



Independent inspection will check on management of sex offenders

Criminal Justice Inspection is to carry out an independent inspection of the action taken by criminal justice agencies to strengthen arrangements for the management of sex offenders following the sentencing of Trevor Hamilton for the murder of Strabane pensioner Attracta Harron.

The inspection will be led by CJI's Chief Inspector Kit Chivers assisted by Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan, Tom McGonigle and other members of the inspection team. It will take into account the internal investigations carried out by the PSNI, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Prison Service following Mrs. Harron's murder.

It will also include the findings of the separate Serious Case Review carried out by Mr. David Watkins.

"The Minister for Criminal Justice, David Hanson MP asked CJI to undertake this important piece of work, with the aims of improving arrangements for the management of sex offenders in Northern Ireland, and providing assurance to the public that any failings within the system have been identified and addressed," said Mr Chivers.

A comprehensive CJI inspection

of the inter-agency sex offender management arrangements (MASRAM) was undertaken at the request of the Northern Ireland Sex Offender Strategic Management Committee (NISOSMC) in September 2004 and a report published in March 2005.

At that point, CJI made a number of recommendations for improvement of MASRAM. It also gave a commitment that inspectors would return in 2006 to establish if the agencies involved had acted upon the recommendations made in the report.

"The review which the Minister has now invited CJI to carry out will fit in well with work CJI had already given a commitment to undertake, and it will enable inspectors to look at the management of Trevor Hamilton within the context of sex offender management generally," said Mr. Chivers.

CJI will produce an interim report in November, and a final and definitive report to check that all the recommendations that have been made are fully implemented by August 2007.

The PSNI, the Probation Board and the Northern Ireland Prison Service have each committed to co-operate fully with the inspection.

The inspection will include file reviews, observation of specialist staff at work, and interviews with



Brendan McGuigan, Kit Chivers (centre) and Tom McGonigle who will lead CJI's independent inspection of the management of sex offenders.

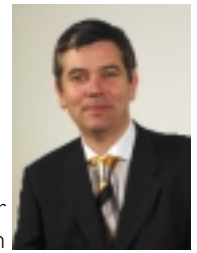
key staff involved in managing sex offenders.

Following the announcement of the inspection, Mr. Chivers and his team extended their sympathy to the family of Attracta Harron, and paid tribute to the courage shown by her family throughout this ordeal.

He also proposed, if they were willing, to involve the Harron family fully in this inspection, as their support for the process would be invaluable. ■

CJI would welcome input from anyone in Northern Ireland who has experience of the MASRAM process, and feels that they can make a contribution to this inspection.

Inspectorate prepares report on Community Safety Partnerships



Lead Inspector
Paul Mageean

An inspection of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) has recently been completed by Criminal Justice Inspection.

Community Safety Partnerships originated out of the recommendations of the Criminal Justice Review published in March 2000 which recommended the creation of community safety and policing partnerships.

CSPs generally consist of representatives of the statutory, voluntary, and private sectors along with local elected representatives and members of community associations.

As part of CJI's inspection of CSPs, fieldwork was carried out in May and June in Belfast, L/Derry, Larne and Craigavon. Though CJI

focused on the working of the CSPs in those areas, Lead Inspector Paul Mageean explained the inspection report sought to address themes which were common to CSPs across the whole of Northern Ireland.

The main aims of the inspection were to:

- assess the institutional strengths and weaknesses of CSPs against the 'common core' themes;
- examine the aims and objectives of CSPs, and the performance management system;
- examine the relationship between the CSPs and the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) at local level;
- examine the relationship between the Community Safety Unit and the Board;

- evaluate the contribution of the CSPs to the proper and effective functioning of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland and their impact in terms of local community confidence, and
- examine whether greater value could be added to the criminal justice system by some restructuring of CSPs and DPPs particularly in light of the Review of Public Administration (RPA).

An inspection report has been prepared which makes recommendations for the future of CSPs.

The report will be published in the autumn. ■

Deputy Chief Inspector addresses members of Iraqi criminal justice system

CJI's Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan was invited to give a presentation to a number of representatives of the Iraqi criminal justice system attending a Strategic Management Course at the Leadership Academy for Policing at Bramshill in June.

The Foreign Office sponsored scheme was designed to provide members of the Iraqi justice system including police officers, judges, prison governors and probation officers with an insight into how 'Terrorism' is dealt with in other jurisdictions.

