided supervision for all PQiPs a minimum of monthly, in line with national expectations</li> <li>• Undertook calls with PQiPs and PSOs following last inspection to understand specific issues</li> <li>• Provided joint training with SPOs and PQiPs specifically around risk of serious harm and sentence planning, including contingency planning</li> <li>• Provided extra development days on topics that were specific to the learning needs of new staff</li> </ul>	Some progress	Yes

	<p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>Most PQiP learners were managed by the designated PQiP SPO. This enabled the PDU to closely monitor the progress and learning needs of this staff group. In addition to the national offer, trainee probation officers were given additional local shadowing opportunities, visits to local services and inputs from people with lived experience. Examples of this included attending court and placements in victim liaison units.</p> <p>Most staff indicated they were having regular supervision.</p> <p>There was no notable difference in the quality of the case inspection results between PO, PSOs and trainee probation officers. However, our case inspection results showed that the quality of the work to keep people safe was insufficient across assessment, delivery and reviewing.</p>		
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