



Justice in a changing community – CJI Stakeholder Conference '07

Justice in a changing community is to be the theme for CJI's fourth Stakeholder Conference which is due to take place at the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick, on Wednesday 17 January 2007.

The annual conference aims to bring together people who work in the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland with academics, politicians and representatives of voluntary and community groups.

The event provides CJI with an opportunity to consult its stakeholders – all those with an interest in its work – about its plans for the coming year, as well as providing a chance to encourage discussion on a topical theme which is of interest and importance to the justice system.

This year CJI is focusing on the changing nature of society in Northern Ireland.

“We are keen to examine the challenges which are being presented to the criminal justice system as inward migration, particularly from Eastern Europe, increases and

the demography within Northern Ireland changes with sectarianism diversifying into the more complex pattern of ‘hate crime’ affecting all sorts of minority groups,” said Kit Chivers, Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice.

“We want to look at the challenges being presented to the cohesion of the community and to the agencies responsible for maintaining law and order,” he said.

Among those invited to speak at the event is the Chief Constable of the PSNI Sir Hugh Orde, who will look at the subject of policing a changing community. Brendan McAllister, Director of Mediation Northern Ireland, will also address delegates with Professor Kieran McEvoy of Queen’s University, Belfast, examining the challenges we face.

“The conference will also welcome Ms Kathleen O’Toole, the first Chief Inspector of An Garda Síochána who will speak about parallel issues in the Republic of Ireland,” said Mr Chivers. A panel discussion involving minority groups will also form part



Kit Chivers, Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice

of the conference programme.

CJI’s Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan will present CJI’s proposed inspection plan for the incoming year and invite discussion on the future direction of CJI’s work.

“It is envisaged those attending the conference will split into four separate groups covering the areas of policing, prosecution and the courts, custody and human rights and probation and youth justice to discuss the proposed inspection programme,” said the Chief Inspector. ■

Joint working between CJI and RQIA a possibility for the future

Members of the inspection staff at CJI attended a meeting with the new Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) in September to learn more about their respective organisations and ways in which they could work together in the future.

The meeting took place at the RQIA's headquarters at Riverside Tower, Lanyon Place in Belfast. During the meeting, Kit Chivers and Stella Burnside, Chief Executive of the RQIA, gave short presentations on the role and inspection methodology of their respective organisations.

The presentations were followed by a discussion involving CJI Inspectors and a number of senior directors from RQIA around areas of mutual interest, common skills and knowledge sharing.

"It was clear from the discussions that took place that both Inspectorates are committed to securing improvement through the inspection process, and in doing so, raising public confidence in Health and Criminal Justice services," said Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan.

"The event also highlighted areas for future joint working in particular



Brendan McGuigan and Kit Chivers from CJI meet Stella Burnside, Chief Executive of RQIA.

Prison healthcare, healthcare provision at the Juvenile Justice Centre and mental healthcare provision for convicted offenders," he explained.

During the meeting representatives of both organisations discussed the potential effects of the Review of Public Administration (RPA) and the impact of the restoration of devolution.

"The meeting was very useful and informative and CJI and RQIA staff have committed themselves to maintaining regular contact with each other with a view to exploring developmental opportunities for their respective staff through their inspection programmes," concluded Mr McGuigan. ■

FACT FILE ON RQIA

RQIA was set up in 2005 as a non-departmental public body under the HPSS (Quality, Improvement & Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, to carry out tasks of regulation and inspection. It is sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and has responsibility for three broad areas of work. They are:

- an overall assessment of the state of health and social care services;
- clinical and social care governance and
- the regulation of care services.

RQIA is still developing its full capacity to fulfil an extremely challenging and complex role that will at one time or another affect everyone in Northern Ireland.

Among the areas which fall within the inspection remit for RQIA are:

- children's homes;
- independent clinics and hospitals;
- nursing homes;
- residential care homes;
- fostering agencies;
- HSS boards;
- HSS trusts and special agencies.

Criminal Justice System responds to CJI Avoidable Delay report

The inter-agency team established to develop a new strategy aimed at improving processing times for criminal cases following the publication of CJI's *Avoidable Delay* report in May, has published its strategy and action plan for improving the existing system.