Brendan's presentation *From Conflict to Peace in Northern Ireland* focused on the historical context and how the criminal justice system had

adapted to deal with terrorism over the years. It also gave the audience an insight into the challenges presented as the transformation is made from a 'conflict' situation to that of a more normal society.

During the presentation he described the ongoing political development and the transformational changes to policing and prosecution. He also explained how the inspection process was helping maintain the momentum for change.

Speaking after the presentation the Deputy Chief Inspector said: "While the scale of the conflicts cannot be compared there are many lessons to be learned from a closer examination of the 'Troubles' and the processes that are required to



Bramshill Police College

address the underlying causes of inter communal conflict.

"In giving the lecture and addressing the questions raised, I could not help but feel humbled and saddened that the Iraqi people have not even begun their journey out of conflict and that much of it is still beyond their control," he concluded. ■

CAUSEWAY INSPECTION OFFERS LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

An innovative IT system enabling information to be electronically shared between different criminal justice agencies in Northern Ireland was inspected by CJI earlier this year.

The interim inspection led by CJI's Bill Priestley is one of a series of inspections which will look at the phased roll out of the Causeway IT system until the programme is completed in about two years time.

"CJI and the main organisations involved in delivering Causeway felt it would be useful to carry out an inspection in the early stages of the programme to see how it was progressing and if any lessons could be learned to facilitate the latter stages," explained Mr Priestley.

"Prior to starting work, CJI met with a steering group made up of senior representatives from the main agencies participating in the programme. This helped to determine the scope for the inspection."

He continued: "As a result of these discussions we were able to draw up a list of key areas to look at during the inspection. These included how information was placed on the system; business change; how organisations were moving to facilitate Causeway; the emerging and anticipated benefits Causeway would bring and the lessons that had already been learned by agencies as a result of Causeway and their application to preparatory work across the criminal justice sector."

The inspection report – which was published on 24 July – showed participating organisations had engaged positively in Causeway through the Programme Board.

"Causeway has resulted in closer working relationships being established between the Criminal Justice organisations working together to deliver this extensive programme. It has also led to the development of a criminal record viewer that can be accessed by the Prosecution Service, Probation Board and to a lesser extent the Compensation Agency, Police Ombudsman's Office, Prison Service and Youth Justice Agency," explained Mr Priestley.

In its first full year of operation over 50,000 case files were transmitted electronically by the PSNI and over 21,000 were shared with the Prosecution Service. The Police Service also benefited from the provision of live case management information through the Causeway Business Information System.

"While there were many positive things to highlight in the inspection report there were a number of areas where improvements could be made," added Mr Priestley.



Bill Priestley unveils the Causeway Report

"The Police Service had initial difficulties with its electronic case file preparation system but after overcoming these problems they made great strides in completely changing how case files are prepared and transmitted by moving from a paper-based system to a predominantly electronic system in less than three years.

"Overall, Inspectors identified a number of areas for improvement and made 12 recommendations to address these issues," he concluded, adding that all the participating agencies had accepted the findings of the report.

As the Prosecution Service and Northern Ireland Courts Service are set to become critical partners in the next stage of the programme, CJI recommended the good work already underway in preparation for the next phase of the roll out should continue. ■

CJI takes part in DPP briefing on oversight of policing

The Deputy Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland Brendan McGuigan was one of four speakers who took part in a briefing session for DPP members hosted by the Policing Board earlier this year.

The information evening was held at the Beechlawm Hotel, Dunmurry and provided over 80 DPP members with an opportunity to learn more about the organisations providing oversight to policing in Northern Ireland.

During his address Mr McGuigan described how CJI was helping maintain momentum to police reforms, benchmarking against other jurisdictions and encouraging agencies to share best practice. He

also outlined the future inspection programme affecting PSNI.

The event was opened by Barry Gilligan, Vice Chairman of the Policing Board. Trevor Reaney, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Policing Board, outlined the Board's role in calling the PSNI to account for its performance.

Oversight Commissioner Al Hutchinson explained the role played by the Office of the Oversight Commissioner as well as how policing had been and continued to be transformed as a result of the Patten report. He also spoke of his hopes and fears for the future. The role of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland was explained in the final address by



Brendan McGuigan (second left) pictured at the DPP Policing Oversight Briefing at the Beechlawm Hotel with other speakers who addressed the audience.

its Chief Executive Sam Pollock who outlined how the independent investigations of complaints against PSNI officers was beneficial for both the public and police.

