



Consultative approach used to design new Corporate Plan

CJI's Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan outlines the work which has been carried out in recent months as CJI works towards compiling its new Corporate Plan for the next three years.

“Developing the inspection programme has in the past been very much an internal organisational task undertaken in the three-year Corporate Planning or annual Business Planning cycle.

“The inspection agenda has largely been determined from within the Inspectorate with proposals being discussed with relevant stakeholders at CJI's annual Conference,” said Brendan.

He continued: “This year we have approached the process in a more consultative and inclusive way by engaging firstly with the management teams of the main criminal justice organisations. We have started with a blank sheet and populated it with their views and concerns as well as listening as to how the inspection programme can add value to their organisations as they move forward.

“At the same time, the Chief Inspector has met with Ministers and the heads of our partner Inspectorates to ensure that we are reflecting the Government's overall aims for the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland.

“We have also engaged with the various political parties at the Assembly to ensure that our inspection programme reflects some of their observations on the effectiveness of how



Brendan McGuigan and Dr Michael Maguire who have led the Corporate Plan consultation exercise.

criminal justice is being delivered and some of what they are hearing on the doorsteps from constituents or as a result of complaints about the criminal justice system,” added the Deputy Chief Inspector.

“We also plan to meet representatives from the voluntary and community sector who provide valuable services across the criminal justice system. Their contributions in the past have been considerable, as they are well placed to make informed observations, particularly on service delivery.

Commenting on the process, Brendan said: “This has been an extremely worthwhile process. It will make sure the inspection programme is corporately owned by the criminal justice system and will ensure CJI's work continues to help define the way forward, guaranteeing the continuing

relevance of the inspection programme in the years to come.”

Although there will still be a number of inspections which focus on organisational practice and service delivery, CJI have identified five themes which reflect the dialogue to date. They are:

- young people and the criminal justice system;
- balancing public protection and the resettlement of offenders;
- the care of victims and witnesses;
- reducing/eliminating avoidable delay; and
- efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system.

The proposed inspection programme will be circulated in advance of the 2009 Stakeholder Conference on 27 January where it will be discussed and refined. ■

CJI Inspector attends 10th International Corrections and Prisons Association conference

Tom McGonigle co-led a workshop on correctional oversight facilities at the 10th International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA) annual conference, held in Prague between 26 – 31 October.

The conference was a major international event attended by 350 people from 58 nations. Most delegates were senior personnel representing public, private and voluntary sectors, from developed and developing nations.

The theme for this year's conference was A Decade of Lessons Learned which aimed to promote the sharing of best practice among penal practitioners.

The CJI workshop was jointly-led with the Correctional Investigator of

Canada, Howard Sapers, the recently retired Chief Inspector of Custodial Services for Western Australia, Richard Harding, and Uju Agomoh, the Director of PRAWA, a non-governmental prisoner's rights organisation from Nigeria.

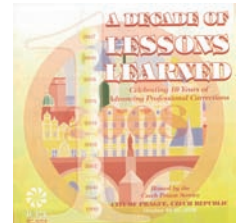
The wide range of workshops and speeches from most of the participating countries attending the conference provided an excellent opportunity to share experience of corrections practice throughout the world.

The ICPA ethos is strongly human rights based, and in an international climate of increasing prison populations, there was considerable debate about how much had been achieved in improving corrections during the past decade.

Speaking after the conference Tom told The Spec: "From a western perspective, it was humbling to

hear about the fundamental penal challenges faced in parts of the developing world such as gross overcrowding, and the difficulty of feeding prisoners and dealing with their healthcare needs when the population at large faces famine and shortages of medicines."

The conference was very well organised by an international committee and hosted by the Czech Prison Service. It included an awards ceremony and a visit to a women's prison. ■



The value of the inspection process

Dr Michael Maguire spoke of the importance of the inspection process when he addressed delegates attending the 2008 Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland conference in November.

The one-day event held in Templepatrick provided an opportunity for the Chief Inspector to focus on the contribution inspection can make to securing greater confidence in the criminal justice system among local communities.

"Winning public confidence is essential to the effective working of the criminal justice system and people need to be assured the system is working effectively in order to have confidence in it," said Dr Maguire.

