Persistent Offender Programme Interim Evaluation Report 2

May 2018
MOPAC Evidence and Insight
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Executive Summary

The Persistent Offender Programme (POP – previously the Gripping the Offender (GtO)) pilot aims to test a new partnership approach to tackling the most prolific offenders across the whole Criminal Justice System (CJS). Commissioning for the two-year pilot began in April 2015 and the first phases of delivery began in February 2016 in the North and East London Local Justice Areas. The original aims of the pilot were to deliver an end-to-end approach across the CJS, including:

- Courts: putting in place an enhanced pre-sentence report (PSR) service to speed up sentencing time and developing a problem-solving approach through a young adult court tailored to the needs of 18-25-year olds within the cohort
- Enhanced offender management and pathways out of crime: delivering an enhanced offender management service providing additional support to resettle and rehabilitate offenders within the cohort, particularly for priority groups of young adult males and females. Offering pathways out of crime through personalised budgets for female offenders used to spot purchase interventions to address health and wider needs
- Policing: developing an offender-based tasking process and providing the police with a greater ability to complete research and intelligence gathering
- Case tracking and performance management: testing the use of IDIOM as a case management tool with the aim of scaling this across London to enable local and regional performance management
- Electronic monitoring: testing the use of GPS tags as an electronic monitoring requirement of a Community Order or Suspended Sentence Order.

In practice the pilot has evolved since delivery began in February 2016. The case tracking and performance management strand proved challenging and the original aim to use IDIOM was abandoned due to strategic decisions made by the Home Office and the Metropolitan Police Service to withdraw partner access to IDIOM for information security reasons. Despite the House of Commons Justice Committee recommending the government to trial a young adult court, the Ministry of Justice remains reluctant, and policy development is ongoing. Testing the use of GPS tags as an electronic monitoring requirement became a focus of the pilot with tags being made available for courts to use as part of a Community Order or Suspended Sentence from March 2017.

The POP pilot targets individuals in 8 London boroughs who are most prolific in their offending. To be included in the pilot an individual must be aged 18 or over, resident within one of the eight pilot boroughs (Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest), and have an OGRS 2-year score of either (a) 75%+ or (b) 50-74% with either a robbery or burglary offence in the preceding 12 months in the community. Individuals managed by both the NPS and CRC are in scope. The initial cohort for the pilot consisted of 1,363 prolific offenders, 73% managed by the CRC and 27% by the NPS. The cohort was predominantly male (91%) and in the younger age brackets (36% were 18-25 and 29% were 26-34). Thirty-eight percent were identified as being in custody, 38% were on a community order, and 24% were in the community on licence.

The evaluation of the pilot is being conducted by the Evidence and Insight team at MOPAC. This second interim report will share emerging findings from the research since the inception of the programme and will update findings from the first interim report produced in February 2017. This report will include performance analysis of the enhanced service delivery, staff feedback from interviews, surveys and focus groups and early impact of the PSR service. The report will provide an update on the overall progress of the evaluation and next steps.
Key Findings

This evaluation report demonstrates that there has been a great deal of support for the rationale for the pilot and respondents understood the aims and objectives of the pilot, and its component parts. Staff identified an increase in partnership working as one of the main benefits of the pilot so far, both in terms of creating new partnerships and improving relationships with existing partnerships.

Staff were positive that the pilot had created additional resources for offenders through the enhanced service offer and noted the benefits of having a direct contact in the courts and prisons and having ready access to forensic mental health practitioners. Most staff agreed that POP has the potential to impact on many important outcomes, helping offenders tackle problems in their lives, and improving partnership working.

There was positive feedback on the following strands of the pilot:

- **The PSR service** was positively regarded by stakeholders and practitioners. These views were reinforced by impact analysis showing that those who had received the PSR service had a significantly shorter time between conviction and sentencing (19 days), compared to a matched control group (30 days). Of the 2,944 eligible cases that came to the attention of the probation officers at Highbury Corner and Thames Magistrates’ court between 6th February 2016 and 31st January 2018, 561 (or 19%) received a PSR as part of the enhanced service; 350 reports (62%) were delivered within 5 days of the offender’s plea. While below the desired outcome for the service of 90%, this figure is a statistically significant increase from the 38% delivered within 5 days at the time of the first interim report. The PSR service did not have an impact on the disposal type with 35% of the POP cohort and 30% of the control group sentenced to custody.

- **Mental Health Practitioners** were well-liked by stakeholders and practitioners, with the level of demand for the service suggesting this was filling a gap in service provision. Between July 2016 and March 2018, a total of 291 referrals were made to the Mental Health service. In the course of these referrals, the forensic mental health practitioners (FMHPs) undertook 1,430 consultations (1,135 with offender managers, and 295 with other agencies) and completed 137 assessments with service users. Over the same period, service users commenced care plans which included 333 direct interventions in total. In addition, the Mental Health pathway made 218 referrals to other agencies.

However, feedback for other strands of the pilot was more mixed:

- **Take up for the Female Personalised Budget** scheme was initially low. After the refresh, and the identification of all eligible women, there remained problems with the engagement of women on the scheme, as a result of their chaotic lives. At the time of writing, twenty females have been referred to the personalised budget service since its launch on 15th November 2016. Of these referrals, 13 have currently been accepted. The low number of women accepted makes it impossible at this point to assess the impact of the pathway.

- **Respondents’ views on the CBT and family services** were initially poor due to the difficulties they experienced in getting referrals accepted, and the quality of the service provision. Between 25th April 2016 and 30th June 2017 135 referrals were made to the Right Track programme and 77 to TIGER. However, only 26 service users commenced Right Track (with 19 completions) and only one service user started the TIGER programme. In the same period, 81 referrals were made to the Building Bridges programme; 26 service users commenced the programme and 20 completed it.
• Views on both services seemed to be improving over the last four months since a ‘refresh’ of the services took place in October 2017 and Courage to Change (CtC) replaced Right Track and TIGER. Between 1st November 2017 and 31st January 2018, there have been 59 referrals to Courage to Change (CtC); 39 starts, and 19 completions. In the same period, 18 referrals have been made to the family programmes, of which 9 have been accepted. Again, the small number of completions at the point of writing means any assessment of impact will be included in the final evaluation report.

• Respondents’ views on mentoring were largely negative, again due to difficulties with referrals and the quality of service provision. Of the 199 referrals made to the mentoring service between 25th April 2016 and 30th June 2017, 81 service users accessed the service and 16 completed it. From May 2017, Reaching All People became the sole provider of mentoring services in response to the concerns raised about service providers. Of the 45 referrals made between 1st July 2017 and 31st January 2018, 34 were accepted and 10 service users completed the mentoring service.

• Although it was a small part of the pilot, the employment pathway came in for particular criticism from practitioners, both in terms of the service provided and the difficulties getting referrals accepted. This was reflected in the figures since going live in July 2016 where 105 referrals resulted in only two individuals being placed in employment. MOPAC ceased this provision in March 2018.

• Policing - respondents were unclear about the additional intelligence function and argued that to date it had not provided additionality. The lack of data available about the intelligence packages has meant that there is no analysis about their impact in this report. Other aspects of the policing strand (a sustained increase in the number of police officers working within IOM teams, and the commitment to focus upon persistent offenders at regular borough intelligence meetings) will also be evaluated in greater detail in the final evaluation.

Stakeholders and practitioners felt there was a lack of enhanced offender management services available for males aged over 25 and raised queries about the use of the same selection criteria for men and women on the cohort. Respondents also spoke of the difficulties arising from the characteristics of the POP cohort, the perceived lack of discretion around its composition, the ‘churn’ in the caseload, and the difficulty of getting chaotic offenders – who are often resistant to attempts to change their behaviour – to engage.

While respondents felt that the POP pilot had improved services available to the cohort, this did not extend to a belief that it would impact on their engagement or levels of reoffending, linked to feelings that there was a need to address underlying factors, notably the lack of accommodation. The timing of the implementation of POP at a time of wider organisational change in the police and probation was also questioned.

Communication about the pilot, while it was felt to be good at a strategic level, was criticised at the borough level, particularly in the early stages, with associated concerns that this contributed to poor awareness of the services available for the cohort, in turn leading to low levels of referrals. However, there was a feeling that awareness about the pilot had improved when focus groups took place in November 2017.

For the remainder of the pilot, which is funded until September 2018, the evaluation will focus on: (1) capturing the views of service users through interviews and case studies; (2) continuing to gather the views of staff involved in the pilot, particularly around local practice and service delivery in the eight boroughs; and (3) analysing the impact of the POP pilot on re-offending rates. The last will be dependent on having an adequate sample size, particularly for the individual services, robust data being available, and the identification of an appropriate comparison group.
1. Introduction

Background to the Management of Persistent Offenders

Previous research has shown that a minority of offenders commit a disproportionate amount of crime. The latest Criminal Justice (CJ) statistics published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) showed that in England and Wales for the year ending September 2017 there were around 121,000 persistent offenders\(^1\) who were responsible for around 2.7 million crimes throughout their criminal careers.\(^2\) It is generally accepted that targeting additional resources to the most active offenders will bring about the biggest opportunity for impact, in terms of reducing crime, generating savings, and bringing down demand across the entire CJ system. Over the past 15 years, a number of offender management initiatives have been piloted in England and Wales to target this group of offenders (e.g. the Persistent Offender Scheme, Prolific and Other Priority Offender Scheme, the Diamond Initiative).\(^3\)

Integrated Offender Management (IOM)—a strategic partnership approach to tackling prolific offenders—was launched nationally across the UK in 2004.\(^4\) The overarching aim of IOM is to bring a ‘cross-agency response to the crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities by managing the most persistent and problematic offenders identified jointly by partner agencies working together’.\(^5\) However, it has been recognised that IOM has been adopted at different rates across London, and that the approach adopted varies significantly between London boroughs, often reflecting local circumstances and priorities. Differences include: cohort size and selection; staff resource allocation; governance arrangements; performance management; information sharing; and multi-agency activity.