The team – which was established by Criminal Justice Minister David Hanson MP, – revealed its proposals in November.

The strategy and action plan, which are available on the publications section of the NIO website

(www.nio.gov.uk) deals in detail with the 30 recommendations made by CJI contained in the *Avoidable Delay* report and included an ambitious programme of work much of which is set to be delivered in 2006-07.

Key actions include the alignment of individual agency strategies and targets with the single criminal justice strategy on avoidable delay. Specific timeliness targets for criminal cases will be set following validation of case data.

Ministers are to continue to monitor performance and the NI Criminal Justice Board is to take on more responsibility for delivery of

the strategy. A newly established Delay Action Team is tasked with implementation of the action plan.

CJI intends to conduct a follow-up review of progress against the action plan in 2007. ■

CJI's Avoidable Delay Report



CJI hosts seminar on VCS contribution to the Criminal Justice System

Criminal Justice Inspection recently welcomed Helen Edwards, Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) to its headquarters for a short seminar on the contribution made by the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System.

Ms Edwards, who heads up the umbrella organisation designed to integrate the Prison and Probation Services in England and Wales, was in Northern Ireland for NIACRO's 35th Annual General Meeting and kindly agreed to participate in the CJI seminar.

The seminar which was held in November, was attended by representatives of Government, funders, voluntary and community organisations and statutory agencies.

Following a short presentation on key points arising from CJI's recent report *Added Value? A Review of the Voluntary and Community Sector's contribution to the Northern Ireland criminal justice system*, Ms Edwards outlined the future arrangements for VCS involvement in the delivery of criminal justice services in England and Wales.

She indicated there would be an increased role for the sector, particularly in contributing to the management of offenders in the community. In some instances this will entail competition with other providers, including the private sector.

During the half-day seminar there was a wide-ranging discussion and comparison of VCS roles in Northern Ireland and England and Wales. There was general agreement with the findings of CJI's review which found that the VCS provides significant added value to the criminal justice system here.

The event concluded by recognising that if criminal justice was devolved to a local Assembly, it would be essential to ensure the unique role of the VCS was properly incorporated in new arrangements. ■



Helen Edwards, Chief Executive of NOMS (second left) pictured with Tom McGonigle, Brendan McGuigan and Olwyn Lyner (NIACRO) at CJI's seminar on the contribution made to the Criminal Justice system by the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Profile of Helen Edwards

- Helen was appointed the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service on 4 April 2006 with overall responsibility for reducing re-offending in England and Wales.
- Ms Edwards joined the Home office in 2002 as Director of the Active Communities Directorate.
- She previously worked for NACRO for 18 years holding a variety of posts including Chief Executive for five years.
- Prior to this she was appointed Director-General of the Home Office's Communities Group in January 2004 where she was responsible for the Home Office's work on volunteering, the voluntary and community sector, race, equality, faith, cohesion and civil renewal.

To obtain a copy of CJI's review of the VCS please visit our website – www.cjini.org/publications.

CJI publishes its interim report on the man in light of the murder of Attracta Harron

On 4 December Criminal Justice Inspection published its independent assessment of how sex offenders are managed in Northern Ireland three months after Trevor Hamilton was sentenced for the murder of Strabane pensioner Attracta Harron.

The interim report -- carried out at the request of the Minister for Criminal Justice David Hanson, MP, -- took into account the internal investigations carried out by the Police Service, Probation Board and Prison Service following Mrs. Harron's murder and incorporated the findings of the Serious Case Review carried out by Mr. David Watkins.

The inspection was conducted by Chief Inspector Kit Chivers, Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan and Tom McGonigle, who played

a key role in CJI's 2005 MASRAM inspection report.

"Six themes were identified in the interim report which made seven recommendations for improvement by the criminal justice agencies and by Government. The key recommendation was for an end to automatic 50% remission of prison sentences for dangerous offenders," said Mr. Chivers.

