



HM Inspectorate  
of Probation

An inspection of probation services in:

**Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU**

The Probation Service – East Midlands Region

HM Inspectorate of Probation, May 2025



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## Acknowledgements

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## Foreword

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Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) was last inspected by HM Inspectorate of Probation in November and December 2022, when it was rated as 'Inadequate' overall. Since that inspection, the PDU has faced ongoing challenges, including high staff turnover, elevated sickness rates and, like all PDUs and regions, a prolonged period of significant and frequent changes linked to early prison releases. Only in the past six months has there been a noticeable shift towards improvement. This recent progress was reflected, in part, by an increase in the number of practitioners working in the PDU, which was a positive step. Nevertheless, the PDU continued to face considerable challenges in delivering work to the expected standard across all areas.

The leadership team has earned the respect and support of middle managers and frontline staff, creating a cohesive organisational culture. However, this leadership strength had yet to translate into sufficient improvements in casework, particularly in managing individuals on probation and ensuring community safety. Our inspection found that, while there were some signs of progress, the overall quality of casework remained inadequate.

A key concern remained the inexperience of the practitioner workforce. Their learning and development needs have not yet been fully recognised or addressed, either by the practitioners themselves or their managers. This, coupled with ineffective management oversight, has directly affected the PDU's ability to keep people safe.

On a more positive note, the PDU benefited from well-established strategic and operational relationships with both statutory and non-statutory partners. These partnerships were a strength and offered valuable opportunities to support practitioners further, enhance casework and improve outcomes for people on probation.

Despite encouraging signs of improvement, the quality of case management, particularly in safeguarding the public, remained insufficient. As a result, the PDU has once again been rated 'Inadequate' overall. However, we found a service with much of the necessary infrastructure in place to support meaningful change in future.

I hope this inspection will help PDU leaders to prioritise improvements in risk of harm management and focus on the development and support of inexperienced and probation service officer grade staff, which will be critical to driving better outcomes for people on probation and victims of crime.



**Martin Jones CBE**  
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

## Ratings

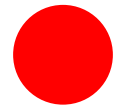
### Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU

Fieldwork started March 2025

Score **3/21**

#### Overall rating

**Inadequate**



#### 1. Organisational arrangements and activity

P 1.1 Leadership

Requires Improvement



P 1.2 Staffing

Requires Improvement



P 1.3 Services

Requires Improvement



#### 2. Service delivery

P 2.1 Assessment

Inadequate



P 2.2 Planning

Inadequate



P 2.3 Implementation and delivery

Inadequate



P 2.4 Reviewing

Inadequate



## Recommendations

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As a result of our inspection findings, we have made a number of recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of probation services.

**Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should:**

1. improve the quality of the work to assess and review risk of harm, ensuring all available information is accessed and utilised
2. conduct a learning analysis to understand the skills and knowledge of the practitioner group and implement a system to ensure gaps in learning are met
3. develop practitioners' confidence and skills in the use of professional curiosity and challenging conversations to identify, analyse, assess, plan, and respond to indicators of risk effectively
4. devise and implement a strategy for returning to a sustainable level of service in which SPOs are focused on leading their teams and monitoring the quality of work produced by practitioners
5. ensure effective management oversight is provided to enhance and sustain the quality of the work with people on probation and keep people safe
6. reinforce, and publicise the process for the gathering of social care and police information via the in-house safeguarding hub and ensure all staff are aware of the process and rationale for using this resource.

## Background

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We conducted fieldwork in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU over the period of two weeks, beginning 17 March 2025. We inspected 45 community orders and 26 releases on licence from custody where sentences and licences had commenced during two separate weeks between 29 July 2024 and 04 August 2024 and 26 August 2024 and 01 September 2024. We also conducted interviews with 69 probation practitioners.

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland is responsible for the supervision of more people on probation than any of the other six PDUs in the East Midlands region, and it is one of the largest by overall caseload in England and Wales. The PDU has offices in Leicester, Loughborough and Coalville, with satellite office arrangements operating from Leicester police station, council offices in Melton and Market Harborough, a drug agency in Hinckley and the 'New Dawn New Day' women's centre in Leicester.

