

News Release
For Immediate Release
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Make Justice Work

JUST RESULTS: COMMUNITY SENTENCING IN THE BALANCE

Make Justice Work (MJW) today (Friday) publishes *Just Results*, a report on the government's plans to apply Payment by Results (PbR) to community sentences.

In May 2012 MJW brought together 30 leading experts to explore in an open-minded and constructive spirit the challenges of applying PbR to the delivery of community sentences. Participants also focused on ways in which such challenges could be overcome. *Just Results* captures the outcomes of the event – facilitated by independent public service experts - and identifies nine key operating principles which must be in place if PbR is to be a success.

Roma Hooper, Director of MJW said:

“We have serious concerns about the use of PbR in community sentences and the haste with which the government is moving. By 2015 the Ministry of Justice intends to roll out PbR across the system, but the two community sentence pilots don't even start until 2013.

“The use of PbR in community sentencing is a radical new departure. The success of the government's 'rehabilitation revolution' will largely depend on the outcome of this experiment. Failure to get it right would be a serious setback and could lead to more people in prison, higher levels of reoffending and more victims.

“*Just Results* reveals serious pitfalls that must be avoided if the new system is to have any chance of success. The principles identified in *Just Results* must be applied and are not a pick 'n' mix menu from which a selection can be made. Ministers must review their proposed timetable and agree to adopt the principles set out in the report.”

ENDS

Notes for Editors

Just Results was facilitated by independent public service advisors Alasdair Liddell CBE and Dr Greg Parston.

Serious concerns of MJW about the use of PbR in community sentencing:

- **Insufficient time** – The MoJ's present plans appear not to allow sufficient time for the necessary experimentation and fine-tuning. The proposed pilots do not start until 2013. It will not be possible fully to assess their success in reducing reoffending before they are completed in 2017. We therefore

strongly urge the government to reconsider the timetable to which it is currently committed.

- **Measurement of success** – MJW questions the wisdom of relying on a single 'binary' outcome measure. Rehabilitation is a complex and usually gradual process, and the needs of offenders vary greatly. Effective community sentences of the kind that MJW has identified (see our report *Community or Custody*) are tailored to the needs of the individual and call for great flexibility.
- **The market** - MJW are concerned that some outstandingly effective existing service-providers with limited access to working capital may not be able to compete successfully in the new PbR market. If the new system were to be dominated exclusively by a small number of large private sector providers, much valuable specialist expertise might be lost and the range of services on offer might be seriously reduced. Steps therefore need to be taken to protect smaller players.
- **Need for an independent inspectorate** - An independent inspectorate will help to ensure that proper mechanisms of quality assurance are in place, and that outcome data are robust and reliable, and properly shared.

The nine underlying principles identified in Just Results:

- **Focus on Outcomes** - The ultimate goal is to make life safer for everyone. The focus of PbR is currently on reducing reoffending, but other outcomes, particularly reducing crime, are also important
- **Integrated Services** - Service provision must embrace agencies outside the traditional criminal justice system to address the underlying causes of crime.
- **Personalised Services** - Providers need the flexibility to tailor packages of support that reflect the individual needs of offenders, victims and communities.
- **Equity of Outcome** - Addressing the needs of offenders of all kinds must be a goal.
- **Procedural Justice** - All aspects of the management of offenders and victims under PbR must be fair and transparent.
- **Effective Communication** - Good communication is required, focused on building the confidence of sentencers and the public in community sentencing.
- **Quality Assurance** - Independent outcome data and effective quality assurance are required, but inspection and regulation must be as light as possible.

- **Innovation** - Structures of provision and service delivery must be agile and flexible, allowing for innovation and learning, and tolerating some failure.
- **Value for Money** - Value for money must be measured by success in achieving outcomes and not simply in reducing costs.

In March 2012 the (MoJ) published a consultation document – *Punishment and Reform: Effective Community Sentences* which revealed that Ministers were committed to the rapid adoption of PbR:

We aim to apply the principles of payment by results to all providers of offender services by 2015. We are testing the approach through a series of initial pilots. Pilots have already started in two private prisons, with two more, in public sector prisons, to follow in 2012. Two further pilots focus on offenders in the community, under the management of the Wales, and Staffordshire and West Midlands Probation Trusts, and are being developed in line with our wider proposals for reforming probation services... The pilots will begin in 2013, and run for up to four years. ...Each of the two pilots will be the subject of an independent evaluation, and the lessons learned will inform our strategy for applying payment by results principles more widely to offender services.¹

About Make Justice Work - MJW was established in 2009 and is a campaign to boost public support for a change in how Britain deals with minor offenders – a switch from expensive short prison terms to intensive and effective sanctions, delivered in the community.

It aims to raise public awareness of the ineffectiveness and expense of locking up low level offenders, only for them to re-offend. Crucially, the campaign identifies the community alternatives to custody that are most effective both at reducing re-offending and cutting costs.

The brainchild of criminal justice campaigner, Roma Hooper, founder of the Prison Radio Association, MJW is backed by leading experts both inside and outside of the criminal justice system – including former prison governors, charity directors and renowned academics. It also enjoys the support of a wealth of key players and opinion formers from outside the organisation. The Chair of MJW is David Barrie CBE.

Web: <http://www.makejusticework.org.uk/>

A full copy of the report can be accessed using the following link:
<http://www.makejusticework.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Just-Results-Final-Report1.pdf>

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¹ <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm83/8334/8334.pdf>