Previous offender management initiatives show mixed evidence of impact and adult reoffending remains a key priority for the Mayor’s Crime Reduction Board as reoffending rates remain stubborn, driving consistently high state expenditure. Overall reoffending rates stand at 25\% but the most prolific offenders have predicted reoffending rates closer to 80\%. It is therefore this cohort that presents the biggest opportunity, both in terms of reducing crime and generating savings to the system.

The Persistent Offender Programme (previously the ‘Gripping the Offender’ pilot)\(^2\)

The Persistent Offender Programme (POP) pilot aims to test a new partnership approach to tackle the most prolific offenders across the whole CJ system with the aim of delivering significantly better outcomes and simultaneously driving down demand across the public sector. MOPAC successfully applied to the Home Office Police Innovation Fund and received a total of £1.4m over two years to design, test and evaluate an approach that creates an enhanced whole system response to those offenders causing the most harm to communities and the greatest demand on the broader criminal justice system. MOPAC allocated additional funding for an extension of the pilot, to run until September 2018. Commissioning for the pilot began in April 2015 and delivery began in February 2016. The pilot has a phased delivery approach, with different elements being launched as and when

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\(^1\) Defined as an offender with 8 or more convictions or cautions.

\(^2\) The name of the pilot has changed in due to feedback from stakeholders and partners.
they become available. In addition, the nature of service provision, and the providers, have developed over time. Details of these developments are provided in the accounts of the various pathways that follow.

The POP pilot includes enhancements across the whole CJS and is fully supported by the London Reducing Reoffending Board. Key partners engaged include: Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), National Probation Service (NPS), London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), Her Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and Local Authorities (LA). The enhanced services commissioned through POP aim to deliver an end to end approach—from arrest to conviction and release back into the community—where all partners are working together to target and support prolific offenders throughout the whole CJS. An enhanced offer has been commissioned in the following areas:

## Courts
A focus within the court aspect is to enhance the pre-sentence report (PSR) capacity to enable more on-the-day reports to be completed and speed up the sentencing time for individuals who are prolific in their offending. This strand of the pilot is supported by analysis which demonstrates the disproportionate demand of prolific offenders within the court system. The North-West IOM evaluation showed that a total of 20,441 offences had been committed by 418 IOM offenders prior to the scheme: an average of 49 convictions each. The evaluation also reported that, although individuals on IOM proceeded through the CJS quicker than ever before (on average 12 days quicker over the first year of IOM), this was due to the reductions in the time from offence to arrest (21 to 6 days). The time taken from arrest to conviction did not significantly change after IOM’s introduction (39 to 36 days), suggesting prolific offenders were not receiving a heightened response at court.

Analysis was completed to identify the courts where offenders in the cohort were most likely to appear. As a result, the enhanced PSR service was rolled out in Thames and Highbury Corner Magistrates’ Courts. Two dedicated probation officers operate within these courts and prioritise POP cases for on-the-day and other fast delivery reports. The court officers also undertake DRR and ATR assessments. The probation officer for Thames was in place between the start of the service (February 2016) and December 2017, the post is vacant at the time of writing. There have been 4 probation officers over the same period for Highbury Corner, the current officer having been appointed in June 2017. In addition, since August 2017 additional administrative support has been provided to the PSR service, but funding for this post is due to finish in Spring/Summer 2018.

## Offender Management
The CRC was commissioned to deliver additional support to resettle and rehabilitate offenders within the cohort. There is a universal prison co-ordination service for all POP cases in custody, as well as further enhancements targeted at specific priority groups within the overall cohort.

Young adult males (aged 18-25) are a priority focus due to the significant volume of the POP cohort (36%) falling within this transitional age group, as well as their high reoffending rates. Young adult males managed by the CRC receive an increased intensity of support on release from prison alongside mentoring and interventions to address their specific needs (e.g., antisocial peers, family
problems). These enhanced services are also available as part of a Rehabilitation Activity Requirement or as part of a licence for young adult males in the community.

At inception (April 2016) the mentoring service was delivered by four providers across the eight boroughs: Caring for Ex-Offenders, Osmani Trust, Reaching All People (RAP), and New Choices for Youth. However, Caring for Ex-Offender’s contract finished in September 2016, and the Osmani Trust’s and New Choices for Youth’s at the end of April 2017, leaving RAP as the sole mentoring provider.

Similarly, at the pathway’s outset (April 2016) a family intervention (‘Building Bridges’) was delivered by PACT and two cognitive-behavioural therapy programmes by Rise Mutual (‘Right Track’ and ‘Transforming Inside Growing Emotional Resilience’ (TIGER)). Building Bridges was initially delivered in a group setting, but from April 2017 PACT’s delivery model changed to allow for one-to-one sessions. From November 2017, PACT also started offering an intervention for intimate relationships (‘Within My Reach’). The two RISE CBT programmes ceased in July 2017 and were replaced by Courage to Change (C2C; delivered by the CRC) which began in November 2017 and has continued to date.

Females are also a priority focus due to their bespoke needs. Research suggests interventions with female offenders are more likely to have a positive impact when they are responsive to the specific needs of women. A total of £25,000 was set aside for personalised budgets to be available for females within the POP cohort. Offender managers can spot purchase interventions to meet the individual needs of each woman.

**Policing**

The policing strand aimed to provide a ‘targeted whole policing approach’ to the POP cohort, aiming to ensure the group was ‘more consistently flagged and targeted throughout the Criminal Justice System. The pilot will test greater use of technology to speed up policing and ensure swift and sure justice’. At its inception the aim was to provide Intelligence Development Plans for ‘Red’ rated members of the POP cohort, including crime mapping, association mapping, open source research and other intelligence products. The intelligence profile would be used to influence release and resettlement plans, sentence plans, and to inform offender based tasking, and to inform fast time problem solving through daily pace setter meetings and longer-term problem solving through Tactical Tasking and Coordination Groups.

When the service was first introduced, in June 2016, it was undertaken by the Metropolitan Police’s Central Intelligence Unit funded by over-time. However, since September 2017 the function has been undertaken by a dedicated analyst based at Cobalt Square. The service evolved to provide two elements: intelligence profiles on offenders, and crime mapping as part of the GPS tagging project (a more detailed description of which will appear in a separate interim evaluation report produced by Evidence and Insight focussing specifically on the GPS tagging element of the project).

In February 2018, following comments by stakeholders, most frequently members of the MPS, MOPAC engaged with partners to improve the quality of the intelligence profiles. Areas of added value have been identified and the format and content of the profiles has since been altered – with
a greater focus on key crime locations and the timings of offending behaviour. Early indications from the MPS suggest staff are happier with the new look profiles and an increase in volumes is expected over the coming months. Partners were keen to explore the potential of adding information from probation assessments (OASys) to the intelligence profiles to increase police knowledge of offender needs (e.g. housing, employment, drug and alcohol misuse). However, there has been difficulty in making this a reality due to concerns around data protection.

Pathways
A pathway to address the mental health needs of the POP cohort was introduced in July 2016. Initially this service was funded by National Health Service England, but since April 2017 it has been funded by MOPAC. The aims of the mental health pathway are: to improve offender engagement with POP practitioners; improve confidence and competence in supporting offenders with mental health issues; and provide POP practitioners with a range of techniques to use when working with this cohort. Under this service Together for Mental Wellbeing have provided two forensic mental health practitioners (FMHPs) for the project, one covering the northern boroughs, one covering the eastern boroughs providing a consultative function for all cases on the POP cohort, as well as direct face-to-face interventions for offenders, and to refer service users on to other service providers where necessary. The FMHP post covering the Eastern boroughs (Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest) was vacant between November 2017 and the end of April 2018.

A second pathway was established in February 2016 to pilot the delivery of employment opportunities for POP nominals, provided by Blue Sky. Until November 2017 the employment pathway delivered by Blue Sky as part of POP aimed to recruit, employ and place ex-offenders into contracts with commercial partners on fixed-term 6-month contracts. However, due to challenges with this service (detailed later in this report), in November 2017 Blue Sky’s focus changed to providing engagement and training sessions for service users. The service ceased in March 2018.

GPS tagging
In January 2016, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) announced their intention to run a number of pilots to test the impact of GPS tagging on offender behaviour and decision making. The MOJ accepted a proposal put forward by MOPAC to test the use of mandatory tagging as part of the POP pilot. From 1st March 2017, an electronic monitoring requirement has been made available for courts to use as part of a Community Order or Suspended Sentence Order. Initially the tagging element of the project was scheduled to run for 12 months, finishing in March 2018, but has just been extended for a further 12 months with funding provided by MOPAC.

Analysis on the use of GPS tagging as part of the POP pilot will be provided in a separate interim report specifically on this aspect of the project. This will contain data on offenders’ perceptions/experiences of the tag (collected via surveys completed at the point the tag was installed, and again when it was removed), and offender managers’ use of the tag (their confidence using the tag, and how they used it) collected via a survey, together with data on compliance and tag use compiled by the tag contractor, Buddi.
Pilot Refresh
A process of reviewing, refining and re-launching the POP services took place in October and November 2017. This was known as the project ‘refresh’ and included meetings and engagement events for managers and practitioners across London, which were also used by service providers to promote their interventions. The refresh also saw changes in the delivery of the enhanced services, detailed above (e.g. Right Track and TIGER were replaced by Courage to Change). Generally, the aims of the refresh were to respond to feedback on project delivery and to make the services more visible and accessible to practitioners and therefore service users.

