

**First Report of the Interagency Group for a Fairer and Safer Ireland,
July 2018.**

Dear Minister Flanagan,

I have great pleasure in presenting you with the first annual report of the Interagency Group for a Fairer and Safer Ireland.

I was appointed by your predecessor, the Tánaiste & Minister for Justice and Equality, Ms. Frances Fitzgerald T.D., as the independent Chairperson of the Interagency Group for a Fairer and Safer Ireland. The main purpose of the Group is to implement two key recommendations of the 2014 Penal Policy Review Group Report (*July 2014 Report of the Strategic Review of Penal Policy*) (www.justice.ie/penalpolicy), which call for much greater interagency cooperation in the management and rehabilitation of offenders and crime prevention in general.

This report outlines the work the Interagency Group has undertaken during its first year. We have spent time analysing the nature of the problems faced by offenders when released from custody and how better interagency cooperation could assist in their reintegration into the community. We have learned about excellent examples of interagency cooperation in relation to prisoner release, such as the Community Return Programme and SORAM, which have demonstrated what can be achieved when agencies work together on common objectives.

We have identified a number of issues that are causing particular problems for the reintegration of offenders and which could be addressed by better interagency cooperation. The main issues are the deficit of suitable accommodation, easier access to income support and employment activation, the award of medical cards to all eligible prisoners before release from custody and the provision of a public service card for all prisoners who wish to have one before release. The Group believes there is a need to increase the amount of information and research about the experiences of offenders following release from custody so that policies can be evaluated and adjusted accordingly. We also draw attention to the need to ensure that data on offenders prior to release can be shared on a confidential basis with agencies that have a responsibility for their reintegration.

I would like to thank the members of the Group for their commitment to improving interagency cooperation in relation to offenders and to Keith Lynn, our Secretary for his hard work in supporting the Group.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues in Government on the implementation of the recommendations of the Penal Policy Review Group Report.



Ruth Barrington PhD

Chair

25 July 2018

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1 Context

1.1 Background to the Establishment of the Interagency Group

The Penal Policy Review Group (PPRG) was established in 2012, in line with the recommendations of the Thornton Hall Project Review Group, to conduct a wide ranging strategic review of penal policy, taking into account relevant work already carried out in this jurisdiction and elsewhere, the rights of those convicted of crimes, the perspective of those who are victims of crime and the interests of society in general.

The PPRG advocated an approach to crime and the penal system which emphasised rehabilitation and advocated for an improved penal system, the reduction of reliance on imprisonment as a sanction, and an increased focus on alternatives to prison. A strong thread running through all of its recommendations is the need to see the wider social context of offending, and to ensure that the work of the criminal justice agencies is integrated with social services, broadly conceived.

The Government endorsed the Penal Policy Review recommendations in 2014.

An Implementation Oversight Group (IOG) was established to oversee implementation of the Penal Policy Review Group's recommendations. The Group is chaired by Dr. Mary Rogan, Associate Professor, School of Law, Trinity College who was a member of the review group. The Group submits Implementation Reports to the Minister every six months for publication. The two key recommendations of the Review Group Report relevant to the work of the Interagency Group are recommendation 3 and 41 below. These recommendations promote inter agency and inter departmental cooperation, on the basis that crime is a matter of social as well as penal policy.

Recommendation 3

The Review Group recommends that there must be greater emphasis, if necessary through legislation, on promoting inter-agency cooperation in the management and rehabilitation of offenders. In addition to the criminal justice agencies, there is a need to recognise that a whole-of Government approach is required in collaboration with relevant agencies and local authorities in addressing offending behaviour and assisting offenders in maintaining crime free lives.

Recommendation 41

The Review Group recognises that crime is a question of social as well as penal policy and recommends that all Government departments and agencies consider the question of crime prevention when formulating policy. In this regard, the Review Group recommends that the Department of Justice and Equality join with all Government Departments and agencies to facilitate and support research in order to assist in the formulation of penal policy.

Key actors in Government departments and agencies were invited to discuss the relevant recommendations of the Review Group Report and the Thornton Hall Review Group and how to advance their implementation, at a Workshop on Interdepartmental and Interagency Co-operation on 8th February 2016 in the Department of Justice and Equality. There was a positive response from other Departments who indicated that they would be willing to participate in improved cooperation and would nominate a liaison person. Prisons Policy Division Agreed to provide secretarial support for this work.