Automatic 50% remission

"Undoubtedly the initial problem with this case was Hamilton's eligibility for release after serving only 50% of his sentence for the original crime of rape. Had there been provision for parole arrangements to manage the sentence, a Board would certainly have thought twice about whether Hamilton was fit to be released back into the community. Unfortunately,

that option was not available.

"In our interim report, CJI strongly recommended that Government should bring forward legislation to end the automatic right of violent and sex offenders to avail of 50% remission and also urged the Government to seriously consider establishing a Parole Board in Northern Ireland," said Mr. Chivers.

The day after CJI's report was published, the Minister for Criminal Justice announced that Government intended to end automatic 50% remission for dangerous offenders.

Plans were also announced to establish an independent body similar to a Parole Board that would make decisions on the suitability of prisoners for release based on full risk assessments.

"Without a doubt, this is the single biggest step which could have been taken towards improving public protection in Northern Ireland and it is a move which has been welcomed by CJI and by the public," stated Mr. Chivers.

PSNI contribution

Brendan McGuigan, CJI's Deputy Chief Inspector explained that the PSNI had been frank about their failings in the management of Trevor Hamilton once he was released into the community.

"CJI's report confirmed police officers had failed to regularly attend the interagency meetings on sex offender management; did not adequately communicate internally or externally and officers on patrol were not sufficiently alert to the danger posed by Trevor Hamilton,"



Kit Chivers speaks to members of the media about the recommendations contained in the report.

Management of sex offenders

said Mr. McGuigan.

“Overall, in the course of this inspection, CJI found evidence to suggest the PSNI’s management of sex offenders is improving,” said Mr McGuigan, “but Inspectors also identified other areas such as greater access by officers to the ViSOR system where further progress is required.”

Co-location

The interim inspection report also highlighted the potential benefits a co-located public protection team could bring to the future management of sex offenders in Northern Ireland.

“Although each agency has improved in its approach to working collaboratively, there is still more scope for closer co-operation. By having police officers, probation officers and social workers working together on a daily basis, staff would be in a position to learn from one another,” added Tom McGonigle.

He continued: “CJI recommended establishing a co-located public protection team in its 2005 MASRAM report and we have reiterated this suggestion in our latest report.”

Conclusion

CJI’s overall conclusion on completing the interim inspection report was that there had been considerable progress in the interagency management of sex offenders since the murder of Attracta Harron.

More robust measures for managing sex offenders are now in place, but further work remains to be done at all levels.

“While practices have improved, the report has recognised that even if all agencies do their best, there can be no guarantees that such offences will not happen in the future. Supervision in the community is not and never will be as secure as custody and it would be wrong to pretend otherwise,” concluded Mr. Chivers.

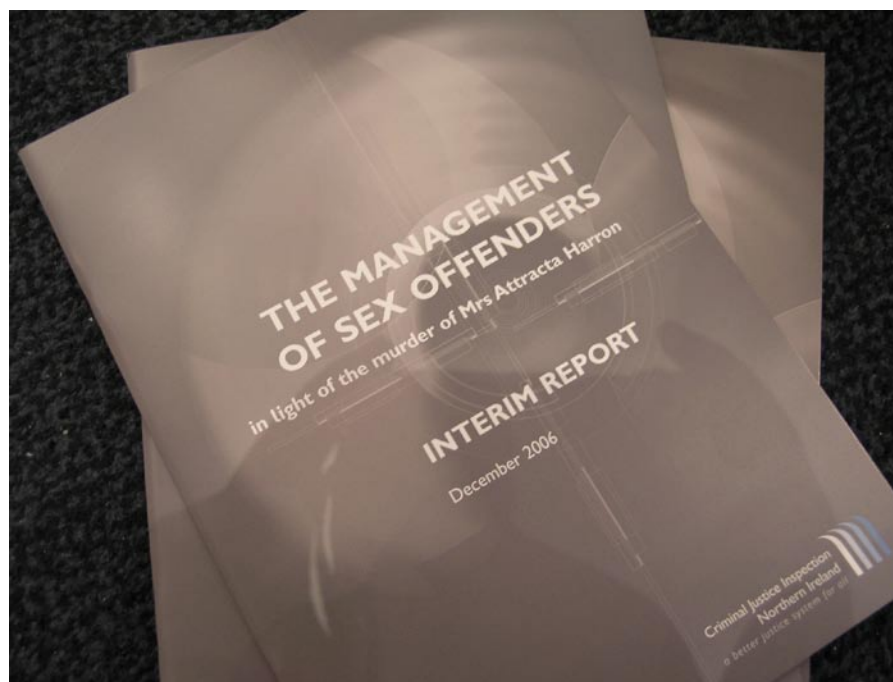
What next?