The POP Cohort

The POP pilot targets individuals in London who are most prolific in their offending. Analysis of the cohort across London was undertaken to identify the most suitable location for the pilot. Volume was considered alongside reoffending rates, acquisitive crime performance, and IOM investment. This analysis identified the North and East London Local Justice Areas as a priority location for the pilot covering the boroughs of Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. Individuals managed by both the NPS and CRC are in scope.

To be included in the pilot an individual must meet the following criteria:
- Convicted of an offence
- Aged 18 or over
- Resident within one of the eight pilot boroughs
- An OGRS 2 year score of either (a) 75%+ or (b) 50-74% with either a robbery or burglary offence committed in the preceding 12 months

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1 Offender Group Reconviction Scale risk of reoffending in the next two years.
2. Methodology

E&I are using a variety of research methods to evaluate the POP pilot, including surveys, interviews and focus groups. Key performance measures will also be assessed throughout the pilot, and the evaluation ultimately aims to explore the impact of POP on re-offending outcomes and cost to the system. The latter is dependent on the provision of appropriate data; without this, the evaluation will consist of process and performance analysis.

Performance Analysis

A range of performance data has been gathered throughout the pilot. On a monthly basis, the 8 boroughs, CRC and the PSR report writers are required to submit a ‘Case tracker’ to MOPAC to determine what is happening ‘on the ground’. Performance data includes: cohort size, numbers eligible for the enhanced services, numbers accessing the services, numbers of completers vs. non-completers, age, gender, ethnicity, needs. Data is also provided weekly and monthly by the GPS tagging contractor (Buddi) and quarterly by the mental health pathway provider (Together for Mental Health).

Process

Staff feedback has been gathered using a variety of methods: on-line surveys, interviews and focus groups. Interviews were undertaken with members of the Project Implementation Board (in May 2017) and with the Forensic Mental Health Practitioners (January 2018). A second Stakeholder Survey was conducted in August 2017 and offender managers completed questionnaires in November 2017 and early 2018. Focus groups were completed in November 2017 with members of the project Local Implementation Groups (covering the North and East boroughs), as well as workshops around the project refresh in November 2017, the female personalised budget (December 2017), and with IOM co-ordinators (January 2018).

These methods have sought to capture stakeholders’ and practitioners’ perceptions about the design and implementation of POP, and to capture change over the course of the pilot. Themes that have been explored include: set-up and design, partnership working, training, staffing, governance, data collection, data management, ways of working, products developed, use of data, business change, multi-agency work/partnerships, new approaches in managing offenders, perceived impacts, lessons learned, and challenges.

This report does not contain offender insight and experience of the POP pilot, these data will form part of the final evaluation report, gathered through interviews and case studies.

Impact

The final evaluation report will examine the impact of POP on primary (e.g., reoffending, severity, frequency, time taken to reoffend, speed through the system, disposal type) and secondary outcomes (e.g., offender attitudes, partnership involvement, data sharing between agencies,
borough crime levels, offender victimisation, victim types, demand reduction, needs being met, timely referrals).

The primary and secondary outcomes have different appropriate follow-up periods. Impact of the PSR service on court timeliness and sentencing outcomes have been examined first, because these outcomes do not require a long follow-up period, and the results are contained in this report. The PSR cohort was statistically matched to similar POP eligible offenders who did not receive the enhancement but who were sentenced in a Magistrates’ court outside of the pilot area in the same period.

Early impact for the remaining services will be examined using arrest and charge rates within a six-month follow-up period. Any more robust measure of impact (e.g., proven reoffending) will require a longer follow-up period (18 months for proven reoffending). This analysis will only be possible if: there is robust data available; successful implementation of the pilot; the sample size reaches over 150 cases; and a suitable control group can be identified from the available data.

**Cost-benefit**

The ambition for the evaluation has been to include a financial model outlining the cost-benefit of the pilot. The complexity of this project and the changes to the model over time make any overall cost-benefit analysis impractical. However, we are currently undertaking a feasibility analysis for conducting financial analysis of the PSR service. Providing appropriate data is available, and impact has been shown, value for money may be examined for other individual elements of POP.

**Overview of report**

This is the second interim evaluation report for POP which will share progress and initial findings from the evaluation. It consists primarily of process and performance analysis, with a limited amount of impact data based on analysis of the PSR service. The proposed plan for the remainder of the evaluation will be presented at the end of this report.
3. Results

Performance Analysis

**POP cohort**

POP cohort ‘refresh’ data was most recently produced by the CRC in January 2018 and the NPS in February 2018. According to this data, there were 2,144 POP cases in the eight pilot boroughs: 61% managed by the CRC and 39% managed by the NPS. These cases were predominantly male (91%) and in the younger age brackets (40% were 18-25 and 29% were 26-34). The average age of the cohort was 30 years (range 18-69 years). The average OGRS2 score was 82 (range 50 to 99), indicating for this group of offenders, there is a likelihood 82% will be reconvicted in the following two years. Twenty-seven percent were identified as being in custody, 36% were on a community sentence, and 37% were in the community on licence.

**Pre-sentence Report Service**

Between the 6th February 2016 and 31st January 2018, a total of 2,944 offenders came to the attention of the probation officers based at Highbury Corner and Thames Magistrates’ court (see Table 1). These cases were predominantly male, were 35 years old on average, and most frequently appeared in court for theft (27%), breach (28%), violence (12%) and burglary/robbery (8%). Ninety percent of offenders pled guilty to their qualifying offence.

Of the eligible cases that came to the attention of the court officers, 561 (or 19%) received a PSR as part of the enhanced service\(^4\); 350 reports were delivered within 5 days of the offender’s plea. The desired outcome for the service is for 90% of PSRs to be delivered within 5 days. The data shows that 62% were delivered within 5 days. This figure is a statistically significant increase from the 38% delivered within 5 days at the time of the first interim report: a marked improvement.

| Table 1. Pre-sentence report service performance data February 2016 to December 2017 |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Thames Magistrates’ Court & Highbury Corner Magistrates’ Court & Total |
| Number of cases came to attention | 1,736 & 264 | 1,208 & 306 | 2,944 & 570 |
| Number of reports delivered | 335 & 57 | 226 & 57 | 561 & 114 |
| Number of reports delivered within 5 days | 171 & 33 | 179 & 43 | 350 & 76 |

The figure below shows the monthly trend in cases that have come to the attention of the court probation officers. The drop in cases for Highbury Corner in the latter half of 2016 and again in May-June 2017 coincide with vacancies at the court. The overall numbers in the table above are also lower for Highbury Corner, again reflecting periods of staff vacancy.

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\(^4\) This refresh data is likely over-estimating the total number of eligible cases. Custody cases with long sentences who would not be released until after the end of the pilot are included in this data, which could explain why the proportion of NPS cases (39%) is higher than the initial cohort (27%).

\(^5\) Reasons why offenders did not receive a report included: they were sentenced without a report (38%); a breach report was used (31%); the PSR was completed by another probation officer (9%); the case was committed to crown (4%); or the case was adjourned (4%).
**Figure 1.** Number of cases come to attention – monthly trend

**Enhanced Offender Management Services**

**Prison co-ordination service**
Between 25th April 2016 and 31st January 2018, the prison co-ordination role has impacted on a total of 946 custody cases located in a variety of prisons, including Pentonville (27%), Thameside (21%), Wandsworth (8%), Isis (6%), Bronzefield (5%), Brixton (4%), and Onley (4%). The prison co-ordinators have also carried out tasks with 292 cases on a community sentence and 2,156 offenders on licence.

**Enhanced services for young adult males**

**Mentoring**
Between 25th April 2016 and 30th June 2017, 199 referrals were made to the mentoring service. Of these referrals, 81 service users accessed the mentoring service and 16 completed the service (see Table 2). The support received varied across providers, but included: introducing the service user to new activities and social settings; helping the service user seek employment and training opportunities; peer mentoring; helping the service user deal with emotions; practical assistance with accessing health and housing services; and building the service user’s life and social skills.

Of the service users who started mentoring, only 20% completed. Reasons for non-completion included: lack of engagement; commission of a new offence or return to custody; difficulties contacting the service user; and lack of attendance at sessions.

**Table 2.** Mentoring performance data April 2016 to June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentoring Provider</th>
<th>Referrals made</th>
<th>Referrals accepted</th>
<th>Number started</th>
<th>Number completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caring for Ex-offenders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osmani Trust</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching All People</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Choices for Youth</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As of May 2017, Reaching All People became the sole provider of mentoring services. Between July 1st 2017 and 31st January 2018, 45 referrals were made to the service. Of these referrals, 34 were accepted and 10 have completed the mentoring service. As part of this service, 25 service users were ‘met at the gate’.

CBT
Between 25th April 2016 and 30th June 2017, 135 referrals were made to the Right Track programme and 77 to TIGER. Twenty-six service users commenced the Right Track programme and 19 completed it. One service user started the TIGER programme but only attended one session.

Since the project ‘refresh’ in October 2017 there have been 59 referrals to Courage to Change (CtC), all of which have been accepted. Thirty-nine of these referrals have started, and 19 have completed. Sessions have been provided to service users on Thinking Errors, Anger Management, Responsible Thinking, Emotional Control and Substance Abuse.

