

**Report To:** Health & Social Care Committee      **Date:** 21 October 2010

**Report By:** Corporate Director Inverclyde  
Community Health & Care  
Partnership      **Report No:** SW/41/10/RM/AM

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**Subject:** SWIA Report – Greenock Prison

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This report is to inform Members that the SWIA Report on Greenock Prison has now been published and to highlight the recommendations which have been made

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 SWIA have published an inspection report on Social Work Services provided within Greenock Prison. The report, although positive about the services provided, identified four areas for improvement.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note the inspection report and to endorse the work required in the areas identified for improvement.

**Robert Murphy**  
Corporate Director Inverclyde Community  
Health & Care Partnership

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 SWIA have been undertaking a thematic inspection of Social Work Services provided in prisons. Although their overarching report has not yet been published, they are in the process of publishing individual reports on the service provided in each individual prison. The report on Greenock Prison was published on 30 September.

## **5.0 PROPOSALS**

5.1 The inspection included file reading, focus groups for prisoners, partners and staff and fieldwork within the prison itself.

5.2 The report highlighted a competent and motivated team of Social Work staff with strong evidence of their commitment to good quality practice. It was noted that there was a very good first line manager and well informed external managers. The feedback from prisoners and other partners was seen to be very positive.

5.3 The identified areas for improvement are:

1. The Council in collaboration with SPS and other providers, should develop ways to measure the differences that services make to prisoners' needs and to the risks they present;
2. The Council should engage with SPS managers and other stakeholders to promote awareness of the needs of adults at risk of harm and ensure that appropriate procedures are in place;
3. The Council, in collaboration with SPS and other service providers should ensure that there are clear processes for sharing appropriate information with regard to 'Hidden Harm' protocols; and
4. The Council and SPS should agree local priorities for the prison-based Social Work Team to be included in the developing of the SLA.

5.4 An action plan will be drawn up to address the above issues as far as is possible although officers have commented to SWIA that they consider a national approach is required for some of the improvements.

- The first area for improvement is of national importance as it will require consistency across establishments if it is to provide comparable data. It would also require the support of other agencies such as the Courts;
- In relation to the second recommendation, work had started on this prior to the inspection, with a workshop on Adults at Risk of Harm which scoped out what was required to promote awareness and to develop protocols and joint working practices;
- Work will also continue in relation to our Hidden Harm Protocols and we have clarified that our partners are clear about their responsibilities; and
- In relation to the fourth area for improvement, staff will be appropriately engaged in the process once SPS have taken forward national negotiations on the SLA. SWIA were informed about the importance of concluding these negotiations for the development of the service within the prison.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Legal: None

6.2 Finance:

No implications

<b>Cost Centre</b>	<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Budget Year</b>	<b>Proposed Spend this Report</b>	<b>Virement From</b>	<b>Other Comments</b>

6.3 Personnel: No implications

6.4 Equalities: No implications

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

7.1 N/A

## **8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 N/A



**SWIA**

**HMP Greenock  
Prison-based Social Work Service**

**Inverclyde Council**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In spring 2010 SWIA carried out an inspection of social work services in every prison establishment in Scotland. This report sets out the findings of the inspection of services in HMP Greenock where we read a sample of social work case records and interviewed a small number of prisoners, social work staff and a range of SPS service providers, staff and managers. This report also draws on information contained within Inverclyde Council's Self-Evaluation Questionnaire in respect of prison-based social work services.

Prior to the fieldwork phase of the inspection we also interviewed a cross-section of prisoners across Scotland about the quality of prison-based social work services. In addition, we surveyed all prison-based social work staff, as well as community-based social work staff supervising offenders on release from custody. We will be reporting on the results of these surveys in a national report (published later this year) where we will also collate the findings of the case file reading exercises we carried out, report on our discussions with national stakeholders, and draw together common themes that have emerged from our inspection activity across the prison estate.

This report refers specifically to the prison-based social work service provided within HMP Greenock. The purpose of this report is to assist Inverclyde Council – and where necessary, its partners – in making improvements to the prison-based social work service.

