
To: North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority

On: 13th March 2015

Report by: Chief Officer

Heading: Redesign of Womens Custodial Estate – Progress Report

1. Summary

- 1.1** On 26th January 2015 the Justice Secretary Michael Matheson announced that plans for a new female prison in Inverclyde would not go ahead. Instead, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Prison Service will now undertake a period of extensive engagement with key partners with a view to developing smaller regional and community based custodial facilities across the country.
- 1.2** Following a series of consultation events The Scottish Prison Service have announced the new estate will be as follows:
- a) Replace existing facility at HMP Cornton Vale with a new smaller purpose built national facilities – 80 Places.
 - b) Retain the existing regional facility at HMP Grampian and review the demand at HMP Greenock and HMP Edinburgh.
 - c) Create 5 new low security community units with a capacity of 20 beds each.
- 1.3** The sites for the new community units have still to be decided but following a “heat mapping” exercise to identify the post codes which historically provide the highest number of women prisoners, The Scottish Prison Service are seeking meetings with the following local authorities to discuss potentially hosting a unit.
- a) North, South and East Ayrshire
 - b) Glasgow
 - c) North and South Lanarkshire
 - d) Edinburgh
 - e) Dundee and Fife Council

The SPS hope that the community units will be located in these 5 areas and they have written to the nine local authority Chief Executives and Leaders requesting meetings to start discussions.

- 1.4 The SPS have also engaged a consultancy to help identify suitable sites in the areas above and would prefer the community units were purpose built.
 - 1.5 Once final decisions are taken on the 5 locations there will be a series of engagements with stakeholders to determine how best to involve all Local Authorities and other partners in the development of the units.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to note the content of this report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 The Scottish Commission on Women Offenders published its final report and recommendations in April 2012. Dame Elish Angiolini QC chaired the commission which recognised that female offenders have very different needs to their male counterparts and require very specific support. One of the key recommendations was that HMP Cornton Vale should be closed and replaced by developing smaller regional units.
 - 3.2 At the press conference on January 26th Mr Matheson said “I believe we should be investing in smaller regional and community-based custodial facilities rather than a large new prison for women. This approach would be more closely aligned with the vision set out by Dame Elish. It also demonstrates the Scottish Governments commitment to tackling inequalities”.
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Implications of the Report

Equality & Human Rights

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals’ human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Authorities website.

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