Arising from the February conference, key areas emerged from discussions to pursue, including the following ;

- The need for a whole of Government approach
- The value of a forum of key stakeholders
- The importance of pre release preparation on release from prison
- Data Sharing between agencies
- Accommodation on release from prison
- Research
- Community Sanctions

1.2 Rationale for the establishment of the Interagency Group

The basic premise for setting up the Interagency Group is that crime is a challenge for all of society and requires a whole-of-society response. Crime is associated with many social problems such as economic deprivation, unemployment, low levels of educational achievement and substance misuse. Society suffers as a result of crime and everyone has an interest in preventing crime; it is not just the responsibility of criminal justice agencies.

The socio-economic factors which may be involved when someone goes to jail are the same factors which need to be addressed when he or she comes out of prison. That is to say, many people convicted of criminal offences have similar characteristics and deficits, in terms of the factors that may have contributed to their offending, and issues that are likely to inhibit their reintegration in the community and predispose them to re-offending.

For example, a significant percentage of those in prison or on probation are poor, unemployed, with low levels of educational achievement, and many are relatively young men, with histories of substance misuse. Homeless people and those with mental illness are also considerably over-represented in the prison and probation populations.

Regarding the size of the prison population and the through-put in the prison system over recent years, the table below provided by the Irish Prison Service, shows the total committals into and releases from prisons over recent years. This includes the number of all committals to prison, both remanded and sentenced prisoners and demonstrates the scale of the challenge

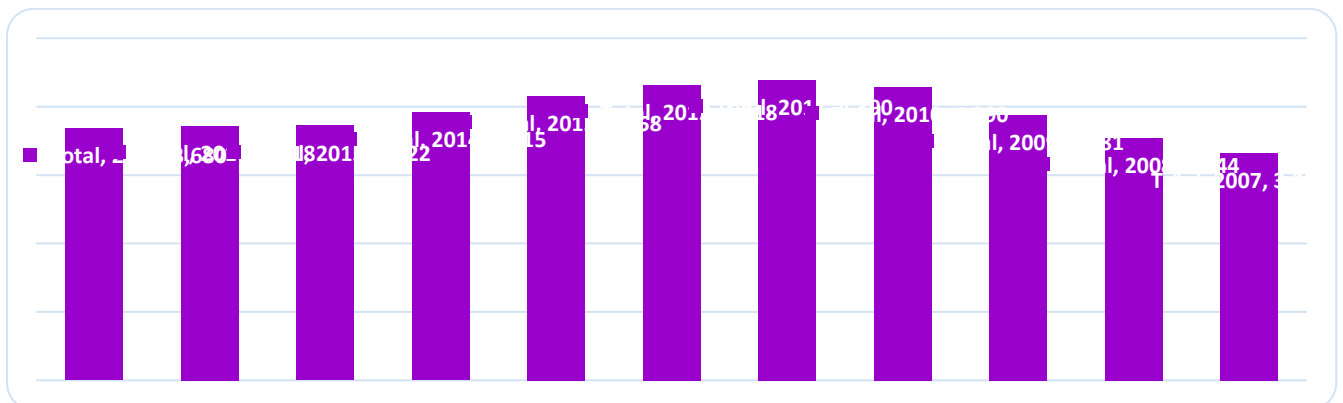
to public bodies of facilitating successful reintegration of prisoners into society and reducing recidivism.

TOTAL COMMITTALS INTO AND RELEASES FROM PRISONS

Year	Total Committals	Total Releases
2017	9,287	9,313
2016	15,099	15,205
2015	17,206	17,403
2014	16,155	16,662
2013	15,735	15,905
2012	17,026	17,052
2011	17,318	17,358
2010	17,179	16,922

DAILY AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRISONERS IN CUSTODY

The graph below provides figures in relation to the daily average number of prisoners in custody over recent years. The overall daily average number of prisoners in custody in 2017 was 3,680 compared to 3,718 in 2016 a decrease of 1.0%. The average number of female offenders in custody was 144, a 2.9% increase on the 2016 average of 140.



RECIDIVISM

In relation to Recidivism, the fourth Central Statistics Office Recidivism Studies for the Irish Prison Service and Probation Service were published in November 2016.

The studies report on:

- Prison Recidivism which is a detailed study on those who were released from a custodial prison sentence in 2010 and whether they were subsequently convicted of a further offence up to the end of 2013 and

- Probation Recidivism which is a detailed study of recidivism (re-offending) among offenders placed under Probation Service supervision in 2010.