Our inspection aimed to address 6 key questions:

- What difference did prison-based social work services make to meeting prisoners' needs and reducing the risks they presented to others?
- What did prisoners and key stakeholders think about prison-based social work services?
- How efficiently and effectively did prison-based social work services operate?
- What systems were in place for monitoring the performance of prison-based social work services and for improving the quality of these services?
- How well supported were prison-based social work staff to carry out the work required of them?
- How good was the leadership of prison-based social work services by the senior managers and elected members responsible for these services?

## **2. CONTEXT**

HMP Greenock is located centrally in the town and combines refurbished older buildings and more recent new build accommodation. HMP Greenock had 255 available contracted prisoner places on the 26 February 2010. The actual prisoner population on that day was 271. It combines functions as a local and national resource. There are 3 distinct categories of prisoner, who are separately accommodated in three halls:

- Short sentence and remand male prisoners, primarily from within the North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority (CJA) area (comprising about 60% of the total population);
- Short-term sentenced female prisoners also primarily from the local area (about 17% of the total); and
- Life prisoners and long-term sentenced male prisoners completing their sentence and preparing for release (a national 'top-end' resource comprising about 24% of the total).

Social work services in the prison were provided by Inverclyde Council. The team establishment was:

- 1 senior social worker
- 4 social workers

All posts were filled, although two social workers were on temporary contracts pending the introduction of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Inverclyde Council and Scottish Prison Service (SPS). The social work team workload of allocated cases was 85 at the point of the inspection.

At the time of the inspection, prison-based social work services were focussed mainly on:

- life sentence and other long-term prisoners subject to statutory supervision on release;
- Schedule 1 offenders and short-term prisoners subject to statutory supervision on release; and
- short-term prisoners not subject to statutory supervision on release.

Agreed local core functions for social work included:

- risk assessment and re-assessment of prisoners;
- preparing reports for Integrated Case Management case conferences, and the Parole Board;
- chairing some ICM case conferences, including all those for sex offenders and schedule 1 offenders;
- producing specific assessments and reports in connection with prisoner home leave and work placements;
- carrying out one-to-one work with long sentence prisoners to assist progression towards release; and
- the provision of a duty service.

Social work staff were also centrally involved in multi-disciplinary strategy and quality management meetings within the prison.

The annual budget for the prison-based social work service in 2009/10 was £186,874 (projected out-turn). The SPS provide Inverclyde Council with the funding for the service and the majority of that funding pays staff costs.

No formal contract was currently in place between Inverclyde Council and SPS for the provision of the social work service. However the managers from each agency met regularly to establish a shared understanding of social workers' roles, and the prioritisation of work.

Since 2007, the Scottish Prison Service has been in discussion with the Association of Directors of Social Work and other relevant stakeholders regarding the development of a Service Level Agreement for prison based social work services. SPS has sought to develop a standardised national template SLA document, which would be used as a basis of future discussions with individual councils. The SLA (*draft version*) specifies core and local priorities. The core priorities focus prison-based social work activities on prisoners who will be subject to statutory supervision in the community. The local priorities allow SPS and the relevant council to agree activities outwith the core tasks that may improve multi-disciplinary working and address specific needs within the prison establishment. The discussions between SPS and councils are ongoing.

### **3. FINDINGS**

#### ***What difference did prison-based social work services make to meeting prisoners' needs and reducing the risks they presented to others?***

The Scottish Government's Concordat with local government sets out a common purpose for government, supported by agreed objectives, outcomes and performance indicators. In short, these are aimed at making Scotland a healthier, wealthier, smarter, safer and stronger, greener place to live and work. More specifically in criminal justice terms, the outcomes focus on making communities safer, reducing the risks posed by offenders, and helping offenders successfully resettle in their communities.

We found that the work of the team in the core activities was consistently of a high standard, with strong evidence of commitment to good quality practice. However the performance management emphasis to date had been on generating appropriate level of service data and measuring the quality of service outputs. This was being done well, with good results for improvement of service processes.