Speaking after the event, Mr McGuigan said: "I found the event to be extremely worthwhile and one which provided a wonderful opportunity for DPP members to raise their knowledge and awareness of policing contributions to the wider criminal justice system. ■"

Local representatives visit CJI

Since its establishment in 2004 CJI has been keen to engage with local representatives by seeking their views on criminal justice matters and keeping them fully informed on the work being undertaken by the organisation.

In May this year Chief Inspector Kit Chivers, Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan and other members of the CJI team welcomed Dr Stephen Farry, Alliance Party Justice spokesman, Allan Leonard, Alliance Party General Secretary and

Robert Logan, Carrickfergus DPP and party member to its offices.

"Our meeting with members of the Alliance Party was informative and interesting," said Mr Chivers.



"This meeting was followed up in June with a meeting with UUP Party Leader Sir Reg Empey and North Down MP Lady Sylvia Hermon, who discussed topics such as community based restorative justice and delays within the criminal justice system," he added.

CJI also met with Policing Board member and PUP party chairperson



Dawn Purvis and party colleague and East Belfast MLA David Ervine, who raised issues such as the recommendations and findings contained in CJI's MASRAM Inspection report and human resource issues within the PSNI.

"These meetings followed on from other meetings which had taken place with members of Sinn Fein and the SDLP," said Mr Chivers.

He stressed that CJI's efforts to build relationships with representatives of all political parties in Northern Ireland would continue and requests from politicians or elected representatives to meet with CJI would be welcomed. ■"



Debate continues around community based restorative justice schemes

The issue of community based restorative justice (CBRJ) schemes in Northern Ireland continues to be an intensely controversial subject following the publication of revised guidelines for Government approved operation.

The protocol – which was published in July by Criminal Justice Minister David Hanson MP – replaced the original draft guidelines published in December 2005.

Like its predecessor the new protocol is subject to a 12 week consultation period.

The protocol makes it clear that CBRJ schemes must communicate with the PSNI directly, not through intermediary organisations, and it introduces a vetting procedure to check the suitability of all persons the schemes propose to employ on 'criminal justice' work.

The document also describes the role which CJI would undertake in providing regular independent, professional inspection which would serve to reassure the public that CBRJ schemes were meeting the required standards of legality and co-operating fully with the formal criminal justice system.

This role would be seen as critical if schemes were to go ahead in accordance with the protocol.

Restorative justice is widely recognised to be a sound approach, especially (but not only) in dealing with young offenders. Bringing together the perpetrator and the victim of a crime can have a powerful effect on both. It brings home to the offender the human consequences of what they did, and it gives the victim the satisfaction of an apology and perhaps some reparation by way of voluntary help.

The process is often more demanding for an offender than conventional court sanctions – and more beneficial.

The Criminal Justice Review in 2000 saw a role for the schemes, provided they met the necessary conditions of due process and respect for human rights. They were also commended by Lord Clyde, the Justice Oversight Commissioner, who encouraged the Government to authorise them, subject to strict conditions.

However, restorative justice schemes must be prepared to work with the criminal justice agencies, including the police. If the



Chief Inspector Kit Chivers examines the new protocol and the role it outlines for CJI if it goes ahead.

community is going to be involved in the administration of justice and public safety, all concerned will need to show that they are ready to observe modern, democratic standards of legality and human rights.

If it is called upon to inspect the schemes – and it is by no means certain at this stage that they will go ahead – CJI will apply the same criteria as it does to any criminal justice organisation, looking at whether they are open and accountable, good partners with other criminal justice agencies, show respect for equality and human rights, are well-managed and deliver a worthwhile service.

All the inspection reports will be published. ■

New business manager appointed

Criminal Justice Inspection has appointed a new Business Manager.

Tom McGonigle became the first CJI Inspector to take on the role on a part-time basis in February, when he replaced Dan Mulholland who returned to the NIO after three

years as Business Manager with CJI.

“The decision was made at the beginning of this year to rotate the post of Business Manager among the five Inspectors on a yearly basis, and I was delighted to be the first take on the role,” explained Tom.