Prison Report

The Prison Recidivism Study reports on recidivism among 9,339 offenders released by the Irish Prison Service on completion of a custodial sentence in 2010, based on reoffending and reconviction data up to the end of 2013.

The study's findings indicate that the recidivism or re-offending rate was 45.1% for the particular cohort of offenders released in 2010. When compared with the equivalent cohort from the 2009 study there is a fall in recidivism of 2.4%. This follows the 3.5% decrease that was seen for the 2009 cohort from the previous report.

The report found that males made up most of the total population assessed and had a higher recidivism rate than females (46% for males and 37.8% among females). Re-offending among younger offenders is high (a rate of 49.8% for prisoners under 21 years of age, however, this is down from 54.4% for the 2009 cohort).

The highest rates of recidivism were in the 21-25 age group at 50.7% and the lowest was in the 51+ age group at 29.4%. The highest rates of recidivism were among prisoners whose initial offence was in *Group 6 Robbery, extortion and hijacking offences*, *Group 7 Burglary and related offences* and *Group 8 Theft and related offences*. Recidivism in each of these groups was measured at over 60%, as was the case in the previous year.

Probation Report

The Probation Recidivism Study reports that close to 63% of offenders did not reoffend within a three-year period of being placed under Probation Service supervision. This is a similar figure to the previous year. When compared with the 2009 cohort the overall recidivism rate increased marginally from 37.3% to 37.5%.

The re-offending rates were lower for females with almost 70% of females not reoffending in the period.

The percentage of offenders on Community Service Orders who did not re-offend was slightly lower at 66.1% in comparison with 67.5% in the 2009 cohort.

The re-offending rate for offenders on Probation Supervision stayed at a similar level to the previous study at almost 41%.

The analysis above (by the CSO) shows that on average an prison offender has 45% probability of re-offending within 3 years of leaving prison

An average probation client has around a 37% likelihood of re-offending within a 3-year period of completing probation supervision.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Although the prison service and the probation service provide direct services - such as risk assessment, motivational programmes, offending behaviour programmes, counselling, and practical help - aimed at the rehabilitation of those under their care or supervision, many of the services that offenders need to reduce their risk of reoffending are provided by a range of other government departments and agencies. These services include accommodation, health and mental health services, income maintenance, education and training. At present, prison and probation staff working with individual offenders can often refer prisoners only on release to these other services and hope that they get to access them.

By definition, offenders can experience resistance, delays and even rejection in trying to access mainstream services. As a result, from a very practical point of view, their level of risk of reoffending can be unwittingly increased. Clearly, criminal justice services - prison and probation - have a responsibility to do what they can to facilitate reintegration, by virtue of their specific roles, responsibilities, experience and expertise. However, they can only go so far: to address some of the issues that have a significant impact on the risk of reoffending - e.g. homelessness, unemployment, addiction, and mental illness - the cooperation of the responsible Government departments and agencies is required.

Therefore, there is a clear need to have joined-up services, including improved information sharing and operational co-operation, if we are to have the optimal impact on reducing offending and victimisation in our communities.

A key role played by the Interagency Group is to raise awareness among its members from Government departments and agencies of the implications of policy and services on the reintegration and rehabilitation of offenders and the prevention of crime and of the need to adapt or coordinate those policies/services to facilitate reintegration and reduce recidivism.

2 Working Methods

2.1 Representation on the Interagency Group

In September 2016, the Acting Secretary General, Noel Waters wrote to a number of Secretary Generals and heads of public sector bodies, inviting them to nominate a representative to sit on the Group. As a result, various public sector bodies and Departments nominated representatives to sit on the Group. The membership list is attached at Appendix A.

2.2 Meetings

The Group agreed that we would meet quarterly to progress our work. To the end of 2017, the Group held six meetings on the following dates - 10 October 2016, 16 November 2016, 15 February 2017, 18 May 2017, 6 September 2017 and 6 December 2017. A table of those Department/agencies attendance at the six meetings is attached at Appendix B.

The Group also established a subgroup that met on four occasions during the same period.

2.3 Terms of Reference

The following terms of reference of the Group were discussed over a number of meetings in 2017 and agreed. The mission of the Interagency Group on Cooperation for a Fairer and Safer Ireland is to improve interdepartmental and interagency coordination in the integration and rehabilitation of offenders and the prevention of crime as recommended by the Report of the Penal Policy Strategic Review Group.