Family intervention
Between 25th April 2016 and 30th June 2017, 81 referrals were made to the Building Bridges programme. Twenty-six service users commenced the Building Bridges programme and 20 completed it. Since the refresh in October 2017, 18 referrals have been made, of which 9 have been accepted. Sessions have been provided to service users on personality types, family background, and how past influences the present, communication and communication skills, anger and conflict, trust and forgiveness, and relationships and safety in relationships (under the ‘Within my Reach’ and ‘Building Bridges’ programmes).

In addition to the above services, young adult males managed by the CRC are expected to receive an increased contact with their offender manager (a minimum of a weekly appointment for the first 3 months of supervision, then fortnightly for the next 3 months). For the first measure, cases released between 1st October and 31st December 2017 received an average of 1.59 appointments per week (the figure for the same period in 2016 was an average of 1.18 appointments per week). However, this quarterly figure masks the degree of variation month on month, with the figure for October 2017 being an average of 2.38 appointments per week, November 2017 being 1.59, and December being 0.8). For the second measure, the service users received an average of 0.9 appointments a fortnight, slightly below the target (average of one appointment per fortnight for October 2017, 0.86 for November 2017 and 0.8 for December 2017). It should also be noted that due to restriction in the case recording system, it is not possible to measure the number of appointments offered, which would be a more accurate measure of the support on offer to these offenders. Because of this limitation, combined with the sporadic attendance of a significant number of this group, it is likely that these performance figures underestimate the support on offer.

Female Personalised Budgets
Twenty females have been referred to the personalised budget service since it launched on 15th November 2016: five each from Tower Hamlets and Newham, three from Waltham Forest, three from Islington, and one each from Haringey, Camden, Enfield and Hackney. Of these referrals, 13 have currently been accepted. Referrals have been made to PECAN (a charity designed to meet people’s needs in employment, community services and resettlement) and Air sports (tackling issues
such as substance misuse, crime and offending behaviour, homelessness, health and fitness and employability). In December 2017 a meeting was held between MOPAC project staff and OMs responsible to discuss the Female Personalised Budget and to try and identify offenders who would be appropriate for referral to the service. Since the meeting there have been eight referrals.

Pathways

Mental Health
Since the start of the pathway (July 2016) and March 2018, a total of 291 referrals were made to the Mental Health service. In the course of these referrals, the forensic mental health practitioners (FMHPs) undertook 1,430 consultations (1,135 with offender managers, and 295 with other agencies) and completed 137 assessments with service users. In March 2018 90% of the Together caseload was male, 10% female; 25% of the caseload was aged 18 – 24, 75% 25 or older.

Over the same period, service users have commenced a care plan with a FMHP which include the following direct interventions (333 in total): psycho-education (71), motivational interviewing (56), supportive programmes (41), anxiety management (29), crisis management (28), mood management (25), anger management (22), problem solving (19), resilience (12), trauma informed (12), brief intervention on coping strategies (7), brief intervention on loss and bereavement (7), social skills training (3) and sleep management (1).

In addition, the Mental Health pathway made 218 referrals to other agencies; this included 73 to Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs), 70 to GPs, Substance Misuse Service (19), Secondary Health (12), voluntary sector (12), Specialist services (11), Primary health (7), Emergency Psychiatric Services (5), re-engage with services (5), Home Treatment Team (2) and Early Intervention Team (2).

Employment

The Employment pathway has received 105 referrals since going live in July 2016. Two referrals have been placed in employment. Reasons why referrals have not been accepted include: the referral does not reside in a pilot borough; the referral is in custody; the referral is an identified drug user; and no full referral form returned. In the last 3 months (December 2017 to February 2018) there have been 16 referrals.

In November 2017, in recognition of the limited success of the Employment Pathway its focus changed to place more emphasis on the running of training and engagement sessions for service users felt to be ‘work-ready’. Following 1-2-1 consultations with OMs to identify their most work-ready offenders, forty service-users were invited to the first event on January 19th 2018; however, only two attended. Feedback on why people did not attend was obtained for 28 of the 38 non-attendees: lack of service user motivation to attend (8), in prison/breach/offender non-attendance, not instructed due to OM oversight/pressure of work (4), not instructed due to change in allocated Offender Manager (2), now not ready to work due to health (2), called in sick (2), found work elsewhere (2), offender got date wrong, drug relapse, could not attend office due to risk issues, and

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6 An individual may receive more than one type of intervention.
could not afford to travel due to benefit suspension. Due to these issues, the service was terminated in March 2018.

**Policing**

Four intelligence profiles have been produced since the police analyst took up his post. A further 12 have been requested, but their delivery is pending clarification from the IOM units about exactly what they require in the profiles.

Another aspect of the police analyst’s role is to match GPS location data with the location of crimes that have occurred in London (discussed in greater detail in the GPS Tagging Interim Report). Between September 2017 and January 2018, a total of 264,527 crimes were uploaded for crime mapping purposes. There was a total of 865 matches with GPS location data. Following further analysis, 52 were considered a significant enough match to be referred to local IOM teams.

**Enhanced service referral overlap**

POP is designed to be a whole systems approach to offender management where prolific offenders are given enhancements across the CJS. As such, there has been significant overlap in referrals to the POP enhanced services. Of a sample of 375 offenders who received the PSR service, 242 (65%) also received the prison co-ordination service and 56 (15%) were referred to an enhanced OM service for young adult males.

**PSR Early Impact Analysis**

Impact analysis was undertaken on the PSR service for the first 19 months of service delivery. The impact of the service on timeliness of sentencing and sentence outcomes was explored using a quasi-experimental approach (comparing the POP cohort to a matched Control group). The method used and results from this analysis are presented below.

**POP Cohort**

Between the 6th February and 30th September 2017, a total of 1957 offenders came to the attention of the probation officers based at Highbury Corner and Thames Magistrates’ court. These cases were predominantly Male (88%), were 35 years old on average, and had a mean 85% likelihood of being reconvicted of a new offence in the following two years. Offenders most frequently appeared in court for theft (28%), other offences (16%), breach (16%), violence (14%) and burglary and robbery (9%).

Of the eligible cases that came to the attention of the court officers, 342 received a PSR from the dedicated court officers. These cases make up the ‘treatment’ sample for this analysis.

**Creating a Matched Control Group**

To identify a suitable control group, offenders were identified from NPS records who met the following criteria:
- OGRS 2-year score of 75%+ or 50-74% with a robbery or burglary offence in the preceding 12 months
- Aged 18 or over
- Pled guilty and were convicted of an offence in a Magistrate’s Court (outside the pilot area) between February 2016 and September 2017

Both NPS and CRC cases were in scope. Based on these criteria, 2,058 offenders were identified who were convicted of a combined total of 2,369 offences in the relevant time period. This sample was further reduced by selecting those cases who matched most closely to the POP cohort on:
- OGRS 2-year score
- Age
- Gender
- Index offence type

To match OGRS scores, the average score for the PSR sample (87.5%) was used to select only those cases who fell within the top 10% of similarity (e.g., those with an OGRS score between 79 and 96). Cases that fell outside this range were removed from the sample, leaving a total of 1,883 cases.

One-to-one matching was then conducted using Age, Gender and Index Offence. Control cases were randomly selected who matched most closely to the POP cases. For example, in the POP sample, there was one 18–25-year-old female who had committed a violent offence; therefore, a randomly selected 18–25-year-old female who had committed a violent offence was selected from the Control sample. Where it was not possible to select an exact match, a randomly selected case was identified who met two of the matching criteria (e.g., Gender and Index Offence but not Age). This was only necessary for 18 cases; all other Control cases matched on all three variables. Based on this procedure, a total of 342 cases were identified for the Control sample.\(^7\)

The table below shows the match between the POP and Control sample was strong. The breakdown of Age, Gender and Index Offence Type was almost equivalent for the two groups (and not statistically different).\(^8\) However, despite the difference between average OGRS scores being small between the two groups, the POP sample had a significantly higher OGRS score than the control sample (although the effect size was small).\(^9\)

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\(^7\) Including 328 individual offenders. Offenders could be counted twice if they received more than one conviction in the relevant time period.

\(^8\) According to chi-square tests.

\(^9\) According to an independent samples t-test: \(t(682) = 3.80, p<.001, \text{CI } [.84, 2.62], d = .29\)
**Table 3.** POP and Control cohort results for matching criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matching Criteria</th>
<th>POP N=342</th>
<th>Control N=342</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OGRS 2-year score</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>85.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>85% (n=342)</td>
<td>85% (n=342)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15% (n=50)</td>
<td>15% (n=50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Range</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25 years</td>
<td>21% (n=71)</td>
<td>22% (n=74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-34 years</td>
<td>27% (n=93)</td>
<td>29% (n=98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-49 years</td>
<td>48% (n=163)</td>
<td>45% (n=155)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+ years</td>
<td>4% (n=15)</td>
<td>4% (n=15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index Offence Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft and Handling Stolen Goods</td>
<td>43% (n=147)</td>
<td>44% (n=150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>15% (n=50)</td>
<td>15% (n=50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary/Robbery</td>
<td>10% (n=33)</td>
<td>9% (n=32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Damage</td>
<td>6% (n=20)</td>
<td>6% (n=20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Order</td>
<td>4% (n=14)</td>
<td>4% (n=14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs Offences</td>
<td>4% (n=12)</td>
<td>4% (n=13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving Related Offences</td>
<td>3% (n=11)</td>
<td>3% (n=10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach Offences</td>
<td>1% (n=5)</td>
<td>1% (n=5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapon Related</td>
<td>1% (n=5)</td>
<td>1% (n=5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Offences</td>
<td>.9% (n=3)</td>
<td>.9% (n=3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud</td>
<td>.3% (n=1)</td>
<td>.3% (n=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Offences</td>
<td>12% (n=41)</td>
<td>11% (n=39)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome Measures**

Sentencing data was obtained from the NPS. Timeliness of sentencing (i.e., days between conviction and sentencing) and sentence outcomes (i.e., custody versus a community sentence) were the main outcome measures. Based on the aims of the pilot, we expected the POP cohort would be sentenced significantly quicker than the control sample and would be sentenced to more community based orders.