As part of his new role, Tom has responsibility for the supervision and line management of the Business Support Team. ■

Report prepared on the procurement of goods and services

CJI has conducted a review of the procurement of goods and services in the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland.

Procurement is an important topic for an inspection due to the large amount of public expenditure involved and the potential to divert savings to the front-end delivery of criminal justice services.

The process of how procurement operates also has direct implications for wider government policies such as sustainability of the environment, local economic development and social inclusion of marginalised/disadvantaged sections of society.

The review commenced in June with research and assessment of relevant documents and statistics. James Corrigan and John Shanks from CJI visited the National Audit Office in London where they received valuable advice and guidance.

Fieldwork for the review was undertaken in June and July, which included interviews with financial and procurement staff in the NIO and each of the main criminal justice organisations. Meetings were also held with the UK Office of Government Commerce and the Central Procurement Directorate (Northern Ireland) which leads on the operation of procurement and dissemination of best practice in England and Wales and Northern Ireland respectively.

As part of the fieldwork, Inspectors reviewed a selection of procurement files relating to completed tendered projects in the criminal justice system.

The views of suppliers (and potential supplier companies), is



Assistant Inspector Ian Craig analyses results from the CJI Procurement survey.

critical to identifying problems and areas for improvement. A questionnaire was developed by CJI and posted to 2,500 companies in the UK and Ireland – identified from lists provided by the NIO Procurement Unit. The survey asked about the opportunities to supply the Criminal Justice System (CJS), the quality of service provided by the CJS including communication and invited views on the fairness and transparency of the procurement process. The responses will form a key element of the final inspection report.

The report features an analysis of the growing importance of, and spend on procurement in the NI criminal justice system. The policies, structures and procedures for the procurement of goods and services forms the core of the report and its recommendations. A primary focus of the review has been to identify areas of best practice which can be shared and applied across criminal justice organisations.

The report was prepared in September and it is expected to be published by the end of 2006. ■

A Review of the Voluntary and Community Sector's contribution to the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System

This review is well-advanced and CJI aims to publish before Christmas. Our 2006 Stakeholder Conference had already provided a useful opportunity to discuss the subject, and the report will provide for the first time an analysis of the added value that is provided to the criminal justice system by the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The review canvassed views from 85 groups in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, and received feedback from 40 of them. It is a high-level, qualitative exercise rather than an inspection of individual organisations' efficiency.

The findings reflect a sophisticated voluntary and community sector which works within a complex and changing set of arrangements. Service delivery, innovation and policy comment are some of the main functions provided by the sector, making an important contribution to the criminal justice system. While Inspectors heard of tensions and disagreements, the overall picture was positive in comparison to other jurisdictions. ■

CJI place hate crime under the spotlight

CJI examines Volume Crime and Police Bail in Northern Ireland

A thematic inspection of hate crime and how it is managed by criminal justice agencies in Northern Ireland has been carried out by Criminal Justice Inspection over the summer months.

The Inspectorate was prompted to look at this issue because of the points raised in the April 2005 Northern Ireland Affairs Committee report *The challenge of Diversity: Hate Crime in Northern Ireland*. The inquiry “identified a lack of firm and effective leadership by Government, the PSNI and the criminal justice agencies in Northern Ireland to tackle these appalling crimes.”

In carrying out this work, Inspectors also took note of the increasing level of concern being expressed by members of the public and the high media profile of incidents of hate crime.

“As part of this thematic inspection, CJI has met with representatives of key agencies within the criminal justice system including the police, prosecution service, court service, probation board and Youth Justice Agency,” said Lead Inspector John Shanks.

“Meetings were also held to establish what systems are in place to manage hate crime business which has involved reviewing policies and procedures which relate to hate crime and identifying what steps have been taken regarding staff development to ensure these policies are delivered,” he added.

In addition, as part of CJI’s research and fieldwork Inspectors met with representatives of support groups who work with victims of hate crime and other interested individuals to establish what their



Lead Inspector John Shanks

views and experiences have been.

From the outset the Inspectorate wanted to establish if criminal justice agencies were responding to the needs of victims of hate crime, if their policies were working in practice and if the views held now had changed in any way from views held in the past.

