

Statement to Parliament: Prisons and probation

A new executive agency of the Ministry of Justice, called Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, will replace the National Offender Management Service from 1 April 2017.

The Service will be responsible for the roll out of the government's programme to improve the way we reform offenders to protect the public and tackle the unacceptable levels of reoffending. Michael Spurr will become the Chief Executive of the new HM Prison and Probation Service from 1 April 2017.

HM Prison and Probation Service will have full responsibility for all operations across prison and probation. The Ministry of Justice will take charge of commissioning services, future policy development and be accountable for setting standards and scrutinising prison and probation performance.

The creation of HM Prison and Probation Service will build a world-leading, specialist agency, dedicated to professionalising the prison and probation workforce, backed by an additional £100m a year and 2,500 additional prison officers.

The Service will be a place that staff are proud to work, attracting the brightest and best talent to deliver modernised offender reform, strengthened security, counter-terrorism and intelligence capability.

In recognition of the vital work carried out by prison and probation staff, new schemes to improve promotion opportunities have been launched, including; enhanced professional qualifications for probation officers, a new leadership programme, an apprenticeship scheme to launch in April and higher pay and recognition for specialist skilled officers dealing with complex issues such as counter-terrorism, suicide and self-harm support and assessment.

This forms part of our far-reaching organisational reforms to the system, which will make services more accountable to Ministers for delivery and performance. This will be further supported by measures within the Prison and Courts Bill, which will create a new framework and clear system of accountability for prisons. Probation services will also offer improved training and learning opportunities for offenders to ensure they do not return to a life of crime, working hand in glove with prisons to ensure a more integrated approach. We will set out more details later this spring.

A key priority of HM Prison and Probation Service will be to focus on the particular needs of offenders. To meet the needs of women offenders across the whole system, for the first time there will be a Board Director responsible for women across custody and community. Sonia Crozier, Director of Probation, will take on this responsibility (reporting directly to the CEO) from 1 April 2017.

We set out also in December 2016 the government's plans for the youth justice system, putting education and training at the heart of youth custody.

We are working closely with the Youth Justice Board to review existing governance arrangements and will set out changes in due course.

News story: Animal medicines prosecution: Mr Murray McGregor

From:

First published:

8 February 2017

Details of the prosecution of Mr Murray McGregor. Published in February 2017.

On 18th January 2017 at Perth Sheriff Court, Mr Murray McGregor plead guilty to importing an unauthorised veterinary medicinal product, possession of an unauthorised veterinary medicinal product and that he did administer an unauthorised veterinary medicine under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2008 and 2009.

These charges related to the product Terramycin 100MR which was administered to Mr McGregor's bee hives.

On 1st February 2017 at Perth Sheriff Court, Mr Murray McGregor was fined £2500, reduced by a third from £3750 for an early plea.

Press release: New Northumberland fish passes open up stream

Two new fish passes on a Northumberland stream are giving salmon and sea trout easier access to 22km of watercourse.

The work by the Environment Agency and Northumberland Rivers Trust at South Low, in north Northumberland near Berwick, is making it easier for fish to migrate and spawn.

Two large weirs were preventing fish movement upstream, but both weirs have

been changed to make it easier for sea trout and salmon to make their way to their spawning grounds.

It follows work to make it easier for fish to pass through Environment Agency tidal gates at the coast, where the sea meets the stream.

Since then, work has been taking place to make it easier for fish to move further upstream.

Upstream weir before it was altered to make it easier for fish migration

The new upstream fish pass after alterations were made to the weir to make it into a rock pass

Easier for fish

Robbie Stevenson, Fisheries Technical Officer with the Environment Agency, said:

We've worked closely with partners to carry out a lot of positive work in this area, to look at issues which might be having an impact on fish populations.

The alterations to the weirs will open up 22km of watercourse for fish and make it far easier for them to travel upstream.

We've worked really hard together with our partners over the years to make dramatic improvements to water quality.

But there is always more we can do and this project at South Low is the sort of work which is taking place right across the North East and the country to protect and enhance our rivers and streams.

The £100,000 project has been part funded by the Environment Agency, supplemented by private landowner contributions and the work carried out by volunteers.

Important fish passes

Peter Kerr, Director of Northumberland Rivers Trust, who was also designer and project manager for this project, added:

We are delighted to have been able to add these two important fish passes by working in partnership.

The contractors, WL Straughan and Son, did an excellent job in some challenging weather conditions, including the floods following Storm Angus.

After we completed the lower of the passes we saw some big sea trout trying to get past the upper weir, so we are confident that

the lower one works well and that there are many migratory fish trying to return to the South Low.

The recent completion of the upper pass will now let these fish access many miles of spawning gravels.

[Press release: Statement from Priti Patel on UN Yemen appeal](#)

From:

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Part of:

International Development Secretary comments on the launch of the United Nations 2017 funding appeal for the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

The United Nations has today (8th February) launched an appeal for US\$2.1 billion to provide life-saving assistance to 12 million people in Yemen in 2017.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

Today, the UN has launched its new humanitarian plan for Yemen, setting out the steps it will take to save lives in 2017 and the funding it requires to be able to do that.