**Results**

*Speed of Sentencing*

Table 4 shows the average number of days cases were being processed through the CJS for the POP and Control groups. Days between offence and conviction, conviction and sentencing, and offence and sentencing were compared. As can be seen in the table, the POP group spent significantly less time being processed through the CJS than the Control group. Specifically, after committing an offence, the POP group was convicted significantly quicker (57 days compared to 75 days for the Control group) and was sentenced significantly quicker (77 days compared to 104 days for the Control group).
The most important outcome for the PSR service is the amount of time between conviction and sentencing; this is the period of time where the PSR writers should have the most impact. Encouragingly, the POP group took a significantly shorter amount of time to be sentenced following their conviction. For the POP group, there was an average of 19 days between conviction and sentencing, compared to 30 days for the Control group: a reduction of 37%.

These findings are positive and suggest not only a heightened response at court, but also a possible heightened policing response. We were unable to retrieve the date of arrest for the Control group so we could not test whether POP cases were apprehended quicker than Control cases, but these results provide tentative support for a heightened response across the whole CJS.

| Table 4. Speed of sentencing for POP and Control groups |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                            | POP Mean days (SD)           | Control Mean days (SD)       | Independent samples t-test   |
| Offence to conviction      | 57.4 (85.9)                 | 74.5 (127.7)                | t(682) = -2.05, p < .05, CI [-33.4, -.8], d = .16 |
| Conviction to sentencing   | 19.3 (38.0)                 | 29.9 (59.9)                 | t(682) = -2.75, p < .01, CI [-18.1, -3.0], d = .21 |
| Offence to sentencing      | 76.7 (89.1)                 | 104.4 (137.4)               | t(682) = -3.13, p < .01, CI [-45.0, -10.3], d = .24 |

Alternatives to Custody
Next, the two groups were compared on sentence outcomes. Table 5 breaks down sentence outcomes for the POP and Control groups. As can be seen from the table, the POP group was given a larger proportion of custody sentences than the Control group (35% vs. 30%). However, analysis revealed this difference was not significant. The POP group was no more or less likely to be sentenced to custody versus a community-based sentence.10

| Table 5. Sentence outcomes for POP and Control groups |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                            | POP %                       | Control %                   | Chi-square test             |
| Custody                    | 34.5%                       | 30.4%                       | X²(2) = 3.49, p = .18, V = .07 |
| Community Order            | 28.7%                       | 38.0%                       |                             |
| Suspended Sentence Order   | 31.3%                       | 27.8%                       |                             |
| Other (e.g., Fine)         | 5.6%                        | 3.8%                        |                             |

Despite the matching procedure, the POP group was significantly riskier in terms of their OGRS scores, which could explain why they were sentenced to custody more often than the Control group (however the actual difference between OGRS scores was 1.7%, which is unlikely to make a meaningful difference on sentencing decisions). The lack of difference in outcome measures raises

10 In this analysis, community orders and suspended sentence orders were combined and ‘other’ sentence outcomes were excluded.
questions about the extent to which the judiciary was engaged with, and influenced by, the enhanced offer available through the pilot. However, it is worth noting that only the enhanced OM services for 18-25 year olds, and GPS tagging, were visible to the judiciary.

**Key learning**

Between the 6th February 2016 and 31st January 2018, a total of 2,944 offenders came to the attention of the probation officers based at Highbury Corner and Thames Magistrates’ court. Of the eligible cases that came to the attention of the court officers, 561 (or 19%) received a PSR as part of the enhanced service; 350 reports (62%) were delivered within 5 days of the offender’s plea. While below the desired outcome for the service of 90%, this figure is an increase from 38% delivered within 5 days at the time of the first interim report.

In terms of the impact of the PSR service, the POP group spent significantly less time being processed through the CJS than the Control group. Specifically, after committing an offence, the POP group was convicted significantly quicker (57 days compared to 75 days for the Control group) and was sentenced significantly quicker (77 days compared to 104 days for the Control group). Furthermore, the POP group took a significantly shorter amount of time to be sentenced following their conviction. For the POP group, there was an average of 19 days between conviction and sentencing, compared to 30 days for the Control group: a reduction of 37%. In terms of sentence outcomes, the POP group was given a larger proportion of custody sentences than the Control group (35% vs. 30%), but this difference was not significant.

Between 25th April 2016 and 30th June 2017, 199 referrals were made to the mentoring service. Of these referrals, 81 service users accessed the mentoring service and 16 completed the service. Between July 1st and 31st January 2018, 45 referrals were made to Reaching All People: now the sole provider of mentoring services. Of these referrals, 34 were accepted and 10 have completed the service. Between 25th April 2016 and 30th June 2017, 135 referrals were made to the Right Track programme and 77 to TIGER. Twenty-six service users commenced the Right Track programme and 19 completed it. One service user started the TIGER programme. Since the project ‘refresh’ in October 2017 there have been 59 referrals to Courage to Change (CtC); 39 starts, and 19 completions. Between 25th April 2016 and 30th June 2017, 81 referrals were made to the Building Bridges programme: 26 service users commenced the programme and 20 completed it. Since the refresh, 18 referrals have been made, of which 9 have been accepted. Twenty females have been referred to the personalised budget service since it launched on 15th November 2016. Of these referrals, 13 have currently been accepted.

Between July 2016 and March 2018, a total of 291 referrals were made to the Mental Health service. In the course of these referrals, the forensic mental health practitioners (FMHPs) undertook 1,430 consultations (1,135 with offender managers, and 295 with other agencies) and completed 137 assessments with service users. Over the same period, service users commenced care plans which included 333 direct interventions in total. In addition, the Mental Health pathway made 218 referrals to other agencies. The Employment pathway has received 105 referrals since going live in July 2016. Two referrals have been placed in employment.

Feedback from staff on the design and delivery of the enhanced services will be reported in the next section.
**Process Learning**

**Data collection**

Staff feedback was gathered using a variety of methods. POP programme board interviews were undertaken in May 2017 with the (then) project leads from the MPS, NPS, HMCTS, CRC and Together (Mental Health Practitioner Service). Focus groups were undertaken with members of the two Local Implementation Groups (for the Northern and the Eastern boroughs) in November 2017. Feedback was also obtained from ‘Refresh’ events held with offender managers and service providers in November 2017, and from workshops held with IOM co-ordinators and those involved with the Female Dedicated Budget in December 2017 and January 2018 respectively. In addition, data were collected via a second stakeholder survey (N = 34), comprising responses from practitioners, service providers and strategic partners, conducted online in August 2017, and an offender managers questionnaire (N = 30) circulated at the Refresh events and subsequently. In the questionnaire, respondents were provided with statements about POP, the services provided under the pilot, and its impact which they were asked to agree or disagree with (with 1 being ‘strongly agree’ and 5 being ‘strongly disagree’). The results from the online survey and the OM questionnaire, where appropriate, have been compared to the results from the first stakeholder survey contained in the first interim report.

It is important to stress that the process findings outlined below have been obtained from interviews, focus groups and surveys undertaken at different points during the year that has elapsed since the last interim report. They are presented in a thematic manner, rather than chronologically, to avoid repetition, but their chronological order should be borne in mind. As a result, wherever possible, the findings have been presented in date order within themes. The findings are also compared to those in the first interim report to identify any developments (or stability) of perceptions over time.

**Focus of the pilot**

As with the first interim report, practitioners and stakeholders were supportive of the focus of the POP on this group of offenders. As one of the programme board members stated: ‘the intention to deliver enhanced services to this particular cohort of individuals is right’, although ‘given that they are such chaotic individuals and this is a pilot I don’t think there is enough flexibility built into the model’. This last point was picked up by other practitioners, and is discussed in greater detail below.

In the second stakeholder survey in August 2017, 68% (23/34) of respondents indicated that they thought POP had the potential to support prolific offenders to tackle problems in their lives (although this figure was down from 84% in the first stakeholder survey a year earlier). Nevertheless, when offender managers were asked in the questionnaire post November 2017 to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that the pilot had improved the support provided to prolific offenders to tackle problems in their lives, 70% (19/27) agreed, while only 2 disagreed, the remainder neither agreeing nor disagreeing. The pilot was also felt to be a useful way to tackle prolific offending – when asked to agree or disagree with the statement ‘I do not see the pilot as a

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11 To aid clarity in the report, where a 5-point scale has been used in the second stakeholder or the offender manager surveys answers where 1 and 2 were provided have been combined (normally representing ‘agree’), as have 4 and 5 (‘disagree’).
useful way to tackle prolific offending’, of the 28 responses, only one respondent agreed, 7 neither agreed nor disagreed, while 71% disagreed (20/28).