Hate crime currently represents about two per cent of all crime reported in Northern Ireland though its profile is considerably higher than that of many other offences. Hate crime also has the potential to have far reaching implications for many people and organisations ranging from criminal damage and the loss of property to physical injury, the loss of life and the associated fear and intimidation which results from a hate crime.

For the purposes of this Inspection, CJI chose to examine hate crime in relation to four particular areas. They were religion/faith; ethnic minority/nationality; sexual orientation and disability.

Inspectors are currently evaluating findings for consideration by the Hate Crime Inspection Steering Group and it is anticipated the report will be presented to Parliament by the Chief Inspector in the winter. ■

CJI has commenced work on reviewing the operation of police bail and the investigation of volume crime by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Fieldwork for the inspections which have been led by Paul Mageean and Bill Priestley was co-ordinated through the PSNI Inspection and Review Team.

In a bid to ease the burden on the PSNI at a time when resources were stretched, CJI chose to plan its fieldwork to coincide with Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) baseline inspection so that officers and staff were interviewed once rather than up to three times during the fieldwork phase.

The CJI fieldwork focused on the work of a range of police District Command Units (DCUs) including South Belfast, Foyle and North Belfast.

The work has involved Inspectors looking at how police bail was being used to assist the investigation process and the numbers of people currently on police bail as well as how volume crime was being dealt with by each DCU.

This has involved examining issues such as resources and methods deployed to tackle volume crime issues.

As part of the fieldwork CJI personnel met with a wide range of staff including relevant DCU personnel and senior managers based at PSNI Headquarters in Belfast. They have also examined statistical information relevant to both police bail and volume crime.

With fieldwork completed during July and August, CJI Inspectors are now involved in drafting their reports with a view to publication in the near future. ■

CJI carries out its first follow-up inspection review – State Pathologist’s Department

Criminal Justice Inspection carried out its first follow-up inspection when it returned to the State Pathologist’s Department in July.

The follow-up review assessed the progress which has been made by the State Pathologist’s Department against each of the 30 recommendations made in CJI’s original inspection report published in June 2005.

It also assessed progress against the joint State Pathologist’s Department/Northern Ireland Office Action Plan which was compiled in response to the inspection report.

CJI has found that good progress has been made in a number of key areas such as the introduction of a new IT system and the strengthening of linkages with the Royal Group of Hospitals.

Inspector James Corrigan who led the original inspection found it reassuring that most post mortem examinations continue to be conducted within 24 hours of death or notification in spite of the increased workload for consultant forensic pathologists.

The review however found that delays in the preparation of post mortem reports – the main problem highlighted at the time of the initial inspection – remained a concern and CJI has noted that further progress is needed on this.

Other recommendations that still need to be addressed include the renewal of efforts to recruit an additional consultant forensic pathologist and a need for existing workloads to be distributed more evenly.

Staffing reviews, consultant’s contracts and the day to day management of the Department



James Corrigan, Lead Inspector

also requires attention.

Issues such as improving the governance and accountability of the State Pathologist’s Department and the recruitment of a business manager with enhanced management responsibilities will require more progress from the NIO and State Pathologist’s Department.

As a number of recommendations remain outstanding, CJI intends to conduct a further follow-up review in 12 months. ■

Staffing changes at CJI

CJI has successfully appointed another directly recruited member of staff in Linda Boal, PA to Chief Inspector Kit Chivers and Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan.

She also has responsibility for providing support to CJI’s team of Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors as well as being a key member of the Business Support team.

Linda joined CJI in April after spending 13 years as a PA in the IT department of Abbey National.



Business Support team member Keith Boyce – a member of the project board which was involved in

setting up CJI – has moved to a new post within the NIO.

Keith spent nearly four years with CJI working first at its initial base at Massey House and later at its offices in Great Victoria Street.

During his time with the organisation he was involved in drafting initial CJI policies and future HR policies. He was also involved in setting up CJI’s permanent base at Great Victoria Street.

Assistant Inspector Ann Duncan

has returned to England to work with her local authority, Harrogate Council as Corporate Partnership Development Officer.

She joined CJI in September 2004 and during her time with the Inspectorate provided invaluable support to her inspection colleagues both by carrying out background research and taking part in fieldwork.

Ann contributed significantly to a number of inspection and thematic reports including work in relation to the State Pathologist’s Department and CJI’s thematic inspection report on Avoidable Delay within the criminal justice system. ■