CJI will re-examine progress on the management of sex offenders in Northern Ireland in Spring 2007 by which stage important new Practice Guidelines will have had six months to ‘bed in’ and can be properly tested.



Kit is interviewed for television during the press conference.

CJI hopes to publish a final report in 2007. This report will further update progress against CJI’s 2005 MASRAM report recommendations, address the organisational options for a stronger interagency service and consider the outcomes of other Serious Case Reviews. ■



CJI’s interim report on the management of sex offenders.

CJI unveils its 2007-08 inspection programme

CJI staff met at the end of November to draw up the Inspectorates proposed inspection programme for 2007-08.

The programme forms the basis of work to be undertaken by the organisation and includes at least one inspection involving each of the five key criminal justice agencies in Northern Ireland.

“The proposed Inspection programme will be discussed at the 2007 Stakeholder Conference in January and we are looking forward to receiving feedback from our stakeholders,” said Brendan McGuigan, CJI’s Deputy Chief Inspector.

“At this point, the inspection programme for the incoming financial year still contains an element of flexibility so delegates attending the 2007 Stakeholder Conference really will have an opportunity to influence the work CJI undertakes in the coming 12 months,” he added. ■

Proposed Inspection Programme for 2007-08

Policing

- Roads Policing
- Policing with the Community

Youth Justice Agency

- Programme of inspection of the Juvenile Justice Centre
- Corporate Governance

Prisons

- Inspection of Hydebank Wood (Ash House and Young Offenders Centre)
- Maghaberry Prison (unannounced inspection)

Probation

- Offender Hostels
- Enforcement of statutory orders
- Management of life-sentenced prisoners in custody and in the community

Public Prosecution Service

- Disclosure

Court Service

- Coronial Service
- Legal Services Commission
- Administration of jury service
- Life Sentence Review Commission

Others

- Causeway Programme (2nd Report)
- Royal Mail Investigations Unit

Thematic Reviews

- The impact of Section 75 on the criminal justice agencies of Northern Ireland
- How the CJS manages offenders, victims and witness with mental health problems
- Fine defaulters
- Failure to prosecute within statutory time limits
- Impact of changes in the Youth Court
- The operation and effectiveness of ASBOs
- The use of generic management consultants

Action Plan Reviews

- Victims and Witnesses
- Avoidable Delay
- Benefit Investigation Services
- Volume Crime and Police Bail
- Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
- Community Safety Partnerships
- Probation Board Corporate Governance
- MASRAM and the Management of Sex offenders in light of the murder of Attracta Harron (full report)
- State Pathologist’s Department
- Procurement

Young people have key role to play in Ballymena’s future

The Deputy Chief Inspector of CJI Brendan McGuigan took part in a one-day Common Purpose citizenship programme for young people in the Ballymena in October.

The cross-community *Your Turn* course aimed at 14-15 year olds from the local area is supported by the Ballymena Learning Together Group which includes all nine principals of post-primary schools in the Borough.

“The *Your Turn* programme is designed to reinforce the belief that young people have an essential role to play in how society works,” said Mr. McGuigan.

“During the one-day conference, leaders and managers from both the private and public sector are invited to act as advisors to the young people as they grapple with workplace problems

presented by advisors.

“In the afternoon session, the young participants are invited to raise issues which are affecting their lives and which if they changed would make their lives better. The advisors are there as a resource to the young people in helping them plan and mount a campaign to affect change,” added the Deputy Chief Inspector.

Mr. McGuigan explained that during the course he participated in, up to 100 young people had been presented with the problem of how to make people from other countries feel welcome to live and work in Ballymena.