The SEQ contained a number of examples of 'proxy' measures for good outcomes e.g. effective prison-based risk assessment and risk management planning, which was likely to contribute to reduced risk of re-offending or harm in the community.

There was also brief self-reported information from prisoners on the positive effects of one-to-one work on their thinking and decision making. We observed through case conferences the quality of the social work contribution to risk assessments and case plans, and of the one-to-one interventions done by the team, and this was reinforced by the views of other professional colleagues in the prison. However, the proxy measures used do not evidence measurable reduction of risk of re-offending or harm, and service managers



are fully aware of the need to develop measures which could evidence actual outcomes.

### **Area for improvement**

**The council, in collaboration with SPS and other providers, should develop ways to measure the differences services make to prisoners' needs and to the risks they present.**

#### ***What did prisoners and key stakeholders think about prison-based social work services?***

We heard very positive, well-informed, feedback from long-term prisoners which valued prison-based social work and praised the responsiveness of social workers and the quality of service contact. This included positive comments from prisoners on social workers' role in sustaining family links.

Other service partners in the prison described social work as solution-focused and well integrated in the prison's processes. In particular, SPS clearly valued and trusted social work's contribution, with delegation of important roles in several aspects of service such as chairing ICM Case Conferences and co-ordinating joint performance improvement activities. Social work took a leading role in strategies within the prison to sustain progressive service improvements, for example the Sex Offender Management Meeting and ICM Practitioners Group.

Prison and social work staff independently agreed that the personal officer function had been well-defined and well-established at HMP Greenock and any concerns regarding overlap with social work were readily resolved. This reflected the effective developmental work done by both services to ensure this clear understanding of roles.

#### ***How efficiently and effectively did prison-based social work services operate?***

All long-term prisoners were allocated to a social worker. We saw good quality risk and needs assessments with clear and appropriate plans for risk management and meeting needs. We saw a good checklist template which was used for first interview with prisoners, capturing initial assessments of needs and risks along with initial forward planning (all countersigned by the first line manager). There was well developed use of the SPS electronic database *PR2* as a means to access and exchange appropriate prisoner information. Social work staff were also inputting assessment and service planning information to *PR2*.

We saw evidence of 100% social work attendance at ICM case conferences, with acknowledgement from prisoners and partner services that social workers were full and effective contributors to this process.

Feedback from prisoners and from service partners indicated that social work one-to-one intervention, which is aimed at addressing offending behaviour and preparation for safe release, was carried out professionally and to good effect.

While adult protection expertise appeared to be developing well, there was recognition by social work and SPS managers that more work is required to introduce systematic assessments and plans for protection of adults at risk of harm, in appropriate cases.

### **Area for improvement**

**The council should engage with SPS managers and other stakeholders to promote awareness of the needs of adults at risk of harm and ensure that appropriate procedures are in place.**

At the time of the inspection there were no opportunities for involvement in group work programmes, although social workers and some partner services indicated that they felt social work could make a valuable contribution to this. The non-involvement was because of uncertainty relating to the terms of the forthcoming SLA which did not leave scope to train staff for delivery of programmes. Social workers also had a limited role with regard to female and short-term prisoners – confined to responding to one-off requests for assistance – because of the prioritisation of work with long-term prisoners. This reflected appropriate prioritisation of prisoners subject to a statutory requirement for post-release supervision. However, a case could be made that the SLA discussions should address whether the current low frequency of involvement with the other two parts of the prison population left unmet needs.

We encountered some uncertainty between service partners in relation to roles, information sharing and outcomes with regard to ‘Hidden Harm’ referrals, especially with short-term prisoners, including female prisoners<sup>1</sup>. The referring service indicated that outcome information was not routinely fed back.