Staff employed in the PDU provided a service to magistrates' and Crown courts in Leicester and Loughborough magistrates' court. The PDU has four prisons, HMPs Gartree, Leicester, Stocken and Fosse Way. With expansion in some of these establishments, there was a need for the region to provide more probation resources in the prisons, although those practitioners are not led by managers within the PDU. At the time the inspection was announced, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU had a caseload of 1,364 people on probation who were subject to community sentences and 939 people who were being supervised on licence from prison. In total, 795 individuals were being managed in custody before release. The caseload of the PDU represented almost a quarter of the caseload of the East Midlands region as a whole.

Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) were provided by NACRO for accommodation support and Ingeus for personal wellbeing and finance, benefit and debt support. New Dawn New Day delivered services for women. The PDU had co-commissioned drug and alcohol services through Turning Point, in conjunction with the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office and the local authority.

The Probation Reset policy was in place at the time of inspection which meant that individuals' contact with their probation practitioner was suspended for the final third of their supervision period. In cases where contact had been suspended after more than eight weeks' supervision, we applied our core standards and took a proportionate approach in making inspection judgements. We used an adjusted set of standards where contact had been suspended within eight weeks supervision or less. Nine of the 71 cases we inspected were subject to Probation Reset, with two having the adjusted PDU standards applied.

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU was previously inspected in November and December 2022, when it was rated 'Inadequate'. While we saw some progress against previous recommendations, the pace and extent of improvement were insufficient to improve the previous rating. The PDU had been hampered in implementing its change programme and inspection action plan largely due to a shift in emphasis from local to national priorities, focused on reducing the prison population. An additional factor was a high turnover of staff, resulting in an inexperienced staff group overall.

Progress made against previous recommendations can be found at the end of this report.

# 1. Organisational arrangements and activity

## P 1.1. Leadership



The leadership of the PDU enables delivery of a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service for all people on probation.

Requires improvement

### Strengths:

- Clear governance structures were in place with a well-respected leadership team which included the head and two deputy heads of the PDU. Regular PDU leadership meetings provided an opportunity to cascade key operational messages and focus on PDU priorities. This facilitated two-way communication. The deputy heads held monthly performance and accountability meetings with senior probation officers (SPOs), focusing on practitioner performance and delivery, which had driven up PDU performance across key performance indicators. There was a clear feedback loop to the regional accountability meetings promoting the strategic and operational alignment of performance delivery priorities.
- The PDU priorities had appropriate links with regional and Area Executive Director (AED) priorities of protecting the public, reducing reoffending, enabling people to be at their best, having an open learning culture, transforming through partners and modernising their estates. Twenty out of 29 respondents to the staff survey indicated that the vision and strategy of the PDU drove the delivery of a high-quality service for all people on probation always, or most of the time.
- There were strong, long-standing strategic and operational relationships with partner organisations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The head of service and deputy heads sat on several boards to drive improvements in service delivery for people on probation.
- Staff across all grades described feeling able to provide feedback to managers and senior leaders about change and constructive challenge when they felt things were not working well. In our survey, 21 out of 29 respondents said they considered that the culture of the PDU promoted openness and constructive challenge. The use of cross-grade forums promoted a shared ownership among staff in developing the PDU.
- The PDU leadership team had taken a deliberate, strategic approach to meeting diverse needs in relation to some protected characteristics. This included maintaining specialist teams for women and young adults despite the wider challenges of resourcing. There was some evidence in our case inspections of women on probation that this specialist team was performing well, and both teams appeared to provide innovative and consistent services to those supervised.
- Appropriate attention was paid to staff wellbeing. Mental health allies were available for informal peer support, and supervision routinely included discussion about personal wellbeing. Eighteen out of 26 respondents to the staff survey indicated that sufficient attention was paid to their wellbeing always, or most of the time.

## **Areas for improvement**

- The strengths demonstrated in the leadership approach across the PDU were not resulting in the delivery of a high-quality service for all people on probation. This was particularly the case in keeping people safe which was reflected in all aspects of our case inspections. The quality of this work was affected by an inexperienced practitioner group, who were unfamiliar with working within normal 'business as usual' arrangements.
- Senior probation officers (SPOs) wanted to help practitioners in their teams, but in doing so were often undertaking work for them rather than supporting them to deliver the work themselves. In addition, these SPOs were stretched in terms of their spans of control and work away from sentence management and therefore lacked sufficient capacity to deliver consistent and effective management oversight.
- Progress against previous inspection recommendations was insufficient. Although some minor improvements were observed, ultimately the quality of work to keep people safe in all aspects of case activity remained insufficient. Leaders were not always aware of the reality of practice delivery or that staff were not always using processes put in place to support them.
- The PDU had staff with direct access to safeguarding information, but this process was not fully embedded, with some staff unaware of the correct process and others circumventing it to gather information. The case inspection data demonstrated this lack of confidence and resulting lack of use. At the assessment stage we found 24 per cent of cases where child safeguarding information should have been requested and had not been, and 15 per cent of cases where no request had been made for domestic abuse information when it should have been.