"There is a real risk that the inspection process can undermine public confidence through the publication of potentially very critical reports. However, I view the inspection process as something that can enable, rather than disable confidence in the system.

"I would argue that a robust, independent, inspection process which provides an honest reflection of the strengths and weaknesses of the system, is fundamental to furthering public confidence. It also provides a basis from which to move forward with a shared improvement agenda," explained Dr Maguire.

During his speech, the Chief Inspector highlighted the role CJI could play in 'demystifying' the

criminal justice system and the way it operates for the public.

"This can involve providing reassurance to the public when appropriate processes are in place to deal with, for example, sex offenders in the community and by challenging unrealistic expectations," he said.

Speaking in support of the conference's theme – Working together for Public Protection – Dr Maguire concluded his remarks by focusing on CJI's on-going commitment to work with criminal justice agencies to secure improvement, and the need for all agencies to engage with the Inspectorate to develop a meaningful inspection agenda. ■

CJI addresses recommendations contained in Light Touch Review

In spring 2008, the NIO commissioned John Hunter to carry out a 'light touch' review of CJI to assess its progress and contribution to the criminal justice system since its establishment in 2004.

The review, which can be downloaded from the CJSNI website, highlighted Criminal Justice Inspection's achievements to date, and pitched its recommendations to help CJI develop and enhance its relationship with inspected organisations in the future.

The recommendations contained in the Hunter review can be categorised into four areas, which broadly speaking, focused on CJI's need to:

- develop a more strategic relationship with the NIO;
- improve communications between the Inspectorate and other inspection bodies;
- develop a more structured relationship between CJI and the organisations subject to inspection; and
- develop the working of the Inspectorate.

Commenting on the content of the Light Touch Review, CJI's Chief Inspector Dr Michael Maguire said: "We welcome the Review and as an organisation, have been taking forward the recommendations in each of the areas discussed.

"The Review has been of particular interest in the context of developing our Corporate Plan for the next three years," said Dr Maguire.

The Chief Inspector continued: "Over the last two months CJI has been consulting with the various



criminal justice organisations, political parties and the voluntary and community sector. We have been looking at the challenges facing the criminal justice system, and the implications for the development of an inspection agenda. This has been very helpful in developing a more strategic approach to the inspection process – an important area raised by John Hunter in his Review.

"I also believe there will be a need to focus on a more thematic approach to inspections that will allow a more informed commentary on the overall efficiency and effectiveness of criminal justice organisations," said Dr Maguire.

CJI's Chief Inspector added that in addition to the work undertaken regarding the Corporate Plan, the Inspectorate had been working to establish a more structured relationship with inspected bodies.

"The Hunter Review recommended the development of a 'protocol' setting out the

responsibilities of all parties to an inspection. This is something we have taken on-board and have been progressing as we would hope to have a draft document for agencies to discuss within the next month," stated Dr Maguire.

He added that as part of its ongoing work, the Inspectorate had been in regular contact with other 'oversight' bodies to ensure proper co-ordination and communication to avoid placing unnecessary burdens on inspected organisations.

And he indicated that work was on-going on the re-draft of the 'Notes for Inspectors' document which will set out more clearly the working of the inspection process.

Dr Maguire concluded by indicating that each of the areas identified by the Hunter Review had been subject to extensive internal debate within CJI, and that working groups have been established within the Inspectorate to move the agenda forward. ■

The operation and effectiveness of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

CJI has recently published a report on an inspection of the operation and effectiveness of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs).

ASBOs are civil orders made by the magistrate's court acting in its civil capacity, which aim to protect the public from the behaviour of individuals whose anti-social activities disrupt the lives of the wider community.

The inspection was led by Rachel Tupling from CJI and looked at how the police, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and 26 local councils were making ASBO applications and undertaking their responsibilities since the legislation was introduced in Northern Ireland in 2004.

The inspection found that overall there was a sensible approach

demonstrated to the introduction of ASBOs in Northern Ireland. The agencies involved were, in general, using a graduated approach to ASBOs, with alternative methods of dealing with anti-social behaviour also being considered and used where appropriate.