However, practitioners – particularly from the MPS – were concerned that the emphasis on OGRS scores as the basis for the selection of the POP cohort meant that its characteristics were different from the IOM cohort. When asked how POP differed from IOM one respondent suggested, ‘technically speaking there shouldn’t be a difference, but there is difference, a massive difference. When GtO12 came in to being it brought in a cohort of offenders which were unknown to us’. It was suggested that, whereas with IOM there was a degree of discretion available (‘with IOM we have a select known offenders group we would like to work with’) conversely GtO ‘just cares about the OGRS score and you could have hundreds of shoplifters who are being semi-effectively managed but they are on that book’. ‘It’s all about that number [OGRS score] and not really about that particular offender and their needs’. As a result, POP had ‘enlarged our offender population’.

One programme board member stated that, while the POP criteria was clearly aligned with the wider IOM model in London, it suffered the same potential limitations as the wider model; ‘with the wider IOM a lot of the focus historically has been on prolific offending and high-volume crimes not necessarily high seriousness and high harm’.

Related to the wider concerns about the IOM model and its focus on prolific offenders, concerns were expressed by the Mental Health Practitioners, in the LIG focus groups, and by project board members about the use of the same OGRS score criteria for men and women to qualify for the POP cohort. There was a concern that because women generally tend to pose a lower risk of reoffending than men – and therefore fewer females meet the OGRS criteria – POP was excluding a number of vulnerable and/or ‘in need’ women who could benefit from additional services. It should be noted, however, that the POP pilot has always been specifically targeted at prolific offenders, as opposed to other offenders, of whichever gender, who may also benefit from extra services.

Claims about the level of ‘churn’ within the POP cohort, and the movement of service users on and off this cohort, appear to be borne out by some basic analysis undertaken comparing CRC and NPS ‘refresh’ data (data that provides a snapshot of cases that meet the POP OGRS criteria) available for two points in time (August and December 2017 for the CRC caseload, and August and November 2017 for the NPS). For the CRC, in Aug 2017 there were 1112 unique cases, in December 2017 959 unique cases. There were 522 cases that overlapped both months. However, five hundred and ninety cases from August were no longer on the December caseload (54% of the August total), and in December 437 cases (46% of the December total) had not appeared in August’s totals.

‘The interesting question is as time has gone on, is the IOM and GtO model the best model now? What you’re seeing with a lot of IOMs around the country is that they’re moving to public protection focused IOMs. The problem that we have going forward with GtO is that we’re now locked into a model that is actually a bit old fashioned compared to a lot of other forces’ (Programme Board member).

12 Although the pilot is now referred to as POP rather than GtO, in situations where direct quotes from respondents are used the original has been retained.
When the same analysis was undertaken for the NPS data a similar picture emerged, although the extent of the churn was smaller\(^\text{13}\). In August 2017, there were 656 unique cases, in November 2017 694 unique cases. The overlap between the two dates was 487 cases. The number of cases that appeared in August, but not in November was 169 (26% of the August total), and 207 cases appeared in November but not in August (30% of the November caseload).

\[
\text{\textit{`I think the difference was that with the IOM cohort you could control it, with the GtO cohort you cannot because as soon as someone today might not be GtO eligible but come the end of the week, or next week they are and that's what you cannot control'}} \text{(LIG focus group respondent).}
\]

**Provision for older clients**

Practitioners queried the lack of services available for men aged over 25, even though this group comprised the bulk of the POP cohort (one respondent described the ‘typical’ POP member as ‘men aged 30 upwards, 30 – 50, entrenched, drug users, burglars, Class A drugs’). ‘A lot of money is available for 18-25-year olds, but this cohort is older and offenders are generally getting older anyway so we need to stop saying all the money is for 18-25 year olds’. Another LIG respondent stated, ‘it’s illogical that you provide a huge amount of resources to an offender population of less than 20%’, as another respondent observed ‘the majority of cases are 25 plus and …there is nothing we can really refer into’, ‘there’s nothing for us to offer those people and they are not really getting much more than they are getting on the IOM’. Similar views were expressed by the Mental Health Practitioners and by the programme board members in interview too. As one respondent from the latter group said, ‘I know that’s a commitment [focus on 18-25 males]. I would say that in my experience a lot of the offenders who are eligible in terms of the criteria for IOM tend to be over 30. There’s a danger we neglect that’.

As a corollary of this, respondents also suggested that some of what was being offered to 18-25-year olds was inappropriate, particularly the early iteration of Building Bridges based around group work; although it should be noted that, precisely because of this issue, the intervention changed from a group-work focus to working one-to-one in April 2017.

\[
\text{\textit{`Young offenders are very very reluctant to sit in a group setting and discuss their problems or concerns amongst other strangers, the older the population gets the more likely they are to sit and feel comfortable to share information but that is something we have to overcome if we want to do an offender based programme. It was the restriction that was placed, caused problems for us, the age category'}} \text{(LIG focus group respondent).}
\]

\(^{13}\) Possible explanations for the difference between the CRC and NPS figures might be the different characteristics of the NPS caseload, and the fact that there was a shorter period for the calculation (3 months as opposed to 4 for the CRC).
**Project implementation**

**Perceptions of the enhanced services**

**PSR**
Support for the PSR writing service was consistent across stakeholders and practitioners, from members of the programme board, through the LIG focus groups and with OMs. As one of the former said; ‘I think the design is good in terms of the targeting at court and trying to improve sentencers’ responses. The enhanced PSR service is important’, although he felt the two officers who provided the PSR service should have been provided with greater administrative and analytical support (something which has subsequently been provided, until April 2018). However, it was also suggested in the LIG focus groups that the work of the PSR writer would be improved by the provision of extra IT support (lap-top and Blackberry phone – suggestions that had already been made in the previous interim report).

**Prison co-ordinator**
Views on the prison co-ordination service were generally positive, and the service was viewed as useful (the provision of PNOMIS material for example), although there were some criticisms of the quality of the resettlement plans. There was also a feeling that in some circumstances the service duplicated existing local resources (Haringey already having a dedicated prison liaison officer in Pentonville, for example).

**Female personalised budget**
Referrals for the female personalised budget had been small, although they had increased since the workshop arranged by MOPAC in early 2018 specifically to identify members of the POP cohort who were suitable for the service. OMs involved with those on the female personalised budget stressed the difficulties of working with this group, due to their prolific nature, their level of non-engagement, and the fact that they were in and out of custody before contact could be made. The work of Together Mental Health was commended (‘doesn’t frighten off offenders’), although accessing Community Mental Health for this group was identified as problematic (threshold too high and would not look at offenders whose problems are drink or drug related).

**Mentoring**
Although there was praise from an IOM co-ordinator for one of the service providers (no longer contracted), generally practitioners were unimpressed by the service provided by the mentoring services, in terms of the poor response provided to referrals, and in the delivery of the services themselves. Historically there was mention of the problems service providers had had in accessing prison, and MOPAC came in for criticism in mid-2017 due to apparent confusion about which service providers were contracted at which point.

**CBT and family intervention**
Practitioners identified problems in early 2016 with the lack of responses from the CBT and family intervention services (delivered by Rise Mutual and PACT) - ‘when GtO started off in 2016 initially there was no activity and nothing was happening as a result of our referrals’, although the situation was felt to be improving in late 2016 and early 2017. The appropriateness of the Building Bridges
intervention (group-work) for the 18-25 age group was initially queried, but this concern appeared to have diminished following its change to delivery 1-to-1 (there were similar issues around group-work with Right Track and TIGER). There were criticisms around the poor response to referrals, and, again, concern was expressed about the lack of clarity around service provision in mid-2017 because of contractual changes. However, respondents were positive about the CBT service being offered by C2C since November 2017, particularly the proactivity of the project co-ordinator (indicated by his arranging to go into prison to finish the course with service users who have been recalled) and borne out by the increased numbers of accepted referrals to the scheme.

Forensic Mental Health Practitioners (Together)
The work of the two FMHPs was universally praised, in terms of the consultation work that they did with OMs and IOM panels, the direct interventions provided with service users, and the onward referral and liaison work undertaken. Respondents stressed the benefits of the informal and flexible ways the FMHPs worked. The success of the pathway was demonstrated by the fact that, at one point, one of the FMHPs had to cease taking any further referrals because she was up to capacity, and operating a waiting list.

Employment
In contrast, practitioners had little positive to say of the employment strand. There were criticisms about the poor response to referrals, and subsequent poor uptake, as one focus group member said, ‘we have gone to phenomenal lengths to work with them and we have not achieved any outcomes’. The fact that Blue Sky had no presence in the 8 POP boroughs was also mentioned, not least because boroughs already had their own, local resources.

Policing strand
Respondents were also critical of the policing strand – described as a ‘non-entity’ by one LIG member in a focus group. More fundamentally, the view was expressed that there was a lack of clarity about exactly what the police intelligence function would provide; ‘it’s still a little bit vague’. The view was also expressed by one borough that sufficient intelligence was generated from existing local resources, and consequently they were uncertain of the benefit of the additional service.
However, focus group members were hopeful of improvements following the introduction of a dedicated analyst, because of the latter’s previous experience with IOM. There was also the feeling that the introduction of a single analyst might lead to increased standardisation with the intelligence packages; previously the police ‘were providing those intelligence packs and they varied massively from one intelligence pack to another’.