To this end, the Interagency Group will

1. Review existing pathways that involve interagency coordination and cooperation to improve the integration and rehabilitation of offenders;
2. Based on this review, propose improved interagency coordination arrangements for the integration and rehabilitation of offenders;
- 3 Promote pro-social behaviour by offenders, to those most at risk of offending and anti-social behaviour ,which results in positive participation in society.
4. Recommend how the consideration of crime prevention could be incorporated in the formulation and implementation of public sector penal and social policies.
5. Consider how fairness and greater equality could be achieved in the areas of penal and social policy in relation to crime prevention issues.
6. Identify where research and data collation could assist in greater integration across the

Public Service in terms of the rehabilitation of offenders and the formulation and impact of penal policy.

3 Work Programme 2017

The focus of our work in 2017 was very much on fact finding, educating ourselves on the background to many of the issues raised and ascertaining what the situation is on the ground, in respect of those areas covered by the terms of reference.

3.1 Presentations to the Group

Work of the Implementation and Oversight Group for the Report of the Penal Policy Strategic Review Group.

Professor Mary Rogan, Chairperson of the Implementation and Oversight Group for the Report of the Penal Policy Strategic Review Group made a presentation to the Group in which she outlined the background and context to the work of the Oversight Group which is tasked with the implementation and oversight of the recommendations of the Report of the Penal Policy Strategic Review Group.

Overview of crime levels and changes in society

Mr Jimmy Martin Assistant Secretary, Prisons and Probation Policy Division, Department of Justice and Equality also gave us an overview of crime levels and changes in society, which were relevant to the work of the Group. The Group was also provided with information on the current prison population, trends over time and recidivism rates.

Research and Information for Policy and Interagency Cooperation

A presentation on research questions in relation to offenders was made by Paul Crowley, Central Statistics Office. Paul, who is a member of the Group, outlined opportunities for research to provide evidence for penal policy. There were two main areas where research could be valuable for interagency cooperation; first to understanding the correlates of reoffending with a view to predicting the likelihood of reoffending and second, to evaluate programmes/procedures designed to reduce offending, both pre and post release.

Issues raised included:

- The need for the Department of Justice and Equality to develop a research culture for penal policy. This would involve setting a research agenda of the most important questions to be answered and requires the engagement of policy makers,
- longitudinal tracking of the employment experience of released prisoners,

- whether interventions by the State to rehabilitate prisoners are working and are effective,
- whether the Probation Service has a role to play in post release research,
- the importance of identifying which agencies hold relevant data and who should be responsible for the work of longitudinal tracking of policy effectiveness,
- that the Irish Youth Justice Service has a research partnership with the University of Limerick, which examines links between Youth Diversion Projects and tracking reoffending which might provide a model for a research programme for adult prisoners.

An appropriate research programme is an issue the Group intends to focus on in 2018 and is an interest shared with the Implementation and Oversight Group for the Report of the Penal Policy Strategic Review Group. There is broad agreement that developing a research culture for penal policy and setting a research agenda are of vital importance to progressing work in this area. We look forward to engaging with policy makers in the Department in this regard.

Data Sharing between Agencies

Seamus Carroll, Principal Officer, Civil Law Reform Division, Department of Justice and Equality gave a presentation to the Group on the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Directive which comes into force in May 2018. Seamus outlined that Data Protection is now a fundamental right, which is enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights and applies to all bodies both private/public and individuals. The new EU Regulation imposes greater obligations to protect data than the Directive currently in operation. On the basis of the presentation, the Group draws attention to the fact that a coordinated approach to offender release requires the sharing of data between agencies. Under data protection legislation, the offender must consent to the sharing of data about him or her. Work needs to be done to put in place procedures to capture effectively consent and sharing relevant information between organisations to support better outcomes for offenders and for society. Examples of relevant information that should be shared to enhance continuity of care from custody to the community and ensure better outcomes, include committal interviews, medical information, housing and accommodation needs.

The issues of data and research are closely linked. Specifically the issue of consent to collect and share data in longitudinal studies so as to track the effectiveness of policies pursued pre and post release, were raised as important considerations to be provided for in legislation. The Group was pleased to note that the Government's Draft Scheme of the Data Sharing and Governance Bill, provides the legal basis for the sharing of data between public bodies, including those with responsibility for services accessed by prisoners on release.