## 1.2. Staffing



Staff are enabled to deliver a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service for all people on probation.

Requires improvement

### Strengths:

- The number of staff employed across practitioner grades was improving in the PDU, although it was still some way from being fully sufficient. Senior probation officer roles were fully staffed.
- Most staff indicated they were having regular supervision. In our staff survey, 22 out of 26 respondents considered their supervision to be sufficient and frequent. While practitioners were receiving case-focused supervision regularly, our case inspections indicated this was not enhancing and sustaining the quality of work with people on probation or keeping people safe.
- People with lived experience of the criminal justice system were routinely embedded and used in the PDU across a range of activities. They provided feedback and ideas through the EPOP Forum and contributed to staff training and inductions. They also delivered structured intervention pre-programme sessions and attended 'Transition and Hope' sessions which were designed to promote positive attendance, engagement and compliance from people on probation.
- Twenty-eight per cent of staff in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland PDU were from an ethnic minority background which almost exactly mirrored that of the caseload. The workforce adequately reflected the ethnic diversity of Leicestershire and the population of people on probation.

### Areas for improvement

- The number of probation service officers remained lower than required at 78 per cent of target (excluding staff training to become probation officers) and probation officer grades were at 77 per cent. As a result, practitioners were stretched and lacked the capacity to learn and deliver effective work with people on probation.
- The learning needs of the staff were not being met effectively by leaders and were not fully understood. The PDU had an inexperienced workforce, with most practitioners having less than two years of service. This led to increased demands on managers because a greater level of day-to-day support and oversight was required to compensate for this lack of experience. This inexperience was clearly evident in the quality of work delivered in our case work inspections. We found limited evidence that meaningful interventions were being delivered to keep people safe. Our practitioner interviews indicated that 94 per cent of practitioners felt they had sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to manage the inspected cases. However, that was simply not reflected in the casework we inspected nor in their responses during fieldwork.
- Middle managers were frustrated by tasks that took them away from core probation work, particularly the management and investigation of complaints from people on probation and human resources activity. In common with other PDUs, their breadth of responsibility was large. Recorded oversight in our case inspections was sufficient in only 28 per cent of cases.

- Existing supervision and management oversight were not enhancing and sustaining the quality of work with people on probation or keeping people safe. Managers were not providing the necessary skills and support to practitioners to enable them to manage their cases well.
- Middle managers did not have enough capacity to support the number of staff training to become probation officers under the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQIP) programme. Thirty-eight staff were employed in the PDU under the PQIP programme, many newly recruited. Ultimately many of these staff had been recruited to fill a growing number of prison-based vacancies in the region and were not, once qualified, expected to provide support in the PDU.

### P 1.3. Services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, supporting a tailored and responsive service for all people on probation.

Requires improvement

#### Strengths:

- There were appropriate multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) at Levels 2 and 3. Partnership working between the PDU and the police was collaborative and effective, particularly for the IOM cohort.
- We found well developed liaison between the PDU and commissioned rehabilitative service providers at a strategic level. This enhanced the PDU's ability to deal with issues quickly, increased understanding of the service offer and improved the quality of referrals.
- Mental Health Treatment Requirements were starting to be delivered in the PDU. Processes were understood, priority groups of people on probation had been identified, and peer mentors were involved.
- The PDU had led a collaborative strategic response to SDS40, with core partner agencies indicating that they had been well informed, which had helped to prepare for those people released early from custody.
- Referral routes for CRS were clear. Some services were co-located, including those for women, so that practitioners were able to seek guidance, build relationships and share information with partnership staff.
- Systems in place to access child safeguarding information were starting to produce results, albeit these systems were not fully embedded. Information exchange was supported by dedicated PSOs with direct access to social care information held by local authorities in relation to children.