**Delivery of the pilot**

**Partnership working**
The first Interim POP report identified improved partnership working as one of the benefits arising from the pilot, and this continued to be viewed as a positive by those interviewed or surveyed for this report. Seventy-nine percent of respondents (27/34) in the second stakeholder survey felt that POP had the potential to improve partnership working across agencies (albeit slightly down from the 82% in the first stakeholder survey a year earlier), and when offender managers were surveyed again after November 2017 respondents still indicated that they felt the pilot had improved partnership working across agencies. When asked if the pilot had not improved partnership working across agencies, while 23% (7/30) ‘agreed’, 43% (13) ‘disagreed’ (although a third of respondents were undecided). Respondents also supported the statement that the pilot had created a ‘whole systems approach’ to working with prolific offenders, 67% (20/30) of respondents agreeing while 3 respondents disagreed (7 expressed no opinion). Similar views were expressed in the LIG focus groups where respondents stressed the benefits of the POP pilot in encouraging partnership working; ‘the good side of the programme has been for me that it’s built on the relationship that we have had with the police and sharing that information’.

The views expressed by the Programme Board members in May 2017 had also been positive about the partnership benefits of the POP pilot. With the exception of an individual who felt that there had always been good relationships between their organisation and partners, respondents appeared positive about the impact the pilot had had in terms of developing new relationships with partners, or in improving existing relationships. Those interviewed mentioned various benefits in terms of increased contact with the IOM side of probation, increased dialogue with sentencers, more engagement with MOPAC, and with the IOM structures in the boroughs. They were, however, less positive when asked whether they felt that the pilot had been successful in creating a whole systems approach to managing offenders, the responses from the programme board were rather equivocal; ‘partially successful’ and ‘somewhat’ were the responses from two individuals.

**Project implementation/organisation – communication and awareness.**
At the programme board level respondents were complimentary about the level of contact they had had with MOPAC, commenting favourably on the continuity of the implementation team, the frequency of meetings, and the usefulness of awareness sessions provided. They felt there was
generally good communication at their level, with clear expectations and governance structures (managed through the programme boards), although there was a recognition that there was little contact between partners outside the boards. They also felt they were kept well-informed about how the pilot was progressing, with regular updates, although one programme board respondent did suggest that these updates could have been provided in an alternative form (a newsletter was suggested), rather than via email or in the contract management meetings.

‘Compared to a lot of internal pilots I’ve seen I’ve felt quite supported when an issue has come up… the fact that they’ve been a team and that team has stayed throughout the life of the pilot has been a real positive’.  
(Programme Board member).

Interestingly, one programme board respondent stressed the usefulness of the POP governance structure, stating that it provided a blue-print for the wider IOM scheme; ‘it’s given us a mechanism around consistency and governance in those 8 boroughs. We had to set up a lot of structures to support GtO implementation. Those structures worked so well that we took them and we expanded them to cover our entire IOM’.

However, whilst communication was felt to be good at a strategic level, there were concerns that this was not reflected at a lower level, particularly during the early stages of the programme. One programme board respondent suggested that, because the implementation had taken place across 8 boroughs, more effort should have been made to ensure engagement with OMs and that surrounding agencies and partners were aware and involved in the scheme; ‘there are certainly some staff who have a better understanding than others, and that will always be the case, but we should look at that’. In the focus groups too, respondents talked about their uncertainty of what services were available to whom, at which point (particularly in relation to mentoring services, and the CBT pathway). As an illustration, speaking in November 2017 an IOM co-ordinator said ‘…, I think we might have had 1 maybe 2 people complete Right Track, we’ve done tons of referrals, get nothing back. RISE, I am guessing the contract has gone because they are not performing…’, this at a point when RISE had ‘gone’ for 3 months.

Similarly, a number of respondents in the offender manager questionnaire, when asked what their hopes for future developments in the POP pilot were, mentioned the need for better communication and improvements to process (discussed in greater detail below). Evidence of the lack of consistency of the POP message at borough level was witnessed by the authors during the LIG focus groups where individuals from different boroughs had clearly different understandings of the constraints that applied to the Female Personalised Budget, and the level of discretion available to IOM staff around POP caseload.

Differentiation between IOM and POP
What emerged from meetings with the Local Implementation Groups, and the IOM co-ordinators workshop was that the extent to which boroughs differentiate between IOM and POP varied. Both FMHHPs mentioned that in the early stages of the project they were often having to explain the rationale for the project, and the criteria for inclusion. As one remarked; ‘I had to go around and explain for a year and a half maybe, it seemed that boroughs understood it in different ways, and
we had boroughs that said IOM was the same thing as CtO, so I would see all of their clients, and other boroughs were able to differentiate’. However, they added that this had diminished as time progressed, largely as a result of the efforts by MOPAC’s implementation staff from late 2017 to clarify the criteria for inclusion in POP, and the services available to those eligible for it.

Assertions about the increased levels of understanding about the POP project and its various component parts, would appear to be borne out by the results from the second on-line stakeholder survey (undertaken in August 2017) and the offender managers’ survey (undertaken after November 2017). Both the stakeholder survey and the offender manager survey asked respondents whether they understood the aims and objectives of the POP pilot. Seventy-eight percent of respondents in the former (25/32), and 70% in the latter (21/30) felt this was the case. The stakeholder survey asked respondents whether they understood their organisation’s role in POP and 81% of respondents felt this was the case. Seventy-five percent of respondents in the second stakeholder survey also agreed with the statement that they understood their role in POP.

The stakeholder survey asked respondents if they understood the offender eligibility criteria used in the pilot, and 81% of respondents (26/32) agreed. The wording in the offender manager survey was different (in that respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement ‘I do not understand the offender eligibility criteria for the pilot’), but 57% (n=17) disagreed with this statement.

Respondents to the offender manager questionnaire were also asked whether they understood specific elements of the POP pilot, such as the pre-sentence report service, prison co-ordination service, and enhanced offender management service. Overall the responses from offender managers suggests that they felt they ‘understood’ the various components of POP. Sixty-two percent of the 29 individuals who responded indicated that they agreed with the statement that they understood the pre-sentence report service while only 21% disagreed. Similarly, 79% (23/29) agreed that they understood who to refer to the enhanced services, only 2 respondents feeling this was not the case (4 respondents did not express a view). When asked if they did not understand the prison co-ordination service 45% (13/29) disagreed, while 28% (8) agreed. Sixty-five percent (19/29) of respondents indicated that they understood what the enhanced offender management services were, while 17% (5) disagreed. Interestingly, when asked directly if they had referred offenders to the enhanced services, while 59% (17/29) replied that they had, 41% said that they had not.

Variations across boroughs
Difficulties in implementing the POP pilot arising from variation across the 8 boroughs were mentioned by a number of respondents. Focusing on the differences between police areas one respondent said it was;

‘very hard to apply consistent enhancements to an inconsistent base. We had 8 boroughs who worked in 8 different ways, 8 different levels of performance, and particularly around things like tasking. 8 slightly different tasking processes. Some teams are co-located, others aren’t. Some have got dedicated supervisors, some haven’t”

(Programme Board Member)’
The FMHPs identified the impact that the different working arrangements in the various boroughs had on their working arrangements; whether the police and probation were co-located, the presence (or otherwise) of an IOM co-ordinator in the borough, and how effective (and frequent) the IOM panel meetings were. As a result, there were different arrangements with different boroughs; ‘we had to adjust the mental health provision [in terms of working arrangements] slightly to meet the needs of all the different boroughs because obviously the IOM operates in a slightly different model’. In one borough (Hackney) what had been a successful working relationship faltered because of the decision to close the probation office, and subsequent decisions about where to relocate the OMs elsewhere.

Other respondents mentioned the fact that certain boroughs had not ‘bought into’ the POP model and openly expressed opposition to it. Issues arising from local governance were also mentioned by one respondent; ‘you’ve got us signed up to GtO but you’ve also got individual local arrangements’, which in turn was linked to the demands of partnership working ‘Because GtO is a partnership there is no one agency that can stamp its authority on the way that it wants things done, it has to be all the agencies coming together’. Another respondent suggested that ‘the layers of multi-agency working, so getting people on the same page and understanding what the purpose of that delivery is, getting local authorities and police colleagues and prison colleagues all on the same page and all understanding the pilot takes a while’.

**Issues around staff turnover/staff vacancies**
Practitioners also identified difficulties that arose in relation to the operation of the POP pilot arising from the absence or turnover of members of staff in various roles, although this was a problem arising from the general landscape of offender management, rather than POP specifically. Staff turnover at the CRC was mentioned by a number of respondents. The absence of IOM co-ordinators in certain boroughs (Camden and Newham) was identified as a problem by LIG members, project board members and the FMHP interviewees. Similarly, it was identified that the delivery of the mental health pathway, and the PSR service, had been hampered due to staff leaving and there either being delays in replacing the staff, or, in the case of the FMHP due to the shortness of the remaining funding period, impossible to replace them at all.

Interestingly, of the members of the Project Board (interviewed in May 2017), one had been in post since Summer 2015 (but has left the pilot since the interview was undertaken), another had been involved in the early scoping for the project, but then was not involved for eight months, re-joining the pilot in August 2016. Another respondent had been involved since July 2016, and the two remaining interviewees had joined the programme board within the six months of interview. The fact that a number of respondents had not been involved with the pilot at its inception limited their ability to answer some of the questions posed about its design and implementation.

**POP and IOM**
Practitioners also identified the difficulties that arose trying to implement the POP pilot within a wider IOM framework that was not sufficiently well-established or stable.
‘IOM in London probably wasn’t in a strong enough position when we started this pilot to go for enhancements. Part of me would have liked to have put the effort, the time and the money into getting us doing IOM in the way that it should be. We fought a lot of running battles around stuff that was actually basic IOM practice and governance and process and weren’t IOM enhancements e.g., trying to get boroughs to get their cohorts up to right sizes. They weren’t GtO issues, but they took up an awful lot of all of our time’ (Programme Board Member)

Wider organisational restructuring.