3.2 Examples of Successful Interagency Cooperation

Community Return Programme'

Throughout the course of meetings in 2016 and 2017, the Group explored examples of good interagency cooperation and practise. These included the 'Community Return Programme', which is an incentivised temporary release scheme. This scheme provides for the early release of suitable prisoners who are serving sentences of more than one and less than eight years. Prisoners who qualify for the scheme may be granted reviewable, temporary release having served half or more of their sentence. A condition of such temporary release is that the prisoner undertakes supervised community service. The scheme represents a move away from releasing prisoners in an unstructured way.

The presentation from Mr Brian Dack, Assistant Director Operations, Prisoners Risk and Resettlement, Probation Service and Mr Andrew Brennan, Assistant Principal Officer, Operations Directorate, Irish Prison Service, focussed on the work of the interagency Irish Prison Service/Probation Service Co-located Unit. The presentation noted the positive outcomes of the scheme for offenders and the Prison Service, the enthusiasm and commitment of participants and the benefits of a co-located unit and interagency working. The presentation also outlined some of the challenges which are frequently encountered, such as the lack of consistency applied in respect of the payment of supplementary welfare allowances, the lack of stable accommodation and changing family/relationship circumstances. The programme also lacks a statutory basis. Over the five-year period 2012 - 2016, an average of approximately 355 prisoners per annum have been released under the scheme. This programme has proven to be very successful, is an excellent example of interagency work and has received much recognition nationally and internationally for its innovative approach.

SORAM

Another example of good interagency work is SORAM (Sex Offender Risk Assessment & Management). Pauline Downey, Senior Probation Officer & Detective Garda Ger Goldrick, gave a presentation on SORAM to the group. The presentation focussed on the great strides in interagency cooperation in the management of sex offenders in the community. Areas touched on included the close cooperation between An Garda Siochana and the Probation Service in the delivery of the programme and local authorities accepting responsibility for housing of sex offenders on release, which was a big step forward as this is a critical area. Accommodation for this group of offenders is also part of the National Housing Strategy. SORAM structures at both national and local level were discussed and the standardised approach put in place to assess the risk posed by offenders were outlined. The programme does not have a statutory basis. The reintegration of sex offenders is a very challenging area and, despite the good work, accommodation remains a major problem in successfully reintegrating offenders into the community.

Joint Strategy for the development of Social Enterprises

The Group also had a presentation on the “Joint Strategy for the development of Social Enterprises in the Irish criminal justice sector, 2017 -2019”. The Group was pleased to note that this Strategy represents a significant strategic development in seeking to rehabilitate prisoners and reduce re-offending through the establishment of a ‘Social Enterprise’ model in the Irish criminal justice system. Social enterprises engage in commercial activity in order to generate social benefits, such as supporting employment for marginalised groups. Such enterprises are a sub-set of the not-for-profit sector and are characterised as having a commercial/trading dimension.

The fundamental theme of the strategy is that people with education and training, who have a job, are less likely to offend. Preparing prisoners for the work environment while in prison and facilitating them getting work when released – all in the context of a ‘social enterprise’ model – is the basis of the strategy. This is an area the Group intend to focus on further in 2018.

4 Pathways Sub-Group

The challenges faced by those prisoners participating in the Community Return Programme such as income supports on release, access to health services, lack of stable accommodation and changing family/relationship circumstances are not exclusive to participants of that scheme but are common recurring themes. The Group decided to focus in more depth on these and other challenges faced by prisoners on release from prison. A Sub-Group was set up to explore in more detail our first term of reference, which is *“To review existing pathways that involve interagency coordination and cooperation to improve the integration and rehabilitation of offenders”*.

It is clear that much is already being done through interagency work to ensure the successful reintegration of offenders into the community and that policies and models of cooperation are being implemented. However, there is still much scope to remove blockages, make improvements to procedures and enhance cooperation to ensure better outcomes for offenders on release and for society.

Accommodation remains a major concern of the Group. The current housing crisis and the dearth of stable accommodation in the community undermine much of the good work done in prisons to rehabilitate offenders and successfully reintegrate them into the community. Whilst there is ongoing work addressing the needs of offenders who are homeless which includes their referral to homeless services in the community on release, the lack of suitable accommodation remains a significant impediment to successful reintegration of offenders and reducing reoffending. The draft protocol between the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and the Prison Service to ensure that offenders can access accommodation on release was noted by the Group. While there is goodwill on all sides towards implementing the draft protocol, the shortage of accommodation makes it difficult to ensure that no offender is homeless on release from prison.

