



Adult Social Care Select Committee
10 April 2015

**Social Care for Surrey Prisoners:
Implementation of the Care Act's provisions for prisons,
approved premises and bail accommodation**

Purpose of the report: To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the action taken and proposed by County Council officers to fulfil the requirements of the Care Act in Surrey's prisons and approved premises.

Introduction:

1. The Care Act for the first time makes local authorities responsible for meeting the social care needs of prisoners residing within their areas in prisons and approved premises. This responsibility includes the provision of information, advice, advocacy, assessment and the commissioning of services to meet eligible needs. As far as possible, people in prison should be treated consistently and on the basis of equivalence to those in the rest of the population which is a key principle enshrined in the Act. However, people in prison cannot qualify as carers, have a choice of accommodation nor receive direct payments.
2. In the past no social care provision has been offered to prisoners other than ad hoc care provided by prison staff, voluntary organisations and fellow prisoners. (This is unlike health services: formal responsibility for meeting health need, together with associated resources, transferred to the NHS from Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) in 2006.)
3. Surrey has 5 prisons, although one (Downview with capacity for 355 prisoners) is currently closed and a date for reopening has not been set. The others are :

| Prison | Capacity |
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| High Down | 1103(men |
| Coldingley | 513 (men) |
| Send | 282 (women) |
| Bronzefield (privately run by Sodexo Justice services Ltd) | 527(women |

4. In addition, there is one bail hostel, St Catherine's near Bramley, with 18 places.
5. In the prisons run by (HMPS), primary healthcare is provided by Virgin Care and secondary mental provision by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust under contract to NHS England.
6. Surrey County Council has the fourth highest prison population of 58 local authorities with prisons within their boundaries. It is also very unusual in having such a high number of women – 30% of the prison population compared with 5% nationally. Data from 2013 Prison Inspector's reports states that 294 Surrey prisoners (14%) were over the age of 50, considered 'older' prisoners with additional needs, because research by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders suggests that prisoners possess a physiological age ten years in excess of their chronological age. In addition, 50% of women prisoners reported having children.
7. It is very difficult to accurately predict future workload as the Council has had no direct access to the prisons and their populations are in a constant state of flux. A recent needs assessment commissioned by NHS England suggest less than 40 people with eligible needs and this level is also predicted by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). But local authorities suspect much hidden, unmet need and expectations of social care are in any event likely to be high.
8. The Council has been given an illustrative budget of £403,546 with which to fulfil its new responsibilities for social care provision.

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| Activity undertaken to date to develop The Council's service response: |
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9. The aim of activity to date has been twofold:
 - 9.1 To develop the knowledge and understanding of the Council staff about the prisons and their environment, the needs of prisoners themselves and to develop robust working relationships with NOMS and prison staff and governors.
 - 9.2 To develop a preferred model of effective service provision which will assess and provide for eligible need, offer appropriate information, advice and advocacy within budgetary constraints.
10. To achieve these objectives, a series of multi-agency meetings and workshops have been held and Surrey staff have engaged with wider activity led by NOMS and the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADASS). The preferred model which has emerged from this process is proposed at least for the first year of operations. It consists of a small specialist team of 3 full time equivalent social care and occupational therapy staff with the capacity to flex across all 5 prisons depending upon demand. However, each prison will have a nominated lead who will develop good, on-the-ground working relationships and adapt

procedures appropriately to the different levels of security and varied environments found in each prison.

11. A series of visits to each of the prisons took place in December to further develop relationships, explore in more depth how the preferred model could be implemented in each different setting and to find out what resources each prison had to contribute to the delivery of the new service.
12. A programme of staff and prisoner engagement activities has taken place to develop awareness of the new arrangements and to begin the process of training prison staff and prisoners themselves in what constitutes social care need and to provide for care identified in assessments.

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| Next steps: proposals management, recruitment and training: |
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13. It is proposed that the new service be managed by Surrey and Borders NHS Partnership Foundation Trust (SABP) which already has experience of delivering services in custodial settings. The team will be managed by one of the existing senior social care staff working within SABP within the Directorate of Offender and Specialist Services and recruitment has begun.
14. Subject to current discussions, a service policy is being drafted to take effect on 1 April 2015 for an initial period of one year. Arrangements to evaluate the service will be agreed and amendments to the model agreed after nine months activity by which time an accurate picture of need and demand will have been established.
15. Advocacy contracts will be extended from April 2015 to incorporate the prisons and ensure that appropriately trained Surrey advocates will be available for people held in Surrey's prisons. Voluntary organisations working in the prisons have been invited to the forthcoming information and advice training summits for 'trusted providers'.

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| Conclusions: |
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16. The proposed arrangements will enable Surrey County Council to comply with its obligations to prisoners under the Care Act 2014 from 1 April 2015. The service provided by the specialist Prisons Team will be treated as if it were a pilot project during the first year so that need, demand and costs can be fully monitored and evaluated, and the appropriate changes made in year two. These might involve outsourcing the team or mainstreaming the model.

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| Recommendations: |
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17. It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Support the model proposed for the first year of service operation
- b) Receive a report on the performance of the service at its meeting in December 2015.

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Sources/background papers: [The Care Act 2014](#)