Inspectors recommended that discussion regarding anti-social behaviour should be extended to include other partner agencies such as the Youth Justice Agency, Probation Board, Social Services Trusts and Education and Library Boards, so that a collaborative, holistic approach to addressing anti-social behaviour is adopted.

The inspection identified some weaknesses that existed in the collection and monitoring of information on the effectiveness of ASBOs and a recommendation was made to address this.



Underage drinking is a common example of anti-social behaviour.

The collation of accurate, timely information around the number of times breaches occur, coupled with information surrounding the successfulness of alternative methods of dealing with anti-social behaviour, will be beneficial in helping assess the effectiveness of ASBOs as a method of addressing anti-social behaviour.

Copies of the ASBO report can be viewed or downloaded from the CJI website – www.cjini.org. ■

Valuable meeting held with Derry DPP

As part of ongoing efforts to develop greater understanding within local communities of the role CJI plays in securing improvement within the criminal justice system, Dr Michael Maguire recently met with members of Derry District Policing Partnership (DPP).

The Chief Inspector gave DPP members a brief overview of the Inspectorate's work before speaking about the reports CJI had conducted to date.

"This was a valuable meeting that allowed the DPP to explore issues

such as roads policing and prison conditions in Northern Ireland," said Dr Maguire.

"The DPP members were also keen to discuss topics such as how women engage with the criminal justice system, the work ongoing in relation to the resettlement of offenders, the use of police custody and mental health provision within the prison service," he said.

The meeting with Derry DPP kicked off a series of visits to DPP groups across Northern Ireland which are arranged to take place over the coming months.

"The enthusiasm of the members

of the DPP to hear about the work CJI has carried out in greater detail was very encouraging. As a result of this visit, a follow-up meeting between James Corrigan and the DPP members is planned to facilitate further discussion on the issues raised in the Inspectorate's report on Roads Policing," said Dr Maguire.

CJI would like to thank the members of Derry DPP for facilitating the meeting. The Chief Inspector looks forward to engaging with members of other DPP groups in the near future. ■

New Year: New Opportunities?

Dr Michael Maguire looks forward to the 2009 CJI Stakeholder Conference.

“The justice system in Northern Ireland has experienced considerable change over the years. Change, however, is now a constant and the pressures on delivery will be even more intense with the introduction of a devolved Justice Department.

“This will require all organisations within the justice system to consider how services are delivered and how they relate to the wider community. Good governance demands that we engage more fully with the public rather than with a few stakeholders.

“This is part of the process of developing confidence through building knowledge, understanding and debate.

“CJI will host its sixth annual Stakeholder Conference on 27

January and we propose to use the event to discuss the opportunities provided by a devolved setting to consider some of the critical issues facing the criminal justice system.

“The conference will seek to address some of the key issues across the criminal justice system, including:

- getting the balance right between public protection and reducing re-offending;
- ensuring value for money;
- reducing avoidable delays; and
- improving the treatment of victims and witnesses.

“We have put together a stimulating panel of speakers that address the range of issues under consideration including Bruce Robinson, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service; Sean Aylward, Secretary General, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform;

Jan Berry, Reducing Bureaucracy Advocate with the National Police Improvement Agency and Mike Conway, Director of the privately operated Peterborough Prison.

“I hope there will be an interesting and stimulating debate on what success looks like for these important areas.

“The conference also provides an opportunity for CJI to consult with our stakeholders on our work over the past year and our inspection agenda. In 2009, we will be taking a more thematic approach to the development of the agenda and I will welcome your feedback on the proposed shape and content of the agenda.

“I look forward to welcoming all our delegates to this year’s conference and would like to wish all readers of *The Spec* a Happy New Year and best wishes for 2009,” said Dr Maguire. ■

Future challenges examined at Court Service conference

The 2008 Courts Conference hosted by the Northern Ireland Court Service took place at the Inn of Courts, Royal Courts of Justice, in Belfast in November.

One of the guest speakers during the two-day event was CJI’s Chief Inspector, Dr Michael Maguire.