“The response from the group I worked closely with was very good. It was largely based on the experiences of two of the five students experiences of migrant workers in Ballymena,” he said.

The Deputy Chief Inspector explained the young people had raised concerns about exploitation in terms of pay and conditions and felt that more should be done to integrate migrant workers more fully in the town.

Suggestions were made as to how integration into the local community could be improved through the provision of English language classes and by accommodation in locations other than in housing estates being made available. ■



CJI's Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan pictured with young people from the Ballymena area who attended Common Purpose's one day Your Turn programme.

Chief Inspector gives evidence on CRJ schemes to NI Affairs Committee

Northern Ireland's Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice, Kit Chivers, emphasised the differences between the revised new Government protocol for community restorative justice schemes (CRJ) and the original proposal when he recently met members of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC).

Mr Chivers was one of four people invited by the committee to give evidence to its members in London on 1 November.

"This was the first time CJI had been asked by the NIAC to give evidence and I was delighted to accept the invitation," he said.

During the session, Mr Chivers

said that the revised protocol – which was issued for consultation in July – was based on the premise that all concerned would sign up to co-operating fully with the police and that rigorous vetting of those working within CRJ schemes would take place. This altered the calculation of the costs and benefits and the risks and opportunities of the schemes.

He explained that under the protocol the schemes would be 'safer' in that key decisions would be taken by the police and the Prosecution Service where necessary, but that there was a danger that as a result, CRJ schemes would become more bureaucratic.

"Part of the advantage of the schemes is the informality of their approach," he said, indicating they offered the chance of dealing with young people charged with low-level offences outside the formal justice system, more quickly and in a way which was more meaningful to the victim and to the young people.

"I told the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee inspection was a way of setting people a challenge and that if schemes did not operate in an acceptable way in accordance with the criteria set out in the protocol, CJI would not hesitate to report adversely on them, which would lead to a loss of accreditation," concluded Mr Chivers. ■

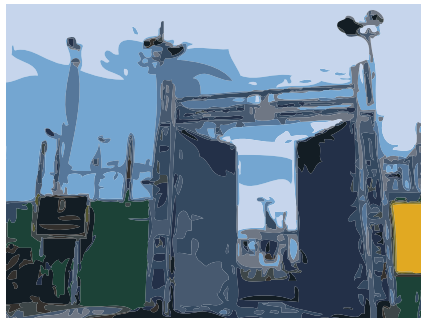
Magilligan Prison Inspection Report published

The report of the joint CJI/HMCIP inspection of Magilligan Prison, undertaken in May this year was published in December.

A team of ten Inspectors took part in the inspection with the aim of determining the level of progress made in implementing the recommendations of the last inspection which reported in 2004.

This year's inspection found some progress had been made in all areas since 2004, but that two factors – a very poor built environment and the limited role of residential staff – still prevented Magilligan from performing as well as it should.

Magilligan's monitoring of outcomes by religion and ethnicity showed - as was the case in the 2004 inspection - that there were differential outcomes for prisoners



The entrance to Magilligan Prison

in relation to the incentives scheme, disciplinary charges and access to the resettlement unit. This was a serious cause for concern, confirmed by HMCIP's own survey which showed that prisoners who self-identified as Irish perceived they had poorer treatment by staff and less help with resettlement or skills. The Prison Service is already taking steps to rectify this.

Resettlement remained a strength and activities had improved,

particularly the quality and quantity of education. Good work was also found to be taking place in the specialist units, but elsewhere there was virtually no personal officer work and most staff-prisoner relationships remained distant.

The report made 130 recommendations for improvement, both by Magilligan and by the Prison Service Headquarters. In particular, the report recommended the Prison Service should develop a strategy to reduce unequal outcomes, within the context of a strategy to promote equality and diversity.

The NI Prison Service has drawn up an Action Plan in response to the report that has been published on their website and CJI's next inspection will assess progress in relation to this Plan. ■

Probation Board chairman addresses issues raised in CJI's Corporate Governance Review

Criminal Justice Inspection published its review of Corporate Governance within the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) in October 2006.