Income Support is an issue that the Group explored in 2017. A draft protocol has been developed between the Irish Prison Service, the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and the Department of Employment and Social Affairs to ensure that appropriate income support and links to support services in the community are in place for offenders on release. The Department of Employment and Social Protection requires personal identification for the payment of allowances. Many prisoners have no form of identification. The Department of Employment and Social Protection has worked with the Irish Prison Service in their open prisons to provide prisoners with public service cards but these were one-off initiatives. Streamlining application procedures so prisoners across the prison estate can apply for Public Services Cards before leaving prison and access income support immediately on release, was identified by the Group as an interagency issue that needs to be addressed.

One issue which the Interagency Sub Group influenced positively was improved links between the Irish Prison Service Training and Employment Officers and the Department of Employment and Social Affairs case workers. Improvements made include capturing relevant information, establishing points of contact and handover of relevant case files for continuity and more efficient and effective outcomes. The shared objective is release of offenders to structured programmes and continuity of access to support services.

The sub-group dedicated one meeting to the issue of the health of offenders and the challenges posed to interagency coordination and cooperation to improve the integration and rehabilitation of offenders released from prison. The main areas discussed included the provision of Medical Cards, Access to Drug Treatment Services and Access to Mental Health Services.

Medical Cards

The Group noted that many offenders have health problems leaving prison and qualify for a medical card. The Irish Prison Service has engaged with the Health Service Executive (HSE) to achieve continuity of care for those leaving custody. There is a pilot project in place in Cork prison, which was extended to Arbour Hill in April 2017, whereby offenders who are leaving custody and are eligible for a medical card are facilitated by resettlement officers in applying for a medical card pre-release. Medical cards awarded in this manner are valid for three months, when the recipient must reapply to retain the card. The intention is that the pilot project would be expanded to other prisons with Mountjoy being mentioned as potentially the next prison. The Group recommends that all eligible offenders should be provided with medical cards before leaving prison as soon as possible.

Access to Drug Treatment Services

There is good communication between the Irish Prison Service and the HSE Drug Treatment services in the community, such as in the case of Methadone support programmes. Liaison has improved significantly over recent years and no problems were reported to the Group in offenders continuing Methadone treatment on release from custody. Unplanned release of offenders has caused problems but with the reduction in overcrowding in the prisons in recent years, this now has been less of a concern.

Access to Mental Health Services

There is a high prevalence of mental health problems among prisoners. Professor Harry Kennedy outlined the services that are provided to prisons with in-reach psychiatric teams available in Cloverhill, Dochas, Cork and Mountjoy prisons. The screening and assessment process has identified that between 3 and 4% of persons committed to prisons have an acute mental illness. There is a deficit in general and forensic mental health services in the community for prisoners and unless addressed, there will continue to be an increase in numbers in prison requiring treatment. A new secure mental health facility to replace the

Central Mental Hospital is being planned for Portrane in Dublin-Fingal but the number of places to be provided will not be adequate to meet the needs of prisoners with severe mental health problems. The Group considers that the provision of mental health services to prisoners is an issue requiring much greater interagency cooperation if the problem is to be addressed and progress made.

The Group notes that the Interdepartmental Group to examine issues relating to people with mental illness who come in contact with the criminal justice system is due to produce its second report shortly. This group includes representatives of the Department of Justice and Equality, the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive, the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service. The Interdepartmental Group's first interim report was published in September 2016. That report sets out the work of the Interdepartmental Group in relation to how diversion could be facilitated, where appropriate, at all stages of the criminal process up to the conclusion of a criminal trial. The second report of the Interdepartmental Group explores matters relating to mental health services for prisoners, matters relating to patients detained under the Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2006 and post-release mental health services for former prisoners. We look forward to the publication of this report and hope that it will address the issues raised.

5 Work Programme 2018

At the end of 2017, the Group agreed a work programme to guide its future work. The mission of the Interagency Group on Cooperation for a Fairer and Safer Ireland is to improve interdepartmental and interagency coordination in the integration and rehabilitation of offenders and the prevention of crime as recommended by the Report of the Penal Policy Strategic Review Group.