#### Areas for improvement:

- The PDU had focused on improvements in the MAPPA Level 1 review arrangements but they had yet to be fully implemented. More needed to be done to reduce the backlog of these reviews and ensure that the quality of both the review and the recording improved.
- Delivery of toolkits and structured interventions was disappointing, with only 24 per cent of all structured interventions and 37 per cent of all toolkits completed successfully in Leicestershire PDU. The rural environment of offices outside Leicester city centre presented some difficulties for people on probation attending their appointments in office locations and for staff conducting home visits.
- People on probation who lived outside city locations did not have equitable access to accredited programmes or unpaid work, particularly if they were in employment or did not have access to their own transport.
- Accredited programme completion rates needed to improve. Eight per cent of accredited programmes for individuals convicted of sexual offences had started, but only 46 per cent of accredited programmes had started for individuals convicted of other offences. Staffing within the accredited programme team was an issue and

prevented appropriate levels of delivery, particularly outside of the city Cobden Street Office.

- The implementation and delivery of sentences was insufficient in most of the cases we inspected. Concerningly, the delivery of services to keep people safe and reduce the risk of harm posed by people on probation were found to be insufficient in most cases. There was a lack of professional curiosity and practitioners did not respond to, or evaluate, new information when they received it. In addition, there was a lack of liaison with other agencies working with those under supervision.
- Work delivered from the satellite office in Hinckley was not conducive to delivering good probation practice. There was not enough space for practitioners to see people on probation privately and a lack of internet connection made it difficult for practitioners to work effectively.

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## Diversity and inclusion

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### Strengths:

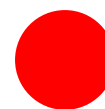
- Leaders were authentic and committed in their focus on diversity, which was embedded across the PDU, for people on probation, partnership arrangements and staff.
- In 82 per cent of cases we inspected, practitioners were building on the strengths of the person on probation and enhancing protective factors when assessing need. Practitioners were often responsive to past trauma, neurodiversity and other personal characteristics.
- Reasonable adjustments were made in almost all cases where staff requested them.
- The PDU had a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the caseload, and there was a directory of services to meet the needs of those under supervision.

### Areas for improvement

- Practitioners reported a lack of confidence in delivering toolkits and structured interventions, indicating that they required training and upskilling. Our case inspection data provided limited evidence that meaningful interventions to keep people safe were being delivered.
- In the context of resource challenges, a decision had been made not to provide a seconded probation practitioner to either of the youth justice services covered by the PDU, and this had been the case for the last two years. While some financial contributions had been made instead, youth justice leaders reported that the absence of these posts had had an impact, given the increased risk profiles of people in their caseload.

## 2. Service delivery

### P 2.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, involving actively the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating<sup>1</sup> for assessment is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
<b>Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?</b>	61%
<b>Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?</b>	73%
<b>Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?</b>	<b>32%</b>

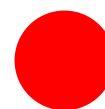
- Analysis of desistance factors in offending was sufficient in most cases. The strengths and protective factors of the person on probation were identified and analysed in 82 per cent of cases. This was the highest rated area of casework across all stages of sentence management. Practitioners drew on additional sources to identify concerns such as substance use and health needs and understood how these factors could affect reoffending and desistance.
- Work delivered by probation officers was assessed more positively than that of staff of other grades across all 12 summary judgements in our case inspections. We found 87 per cent of assessments completed by probation officers appropriately identified and analysed offending-related factors compared to 61 per cent for PSO staff. However, work completed by probation officers was not always sufficient. When considering the assessment of risk of harm overall, we found only 16 out of 43 cases supervised by probation officers where this was sufficient, and only four out of 18 cases for PSOs.
- We inspected 24 cases where the assessed risk of harm was high or very high. Across all 12 measures, these cases were assessed as sufficient more often than for lower-risk cases. However, not all potential victims were clearly considered in assessments where they should have been. Consideration of victims' needs was insufficient in more than half the inspected cases, regardless of the grade of staff or risk level.
- Practitioners failed to demonstrate appropriate levels of professional curiosity. This was particularly evident in their consideration of an individual's past behaviour and information from other agencies when completing their assessments. We found this

<sup>1</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the score for the key question, which is placed in a rating band. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection on our website.](#)

to have been done well in only 25 of 71 cases and was particularly weak in cases managed by PSOs where only three of 18 cases were considered sufficient.

- Despite practitioners having direct access to safeguarding and police information, the gathering and consideration of risk information was not used to its full potential. This supported our findings in our leadership standard which identified that some practitioners were unaware of, or not using, the in-house safeguarding hub. In one in five cases no domestic abuse information had been considered in assessments when it should have been. Of the 60 cases where child safeguarding information was relevant, assessments considered such information in just 23 cases. We found in 26 of these cases that practitioners had either not received information at all or the information that had been received was not adequate. Information that had been obtained was not routinely being used to identify fully the risks posed by people on probation.