The report looked at the structures and functions of the organisation and the relationships between the Board, management and staff and its sponsoring department, the Northern Ireland Office.

While CJI found the Probation Board demonstrated appropriate procedures and had in place the relevant structures and accountability measures for a medium sized organisation, the inspection prompted the PBNI to undertake a restructuring exercise.

Here the chairman of the Probation Board, Mr Ronnie Spence gives his view on the challenges the report presented.



“The review has been a significant challenge for the Probation Board for Northern Ireland.

Ronnie Spence, Chairman of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland

On the positive side, the review found that we had in place the appropriate procedures, structures and accountability mechanisms, that the meetings of the Board and its committees worked smoothly, and that we had made considerable progress in implementing a strategic review conducted in 2004.

“On the less positive side, the review raised serious issues about the management culture and style in the organisation and dissatisfaction amongst both staff and board members.

“Before the review started, we had already begun, first to re-examine how PBNI could increase its contribution to the criminal justice effort and second, to consider possible changes in the top structure.

“The inspection team agreed to delay publication of their report to enable us to reflect upon the emerging findings and to complete consideration, in conjunction with NIO, of a possible restructuring.

“The restructuring came into effect on 1 October 2006. The work of PBNI is now led by a Chief Probation Officer – Brian McCaughey – who has responsibility for all aspects of our professional probation services and by a Chief Management Officer – David van der Merwe – who has responsibility for the management of human and financial resources. Mr van der Merwe was also appointed by the NIO as the Accounting Officer for PBNI's expenditure. The two Chief Officers report, through the Chairman, to the Board.

“We believe that CJI's report provided a constructive input to our efforts to increase PBNI's contribution towards protecting the public, reducing re-offending and integrating offenders successfully into the community as well as improving the way in which the organisation is directed and managed.”

PBNI has welcomed CJI's intention to review progress in 2007-08. ■

Staffing changes at CJI



Amanda Hannan, Inspection Support Officer

Since the last edition of *The Spec* was published, Amanda Hannan has joined the CJI team as Inspection Support Officer. Amanda joined CJI in October having previously worked at

Quigg Golden Contract Consultants.

Her role involves carrying out research for all CJI Inspectors prior to the start of the inspection process and maintaining accurate records and files for CJI.

Speaking about her appointment Amanda said: “I am delighted to have joined CJI and look forward to participating in the various inspections carried out by the organisation.”

Martina White who previously worked for CJI on secondment from the NIO has joined CJI as a direct recruit following her successful appointment to the post of Business Support Officer.

Adverts were recently placed in the local press as part of its search to appoint a further Inspector with Human

Resource experience to the CJI team.

While the selection process is continuing at present, Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan said he was impressed by the high calibre of the candidates who had chosen to apply for the post.

Christmas Reception at CJI

CJI held its annual Christmas Reception at its Great Victoria Street headquarters on 11 December.

The event was well attended by representatives of the various agencies and voluntary and community sector organisations the Inspectorate works with throughout the year.

“CJI was delighted to be able to meet everyone on an informal basis and to thank those present for their help throughout 2006. We look forward to working with all agencies, groups and individuals involved in the Criminal Justice system in 2007,” said Chief Inspector Kit Chivers.

CJI publishes its Annual Report for 2005-06

Criminal Justice Inspection's Annual Report for 2005-06 was placed before the Houses of Parliament on 11 December 2006.

The report tracked the progress of the agency over the financial year and gave a brief synopsis of the various inspections carried out and published in 05-06.

The annual report revealed the organisation had fully achieved 10 of its objectives and targets and partially achieved one objective and target out of a total of 13 covering areas such as inspections; research and communication; planning and management and its relationship with the Criminal Justice Board.

The accounts for 2005-06 provided a full breakdown of CJI's expenditure during the financial year. The figures were audited and approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General of the National Audit Office who recorded that he had no observations to make on the financial statements supplied to him by CJI. ■

Copies of CJI's Annual Report can be downloaded from its website – www.cjini.org or hard copies can be obtained by phoning CJI on 028 90 258000 or by writing to CJI, Media and Communications Dept, 7th Floor, 14 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7BA.