To this end, the Interagency Group will

1. Review existing pathways that involve interagency coordination and cooperation to improve the integration and rehabilitation of offenders. The Group will identify where interagency cooperation can improve the effectiveness of the pathways for the integration and rehabilitation of offenders. It will facilitate agreement among the agencies involved through reviews of successful interagency initiatives and proposed initiatives and, through discussion and analysis, encourage alignment of policy and service objectives.

2. Based on this review, propose improved interagency coordination arrangements for the integration and rehabilitation of offenders. The work of the Group to date suggests that interagency cooperation could be enhanced to ensure that offenders, on release from prison, have an identity for the purposes of accessing public services and have better access to accommodation, to medical care for on-going conditions and to training/employment opportunities. The Group will recommend steps that could be taken to improve access to these services.

- 3 Promote pro-social behaviour which results in positive participation in society. The Interagency Group has noted the success of the Community Return Programme and the Joint Agency Response to Crime Initiative (J-ARC) in promoting better social behaviour among prisoners before release from prison and their positive participation in society after release. The Group will examine initiatives involving interagency cooperation in other jurisdictions, which could improve social behaviour and the positive participation of offenders in society and make recommendations where appropriate.

4. Recommend how the consideration of crime prevention could be incorporated in the formulation and implementation of public sector penal and social policies. The Group will examine ways in which cross-sectoral issues are handled nationally and in other jurisdictions to identify an effective model for incorporating crime prevention in the formulation and implementation of penal and social policies and make recommendations accordingly. Based on the evidence of the importance of family life to the reintegration and rehabilitation of offenders, the Group will pay particular attention to how interagency cooperation could strengthen offenders' engagement in family life, both in prison and on release.

5. Consider how fairness and greater equality could be achieved in the areas of penal and social policy in relation to crime prevention issues. The Group will review existing policies

and practices in crime prevention from the perspective of fairness and equality and identify where interagency cooperation could achieve greater fairness and equality in crime prevention.

6. Identify where research and data collation could assist in greater integration across the Public Service in terms of the rehabilitation of offenders and the formulation and impact of penal policy. The Group will review existing research and data on the rehabilitation of offenders and the formulation and impact of penal policy and recommend where, from an interagency perspective, further research and data are required to underpin policy and to monitor implementation of service initiatives in the rehabilitation of offenders and the impact of penal policy.

6 Future Reports & Recommendations

The Group will prepare a report each year on our work, the issues we are addressing and those areas where progress is required. The Group may also issue separate reports or recommendations on issues of interagency co-operation, which it considers, could promote improvements in the reintegration/rehabilitation of offenders and crime prevention, as the need arises.

Appendix A

Current Membership list of Interagency Group for a Fairer and Safer Ireland.

Dr Ruth Barrington Chairperson

Mr David Kelly, Dept. of the Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government

Mr Paul Crowley, Central Statistics Office

Mr Deaglan O Briain, Youth Crime Policy & Programmes Division, Dept. Justice & Equality

Ms Diane Nurse, Health Service Executive

Mr Phil O'Flaherty, Dept. of Education & Skills

Mr John Conlan, Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection

(Alternate) Mr Dan Harty, Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection

Chief Superintendent Matthew Niland, An Garda Síochána

Ms Margaret O'Neill, Courts Service

Mr Gary Kiernan, TUSLA

Ms Susan Scally, Dept. of Health

Mr Fergal Black, Irish Prison Service

Ms Elaine Butler, Dublin Region Homeless Executive

Ms Ita Burke, Probation Service

Mr Jimmy Martin, Dept. Justice & Equality

Mr Noel Dowling, Dept. Justice & Equality

Mr Keith Lynn, Dept. Justice & Equality (Secretary to the Group)

Appendix B

Attendance at meetings of the Interagency Group for a Fairer and Safer Ireland.

Bodies represented	Meetings	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Total meetings attended
Chairperson		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Dept. Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government		✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	3
Central Statistics Office		✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	4
Youth Crime Policy Dept. Justice & Equality		✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Health Service Executive		✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	4
Dept. Education & Skills		✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	2
Dept. Employment Affairs & Social Protection		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
An Garda Síochána		✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	4
Courts Service		✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	2
TUSLA		✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Irish Prison Service		✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Dept. Health		✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	2
Dublin Region Homeless Executive		✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	3
Probation Service		✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	4
Prisons Policy Division, Dept. Justice & Equality		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6