During his speech Dr Maguire spoke of the challenges facing the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland, and the need for a performance improvement agenda to be developed to deal with the issues that may arise in the future.

“Under a devolved administration, there is no doubt that all criminal justice organisations will come under

increasing and relentless scrutiny.

“One of the particular points of interest will be the cost of the criminal justice system. The current budget of £1.3 billion will make it the third largest after health and education. This will give it a prominence and profile that will be different,” said the Chief Inspector.

Dr Maguire also spoke of the need for all agencies to continue to work to develop good practice in service delivery.

“Standards and practices are constantly changing and what might have been regarded as good practice 10 years ago, may be very different now. We need to know how far behind practice here is compared to elsewhere

in the world, and in what areas we are leaders for change.

“There is also a need to discuss how services are delivered in the future and to build a performance improvement agenda that is comprehensive, realistic and focused on the achievement of better outcomes for all who use the services provided.”

The Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice concluded his remarks by paying tribute to the steps already taken by the Northern Ireland Court Service to develop a performance improvement agenda and reaffirmed the Inspectorate’s commitment to continue to work with the Court Service in the future. ■

Ian leaves for pastures new

After spending three and a half years with CJI, Assistant Inspector Ian Craig has moved on to take up a new post with the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

Ian joined CJI from the Police Ombudsman's Office in 2005, and during his time with the Inspectorate he provided support to Inspectors involved in key inspection reports.

This included work on CJI's inspection and follow-up review of the SSA's Benefit Investigation Service and Hate Crime as well its report on the procurement of goods and services within the criminal justice system and an inspection of Belfast Harbour Police.

Ian was also heavily involved with CJI's Omnibus survey and a number



Ian Craig.

of other stakeholder surveys linked to inspection work.

"Ian made a valuable contribution to the work of CJI through his role as an Assistant Inspector. He brought a range of research and analytical skills to the Inspectorate which were of benefit to his colleagues within the Inspection Team," said Deputy Chief Inspector Brendan McGuigan.

"During recent months Ian had been using his skills and experience to benefit the Northern Ireland Prison Service as part of a 12-month secondment to the agency.

"CJI wish Ian every success in his new role with NISRA," Brendan concluded. ■

Annual Report and Accounts

The 2007-08 Annual Report and Accounts of Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland were placed before Parliament on 4 December 2008.

The report tracked the progress of the Inspectorate over the last financial year and provided an overview of the work carried out by CJI during 2007-08.

The report revealed the organisation had fully achieved 10 of its objectives and targets for the year covering areas such as its inspection work, Media and Communication and Planning and Management.

The 2007-08 accounts also provide a full breakdown of the Inspectorate's expenditure during the financial year.

The figures were audited and approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General of the National Audit Office who recorded that he had no observations to make in relation to the financial statements supplied to him.

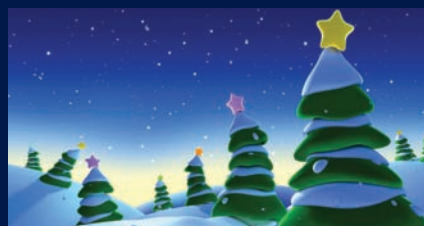
Copies of CJI's Annual Report and Accounts can be downloaded from the CJI website – www.cjini.org. Hard copies can be obtained by phoning CJI on 028 90 258000 or writing to the Media and Communications Officer, 7th Floor, 14 Great Victoria Street, Belfast BT2 7BA. ■

Christmas Reception

CJI held its annual Christmas Reception for representatives of the criminal justice system and members of the community and voluntary sector on Monday 8 December.

The lunchtime reception which took place at the Inspectorate's city centre offices provided an opportunity for the Inspectorate to speak informally with representatives of the various agencies.

It also provided an opportunity to thank the various agencies for their help and assistance during the course



of the year.

"This year's Christmas reception was well attended and we were delighted to welcome our colleagues and partners from across the criminal justice system to the event," said CJI's Chief Inspector, Dr Michael Maguire

"We look forward to seeing many of those who attended at our Stakeholder Conference on 27 January and working with them during 2009 as we take forward the Inspection Programme for the next financial year," said Dr Maguire. ■