

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 9th November 2021

REPORT OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Probation Service Northwest Unpaid work Scheme

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Board Members about current arrangements within the National Probation Service in relation to the unpaid work scheme, known as the “Community Payback Scheme”

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the report and presentation be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Overview of Unpaid Work - Community Payback

Unpaid Work (UPW) as a sentence of the Courts started in 1973 as The Community Service Order. The Courts can impose sentences of between 40 and 300 hours, reflecting the seriousness of the offending. UPW is now one of the 12 requirements that can be added to a Community Sentence. Community Payback is the term used to refer to any work done as part of an Unpaid Work requirement within a Community Sentence or Suspended Sentence Order. It also refers to the organisational structures required to deliver Unpaid Work in the community. It can include service personnel sentenced through a Court Martial and is available to the Civil Courts as a requirement of an Enforcement Order, or imposed as a penalty for breach of a Child Contact order.

- 3.2 Community Payback should be seen by the public to be a credible punishment providing reparation to the community. The Probation Service will be moving to a new delivery model in July 2021 which is an opportunity to focus on demanding and visible community payback that makes a genuine difference to local people. The punishment aspect of Community Payback is inseparable from the rehabilitative potential of the sentence. Reparation and rehabilitation can include learning basic

employment skills through a positive work experience but also the opportunity to gain vocational or skills-based on the job training.

3.3 **Core Principles**

- **Credible Punishment** - Community Payback is primarily a punishment, with rehabilitation as an important secondary element.
- **Visible** – delivery of Community Payback will be visible to the public
- **Rehabilitation** – through developing work ready skills, such as good timekeeping and working cooperatively and the opportunity to develop vocational skills in a practical work environment.
- **Public Safety** - The safety of the public, staff and the service user is paramount. Risk assessment and risk management is the overarching consideration.
- **Public Involvement** - The community should have the ability to nominate work projects that are identified locally. There is a significant restorative effect from service users engaged in activities that have a tangible benefit to the community.
- **Paid Work** - Community Payback should not directly replace paid employment but may add value to the work undertaken by public bodies and voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations. State Aid Regulations and forced labour conventions must not be infringed and competitive advantage must not be exploited through the provision of free labour.

Unpaid Work Statistics

- In 2018-2019 over 5.3 Million Hours of Community Payback benefited local communities.
- Approximately 12% are women
- About 53366 people were sentenced to UPW in 2019
- About 30% are under 25
- About 50% are under 30years of age
- About 28% are BAME

Members will receive a presentation at the meeting which will bring together the different strands of activity across Halton and Cheshire, to show how the partnership is meeting its responsibilities.

4.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **None**

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the health, safety and well-being of young people.

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 Healthy Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the Health, safety and well-being of the residents of Halton.

5.4 A Safer Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the Health, safety and well-being of the residents of Halton.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.