## P 2.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, involving actively the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating<sup>2</sup> for planning is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
<b>Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?</b>	54%
<b>Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?</b>	68%
<b>Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?</b>	<b>44%</b>

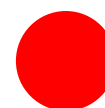
- Planning for desistance was the strongest area across planning activity in the cases we inspected, with 68 per cent of inspected cases being sufficient in this area. When this was delivered well, we found practitioners who had identified interventions and produced stronger plans that were realistic and sequenced and reflective of individual need. Planning activity consistently focused on the most important factors to reduce an individual's risk of further offending and build on their strengths and protective factors. Plans also clearly outlined how the requirements of the sentence would be delivered and by whom.
- Engagement of individuals in planning activity was less consistently delivered, although we still found that this was done sufficiently well in just over half the cases. In just over half the cases we inspected, the person on probation was meaningfully involved in planning and their views considered.
- Practitioners failed to consider information from other agencies in their planning activity in almost half the cases where it was important to do so. It was a recurring theme throughout our inspected cases that even when information was gathered it was not appropriately absorbed into planning for risk management activity. This was a missed opportunity for practitioners to have a more comprehensive picture of the risk factors of the individual under supervision, and ultimately to protect the public.
- Planning failed to consider appropriately the most critical factors linked to harm which provided further evidence of inexperienced practitioners who lacked the skills to understand the essence of good risk management practice. Some practitioners had not considered all actual and potential victims and how they might be appropriately protected. In many cases where this information was absent, it specifically linked to domestic abuse and child safeguarding concerns, critical to strong risk management and public protection.

<sup>2</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection on our website.](#)



- In most cases, risk management plans were not appropriately personalised or robust. Practitioners were not routinely considering and analysing information against the risk of harm presented by an individual or how this should feed into future planning activity.

### P 2.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality well-focused, personalised, and coordinated services are delivered, engaging the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating<sup>3</sup> for implementation and delivery is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
<b>Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the person on probation?</b>	61%
<b>Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?</b>	42%
<b>Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?</b>	<b>30%</b>

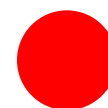
- Given the challenges in staffing that the PDU had experienced, it was positive to find that over half the inspected cases had been supervised by just one probation practitioner throughout the period of their supervision. Practitioners worked flexibly with individuals and were aware of their personal circumstances in 80 per cent of the inspected cases.
- While the level and nature of contact were assessed as sufficient to reduce reoffending and support desistance in 66 per cent of cases, we found some practitioners focused on the wrong aspects because of their lack of knowledge of how to manage cases. Some staff, in spite of good intentions, were undertaking activities that they felt were supporting individuals, but which did not reflect their needs or, most importantly, the risks presented by those under supervision.
- In most cases practitioners managed non-compliance issues proactively and were flexible in their approach. We saw appropriate enforcement action being taken in almost half the cases. Arguably, many inexperienced practitioners felt more comfortable undertaking this kind of process activity than more meaningful offence- or risk-focused work.
- Despite the suite of services available in the PDU, as identified in our Service standard and review of the PDU directory of services, practitioners did not engage and employ these services often enough for the benefit of those supervised. The strong relationships with partnership agencies reported at strategic and operational levels were not always supporting those under supervision to access services. This was particularly the case when considering individuals who required support with thinking and behaviour where we found that just 17 of 60 cases that needed support

<sup>3</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection on our website.](#)

in this area had received it. It was a similar picture for drug and alcohol services where less than half of those who needed these interventions had received them.

- The implementation and delivery of services to keep people safe throughout their order was ineffective with only 21 of the 71 cases inspected assessed as sufficient. We found too many appointments that lacked any meaningful discussion and resulted in a cursory contact with those under supervision. When critical information was disclosed, for example about relationships, there was often no exploration or action taken. The work in cases managed by PSOs was particularly poor, with just two of 18 cases considered sufficient overall for implementation and delivery of work to address harm.