### **Area for improvement**

**The council, in collaboration with SPS and other service providers, should ensure that there are clear processes for sharing appropriate information with regard to ‘Hidden Harm’ referrals.**

### ***What systems were in place for monitoring the performance of prison-based social work services and for improving the quality of these services?***

A network of multi-disciplinary groups, connected by shared membership, was in place in the prison to address planning and performance issues including

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<sup>1</sup> “Hidden Harm” referrals relate to the processes for dealing with children affected by parental substance misuse.

the ICM Practitioners Group, the Progression Risk Management Group and the Sex Offender Management Meeting (which also covered management of all those who had committed offences against children). All had a 'performance quality' dimension and social work was prominent in membership of these groups. Other operational groupings were also in place regarding management of prisoners with addiction or mental health problems, in which social work again played a significant and respected part.

Multi-agency training and guidance had been generated from these groupings, with social work staff prominent in the production and delivery of training, for example a guidance pack for ICM chairs. Work was currently being progressed to develop procedures and training for the engagement of prisoners' families with the ICM process. The provisional SLA local priorities provided for the continued involvement of social work in these groupings in recognition of the value of their contribution.

Social work had produced a range of performance reports providing information regarding quantity of work performed, types of work undertaken and the time commitment required for the tasks. The reports had been expanded to inform the joint discussions about the development of the SLA. However, protracted SLA discussions had led to uncertainty, with staff concerned that the range and effectiveness of work might be limited by a restrictive contract to a smaller range of work than that now undertaken. This had impacted on team morale. Two team members were on temporary contracts pending determination of the SLA terms.

***How well supported were prison-based social work staff to carry out the work required of them?***

The staff group were competent and motivated. They spoke in positive terms about the level of supervision and support they received and the well constructed training and development opportunities available to them. Staff were also well connected into criminal justice structures outside the prison, ensuring that they were not isolated, or denied opportunities available to other staff.

The effects of this were seen in the quality of practice. It would clearly be regrettable if the SLA outcome had an adverse effect on staff retention and morale or led to a loss of quality in service.

***How good was the leadership of prison-based social work services by the senior managers and elected members responsible for these services?***

There was very good first-line management by a team leader who was effective, knowledgeable and committed to service quality and continuous improvement. The team leader was also actively part of wider local and national criminal justice social work planning and delivery structures, ensuring that the prison-based unit was well connected to other aspects of local service provision. The external criminal justice managers who were responsible for

the service were well informed and clearly committed to ensuring that prison-based social work was fully incorporated into strategic planning and delivery of criminal justice social work services. Prison-based staff had, for example, contributed to authority-wide child protection procedures.

SPS managers expressed the view that prison-based social work at HMP Greenock was well managed and focused on performance and service quality, with an appropriate emphasis on public protection. They indicated that their working relationship with social work managers was very professional and effective. There was good evidence too that elected members were informed about the provision of criminal justice social work services including prison-based services, through representation on the CJA and regular briefing meetings with the criminal justice social work management team.

There was a strong sense from staff that the SLA discussions had been protracted and unsettling and had brought uncertainty regarding future priorities of work which impacted on team confidence. Although the process of completing the SLA negotiations was being led by national considerations of prioritising 'statutory' social work functions, such as risk assessment and preparing Parole Board reports, there was also scope for using local priorities as a means of augmenting these with locally appropriate functions, prison by prison.

At the same time SPS managers had expressed expectations of the SLA which did not appear to have been shared with social work managers and had not been fully debated locally. In particular, they were planning for one-to-one social work casework with 6 prisoners per annum which they envisaged could reduce over time as SPS staff acquire the capability to do this work. This implies the potential to transfer professional social work functions to SPS staff. They also regarded the current level of social work provision as capable of reduction without losing functional value. It would be regrettable if the social work service in HMP Greenock lost quality and direction as a result of the way this process has been conducted.

No meetings had taken place to date between the current team of criminal justice senior managers outside the prison and the responsible SPS depute governor (although contact between the SPS offender outcomes manager and Social Work criminal justice manager was regular). It would be valuable for there to be periodic strategic and policy discussions at senior management level in addition to the current good operational liaison. Periodic case file audit by external managers, supplementing that routinely carried out by the operational manager, was not evidenced but would be a useful element in performance monitoring.