Last year, UK aid ensured life-saving food, medical supplies, clean water and emergency shelter reached more than one million Yemenis in desperate need across the country and we will once again be supporting this new appeal.

At the UN General Assembly last September, the UK Government secured more than \$100 million [approximately £80 million] in new funding for Yemen and a commitment from UN agencies to strengthen their response to the crisis. As the UN launches its new appeal today, we will continue to push donors and partners alike to step up their efforts and to keep pace with the UK response.

It is imperative that all parties to the conflict ensure lifesaving assistance can get through and aid agencies get the unfettered access they require. At the same time, the international community

must provide the UN with the funding it is calling for along with the political pressure to ensure aid reaches those who need it.

Notes to editors

1. More detail on the UN appeal can be seen here:
<http://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/yemen-un-and-partners-appeal-21-bln-provide-life-saving-assistance-12-million-people>

[Speech: Matt Hancock's speech at the launch of the New Schools Network arts report.](#)

Thanks everybody for coming today, and thank you to Dr Nick Cullinan, Director of the National Portrait Gallery for hosting and opening up early especially for us.

I hope that everybody here heard very clearly the commitment and the passionate advocacy of cultural education from Nick Gibb as the Minister of State for School Standards and the importance of cultural learning in our education system.

I could too make the argument for how the combination of technical expertise and creative cultural content are the point at which Britain will earn its crust over the 21st century. But I think it is far better for that argument is made by Nick, because you would expect it from me as the Minister for Digital and Culture. But you can see that this is an argument that the whole of Government adopts and buys.

But of course how you do this has been a point of contention recently. But we believe strongly that the arts should be for everyone and not just a privileged few and perhaps most importantly that arts should be used as the potential to be an incredible force for openness and social mobility.

This is drilled through our Industrial Strategy, which sets out the combination of our creative flair and technical expertise, and underpinning that as a direction of travel must be the necessity of the next generation to be well prepared and have a well-rounded education.

Over the last few months I think we have seen some significant, positive developments in arts education and I want to build on that momentum.

The first was the work of DfE in saving art history A-Level.

Now Art History A-Level may have only had a relatively small number of

entries of around 1,000 each year – and that was part of the problem – but the symbolism of when it was made not available and then when it was saved and the amount of people who have been through Art History A-Level and who see that as the grounding for their career in the arts is incredible, so I am delighted at the work to save it.

But it is part of a much bigger drive. DfE also announced £300 million to help children from all backgrounds to enjoy the benefits of music and the arts and in the Autumn Statement the Chancellor announced funding towards work between the RSA and Education Endowment Foundation to pilot and examine through scientific research based on randomised control trials the impact of cultural education on disadvantaged pupils. And if like me you believe in the hypothesis that high-quality rigorous cultural education enhances people's life chances then this research is the opportunity to see this hypothesis proven.

Nick has spoken about Ebacc and how this welcome report from the New Schools Network puts to rest arguments that the policy is stifling cultural education.

But I will make just one further point.

In order to win this argument that we in this room believe in about the importance of art in education, we have to make the argument in the right way.

We all believe in the intrinsic value of the arts.

I am not an artist by profession. But artists know how to relate to an audience.

And we have got to understand that our audience is the education profession. We need to help support and persuade them to deliver this rounded education.

Our audience is the teachers and head teachers who are focussed through their life's passion and life's work and life's passion on driving up exam results and driving up life chances.

So we need to articulate the value of cultural education in the language of life chances and exam results.

I passionately believe that cultural education – arts, music, drama, drawing, dance, even portraiture – is complementary not contradictory to success in maths and English.

This should not be an argument about a battle between the arts and other subjects, but instead a battle for stronger, better, well-rounded education.

Ultimately, the best schools in the country do this. They combine excellent cultural education to complement excellence in other academic subjects. This report backs up that analysis. It looks at the data and says if you want to drive up standards across the board, push your arts and music offer.

Rigorously taught, music complements maths; drama complements English; and the study of art complements history. The rigour matters but so does the breadth.

Of course, everyone can play their part in this debate and we need your help directly to support schools too. Everyone can do their bit.

We are actively encouraging leaders in the arts, as in other fields, to make a direct, personal contribution through organisations like Speakers for Schools, which arranges talks in state schools by successful people to inspire pupils. Both Nick Gibb and Nick Cullinan have played a big part in making that happen, and if you are not involved then you are not doing your bit so I urge you to get involved.

So lets concentrate on how we win this argument and that is by concentrating on the complementarity on how arts education drives up standards. And not by engaging in a false battle between arts and science and English and maths. But instead by saying that if you've got the talent and if you want to spark somebody's motivation and imagination in an artistic subject then lets make sure that everybody in our country has the opportunity to embrace the arts, and in so doing drive up their success in science and maths and English too, and ultimately enhance their life chances are enhanced.

I think we have got a chance to do this now and I look forward to working with all of you on it. But ultimately our goal is that every single person has the chance to fulfil their true potential. Lets do that based on the evidence and lets work together to make it happen.