## P 2.4. Reviewing



Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, involving actively the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating<sup>4</sup> for reviewing is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
<b>Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?</b>	66%
<b>Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?</b>	49%
<b>Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?</b>	<b>40%</b>

- In nearly two-thirds of cases we inspected, people on probation were meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress and engagement. This included collaborative discussions about the individual's progress during and on completion of activity with other providers, including commissioned rehabilitative services.
- Reviewing activity that was focused on supporting desistance was insufficient in just over half of the cases inspected. In 27 out of 58 relevant cases practitioners failed to identify appropriately and address changes to factors linked to further offending. Practitioners needed to do more to review progress that individuals had made to address personal wellbeing, substance misuse and accommodation challenges.
- In common with all stages of the case management process, practitioners gave insufficient attention to keeping people safe when new information was received from partner agencies, the individual on supervision and others involved. Reviewing activity failed to address changes in factors related to risk of harm in 34 of 55 relevant cases. A lack of professional curiosity was again evident: even when information was received, practitioners failed to recognise its importance or relevance to the management of the case. More consideration should have been given to new information to enable work with individuals to be adjusted or information shared with external partners to protect the public appropriately.
- Managers were not supporting practitioners well enough in managing their cases. Management oversight was considered sufficient in only 20 of the 69 cases where it was needed. This linked to findings within our leadership standard where senior probation officers focused on activity outside their sentence management roles. They were also routinely undertaking work for practitioners rather than supporting them to do it themselves and ultimately not addressing their learning needs.

<sup>4</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table.

## Progress on previous recommendations

Previous recommendation	Action taken and impact	Categorisation	Improvement still required?
<i>From previous probation inspections (date)</i>	<i>Summary of action taken and impact</i>	<i>Sufficient progress / Some progress / No progress</i>	<i>Yes / no If yes, consider repeating the recommendation</i>
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should improve the quality of work to assess, plan for, manage and review risk of harm	Risk of harm is still an area of concern for this PDU and is the area that reduces the overall scores in all areas to inadequate.	No progress	Yes
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should improve the probation staffing levels in court, and the quality of court reports to inform sentencing	While not yet at full complement, staffing has improved within court staff group as it has across the PDU, although some vacancies still exist.	Some progress	Yes
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should ensure risk-related information is obtained and shared with other agencies in all relevant cases to support the assessment and management of risk of harm	The recruitment of the PSOs to concentrate on gathering safeguarding is a positive step forward. This needs to be embedded and backlogs cleared to enhance confidence among staff to use it more routinely, and not just at the commencement of orders.	Some progress	Yes

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should ensure that accredited programmes, targeted interventions and other services necessary to improve desistance and reduce risk of harm are fully utilised	Improvements in CRS referrals paint a positive picture but accredited programmes, structured interventions and other services require more focus. Practitioners need to understand how such services can not only support people on probation but also support them to deliver their work appropriately.	Some progress	Yes
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should address the poor staff morale, ensure adequate support is available for staff when required	Increased staff morale and support reported by staff through both HMIP survey and internal staff survey.	Sufficient progress	No
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should address the clear knowledge gap that currently exists with some staff not understanding the key priorities of their role and what they need to deliver	Staff, particularly those at PSO grade, still do not understand what is required of their role and how to deliver good probation practice, particularly concerning risk of harm.	No progress	Yes
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should address the deficiencies in the effectiveness of quality assurance and management oversight of all casework	Management oversight remains a concern – 69% of cases lacked appropriate oversight – which, given the inexperience of the staff group, needs to be a focus for the PDU.	No progress	Yes
East Midlands region should revise the CRS contract for accommodation support services to better provide an effective service which meets the needs of people on probation.	Remains a frustration for managers and practitioners alike but is beyond the gift of the PDU	No progress	N/A

East Midlands region should ensure priorities are clearly communicated and understood by probation practitioners and middle managers.	SPOs were clear in their priorities but this had not translated to those whom they managed.	Some progress	
East Midlands region should review stand-alone unpaid work sentence management arrangements, to address the deficiencies identified in assessments and that these are accurate, thorough and inform placement allocation.	Due to the change in HMI Probation methodology since this recommendation was made, UPW will be considered within the regional inspection.	Not known	N/A
HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) should address the need for improved staff recruitment and retention.	There has been some, albeit minimal, improvement in the attrition rates of staff as a result of a significant focus on human resources activities by the SPO group particularly.	Some progress	No
HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) should improve the support to sites assessed as 'red' under the Prioritisation Framework (PF) in particular through additional resourcing.	LLR PDU no longer a red site	N/A	N/A

## Annexe one – Web links

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- Full data from this inspection and further information about the methodology used to conduct this inspection is available [on our website](#).
- A glossary of terms used in this report is available on our website using the following link: [Probation Inspection - Glossary of terms](#).