### **Area for improvement**

<b>The council and SPS should agree the local priorities for the prison-based social work team to be included in the developing SLA.</b>
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#### **4. SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

There was good first-line management by a team leader who was effective, knowledgeable and committed to service quality and continuous improvement. External criminal justice managers responsible for the service were well informed and committed to ensuring that prison-based work was fully incorporated into planning and delivery of criminal justice social work services. There was clearly a competent, motivated staff group. Staff spoke in positive terms about the level of supervision and support and the well constructed training and development opportunities for them. Staff were also well connected into criminal justice structures outside the prison, ensuring that they were not isolated, or denied opportunities available to other staff. Other service partners in the prison described social work as solution-focused and well integrated in the prison's processes.

We think that Inverclyde Council should consider the following areas for improvement:

1. The council, in collaboration with SPS and other providers, should develop ways to measure the differences services make to prisoners' needs and to the risks they present.
2. The council should engage with SPS managers and other stakeholders to promote awareness of the needs of adults at risk of harm and ensure that appropriate procedures are in place.
3. The council, in collaboration with SPS and other service providers, should ensure that there are clear processes for sharing appropriate information with regard to 'Hidden Harm' referrals.
4. The council and SPS should agree the local priorities for the prison-based social work team to be included in the developing SLA.

#### **5. NEXT STEPS**

Prison-based social work services, in conjunction with their partners in SPS, should ensure that they disseminate the findings of the inspection to key stakeholders, including the prisoners to whom they provide a service. They should work with their stakeholders to develop an action plan that addresses the areas for improvement identified in this report. This action plan should be in place within three months of publication of the report.

SWIA has allocated a link inspector to each local authority in Scotland. Through these link-inspector arrangements SWIA will monitor the progress of Inverclyde Council in implementing the action plan in collaboration with its partners.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Explanation
Community Integration Plan (CIP)	The Community Integration Plan (CIP) is the SPS document that contains important information about the prisoner, their progress during the custodial sentence and their plans for release into the community.
Integrated Case Management (ICM)	ICM is the multi-agency approach used within the prison setting, which aims to reduce re-offending by ensuring that risks are identified and appropriate plans put in place for prisoners.
Links Centre	Links centres provide a location within which prisoners can access a number of community-based services. These services offer a range of information, advice and/or support: e.g. in relation to housing, employment, addiction, benefit entitlement and family relationships.
Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)	MAPPA is the framework used by the responsible authorities (i.e. police, local authorities, the SPS and NHS Scotland) and a range of other agencies with a duty to co-operate to manage sex offenders in the community. The fundamental purpose of MAPPA is public safety and the reduction of serious harm.
Personal Officer	The personal officer is an SPS officer who offers direct support to a prisoner(s) during their custodial sentence and ensures that all service providers meet the agreed outcomes identified in the CIP.
Prisoner Records 2 (PR2)	PR2 is the SPS computerised prisoner record system.
Risk assessment	Risk assessment is a means of quantifying the probability that an event will occur/recur, or that an event that does occur will be harmful.
RA3 & RA4	A screening and detailed framework to help assess the risk of harm
RM2000	A risk assessment tool that predicts reconviction for a sexual offence within a defined period using information about the offender rather than clinical assessment
SA07	A risk assessment tool that predicts reconviction for a sexual offence, helps monitor factors underpinning acute escalation of risk and provides a breakdown of areas of need that may be treatment targets.
Schedule 1 Offenders	Offenders convicted of specified offences against children (specified in Schedule 1 of the Criminal Procedure [Scotland] Act 1995). The categorisation is life-long.
Statutory Supervision	Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to supervise all offenders who receive a custodial sentence of four years or more, as well as those sentenced to under four years who are made the subject to a Supervised Release Order/Extended Sentence Order and certain sex offenders who require to be supervised under Section 15 of the Management of Offenders Act 2005.
Voluntary Throughcare	Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide advice, support and assistance to prisoners who request such a service within 12 months of release from custody.