To compound the challenges outlined above, it was suggested that the timing of the introduction of the POP pilot was unfortunate in coinciding with wider organisational restructuring in probation (and with the CRC in particular), and the Met Police’s organisational changes. As one Programme Board member put it; ‘rolling out a huge project like this across 8 London Boroughs when the CRC is trying to embed its new operational model is a huge challenge’. The ‘innovative work’ of the POP pilot was described by the same respondent as not being a high priority when the priority was getting ‘back to basics’ and ‘just doing what [the CRC] have been commissioned and contracted to do’.

Referrals and credible service provision

As has already been mentioned in relation to specific pathways (and as was identified in the previous interim report), practitioners mentioned the difficulties obtaining referrals for the enhanced services from probation staff, particularly if the response to a referral was poor or non-existent. As one IOM co-ordinator said

‘In our borough people have still got 70-75 cases…. So to get referrals out of them is really really tough. It would be easier if at the end of the programme you have fantastic programmes with an organisation that has integrity and you’ve got completions and really positive outcomes but….there are no outcomes and nothings getting done so how the hell are you going to get any referrals from anyone?’ (LIG focus group member)

This, in turn, was linked to an assessment of the credibility of service provision. As one focus group member said, if proposals/referrals were made for offenders ‘and then they come back to court and nothing has happened and I am unable to say why. ‘Well, what happened to this programme?’ ‘Well it was meant to be ….’ So that is the difficulty that I have had, and it’s been disappointing’.

Lack of accommodation

The lack of accommodation available for members of the POP cohort was also identified by a number of practitioners; ‘the elephant in the room is accommodation…that’s a massive gap. I would say between 35-40% of our GtO nominals are homeless, either street homeless or sofa surfing, and there is nothing for that so how you expect anyone to focus on any of these fancy programmes and things….’. Respondents stressed the need to sort out ‘accommodation and benefit needs’ before offenders could engage with the enhanced services; ‘It’s the practical issues isn’t it? You can’t really address offending behaviour until you’ve addressed the practical issues; if you don’t know where you are going to sleep tonight, your choices in the day are going to be very different’.
**Future changes**

Unsurprisingly, when asked to identify changes or improvements to the pilot they hoped to see before September 2018, in most cases respondents identified features that were directly relevant to their input, and which they had previously identified as barriers for the pilot.

The offender manager questionnaire asked respondents to identify what they would like to see over the remaining 11 months of the pilot. The answers that were provided tended to fall into broad themes; general hopes/expectations for the project, suggestions for improvements to existing provision, and changes/additions to the service.

General hopes and expectations included increased use/take up of services (4), the continuation of the pilot (mentioned by 2 respondents), reductions in offending (1), increased understanding of POP’s ‘potential’ (1), and continued partnership working (1).

Suggestions for improvements included better communication/more updates about POP (mentioned by 4 respondents), improvements to process (5 respondents – although these tended to be fairly wide-ranging and generic in nature, answers provided included ‘more structured’, ‘more stream-lined’, ‘clearer process’, although ‘improved coordination at office site level, in hand with clearer IOM GtO vision as far as CRC is concerned’ and ‘not letting contract negotiations disrupt services’ were more specific), more use of GPS (1), more access for NPS (1), and caseload exemption (1).

Suggestions for changes/additions to the existing service included improved housing support/access to emergency accommodation (mentioned by 6 respondents), access to funding to pay for ID/travelcards for service users (referred to as a ‘slush-fund’ by one respondent, mentioned by 2 overall), ‘better specific resources for GtO’ (1), more services for older service users (1), options for those not ready for work (1), the scheme being ‘opened up to community cases’ (1) and ‘more satellite services’ (1).

**Potential for impact**

The second stakeholder survey asked the 34 respondents whether POP had the potential to achieve a variety of objectives. This second stakeholder survey was a repeat of an on-line survey that had been undertaken a year previously (in September 2016, the results from which were reported in the first POP interim report).

The results from the second survey were very similar to the results from the first survey. Broadly speaking most respondents appeared optimistic about the possible benefits of POP. When asked if they thought POP had the potential to reduce offending, 82% agreed (compared to 84% in the first stakeholder survey). Seventy-nine percent of respondents felt that the scheme had the potential to improve the engagement of prolific offenders (80% in the first survey), while sixty-eight percent of respondents in the second stakeholder survey felt that POP had the potential to speed up the process of dealing with prolific offenders in the CJS.

When asked if POP had the potential to improve public safety, the percentage of respondents in the second stakeholder survey in agreement was lower, at 62%, and even lower proportions of
respondents agreed that POP had the potential to create a ‘whole systems’ approach to working with prolific offenders (59%), or to reduce the cost of prolific offending to statutory services (56%), although positive responses to these questions still comprised the majority. The only question where more respondents disagreed rather than agreed with the premise was when respondents were asked if they felt POP had the potential to improve confidence in the ability of the criminal justice system to tackle prolific offending, where the majority of respondents (53%) disagreed.

Interestingly, the results from both on-line stakeholder surveys were more positive than those from the offender manager survey, which also asked respondents for their perceptions of the impact of the POP pilot, although it should be noted that these questions were framed in terms of their experience of POP, not in terms of POP’s potential, which might explain the lower level of favourable replies. Thus, when asked whether the pilot had sped up the process for dealing with prolific offenders in the CJS, 45% (13/29) of respondents ‘agreed’ with the statement (compared to the 68% of respondents in the second stakeholder survey).

In any case, the respondents from the OM questionnaire were less willing to express a view about the impact the pilot had had on the level of engagement and reoffending by prolific offenders. Thus, when asked if the pilot had improved the engagement of prolific offenders most respondents (54% - 15/28) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Similarly, when asked whether the pilot had reduced the level of reoffending in the target group 75% of respondents (21/28) neither agreed or disagreed with the statement. When asked for their views on the statement that the pilot had not had a positive impact on working with persistent offenders 50% (14/28) neither agreed nor disagreed and 39% (11/28) disagreed (6 strongly).

Offender managers were also asked about the impact of the pilot on their caseload, and whether it had changed the way they worked with prolific offenders. In response to the statement ‘the pilot has increased my workload beyond a comfortable level’, responses were evenly split with 41% (11/27) ‘disagreeing’, while 19% (5/27) agreed and forty-one percent of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. This contrasted with the findings from the first Stakeholder survey where 32% (n=9/28) of respondents reported the pilot had increased their workload beyond a comfortable level.

Finally, respondents in the OM questionnaire were asked to state whether they agreed with the statement that the introduction of the pilot had changed the way they worked with prolific offenders. In answer to this question, just under a half were noncommittal (48% 13/27), while just over a third (37%, 10/27) agreed. A greater proportion of staff had felt more positive at the outset of the pilot with 69% (n=23/33) agreeing that the pilot had the potential to impact their work in a positive way; while 35% (n=11/28) of respondents agreed that the POP had had a positive impact on working with prolific offenders in the first stakeholder survey.
**Key learning**

Findings from interviews and surveys with stakeholders revealed the following key learning points:

Staff were generally positive about the rationale for the pilot but expressed concern about the focus of the pilot (lack of enhanced services available for males aged over 25, and the use of the same selection criteria for men and women on the pilot), and the difficulties arising from the degree of churn in the cohort. Respondents also questioned the wisdom of implementing the pilot at a time of widespread change in the police and probation.

Practitioners had mixed views about the delivery of certain aspects of the pilot, with the PSR service and mental health pathway rated the most positively, and mixed views on the benefits of the prison co-ordination service. Views on the policing and employment services were negative. Overall, delivery was thought to have been compromised by perceived challenges within probation and local variation across boroughs.

As in the first interim report, the pilot was felt to have had a positive impact on partnership working. While awareness raising and communication had been identified as areas for improvement during the early part of the pilot’s implementation, this was felt to have improved since late 2017 around the time the project ‘refresh’ was held.

In comparison to the findings from the first interim report, practitioners were more equivocal about the impact of the pilot on reoffending and engagement by the POP cohort.
4. Discussion

This interim report has provided an update on the progress of POP and highlighted some key learning from stakeholders involved in the pilot. On the whole, performance analysis indicates that some enhanced services are continuing to progress well in terms of numbers (e.g., the PSR service and the mental health pathway, the latter of which at times has been unable to cope with the number of referrals from boroughs); whereas for other services (employment, CBT, female personalised budget) referral numbers and numbers accessing the enhanced services have been lower than anticipated. However, following efforts to raise awareness of the services with practitioners during the project ‘refresh’ in October-November 2017 there appears to be increases in uptake for the last two services at least.

A number of positive messages emerged from stakeholder feedback:
- There was a great deal of support for the rationale for the pilot and respondents understood the aims and objectives of the pilot, and its component parts
- Staff identified an increase in partnership working as one of the main benefits of the pilot so far, both in terms of creating new partnerships and improving relationships with existing partnerships
- Staff were positive that the pilot had created additional resources for offenders through the enhanced service offer and noted the particular benefits of having a direct contact in the courts and prisons, and having ready access to forensic mental health practitioners
- Most staff agreed that POP has the potential to impact on a number of important outcomes, helping offenders tackle problems in their lives, and improving partnership working.

Impact analysis undertaken suggests that those who had received the PSR service had a significantly shorter time between conviction and sentencing, compared to a matched control group, although the service did not have an impact on disposal.

Feedback from staff identified the following challenges to the pilot; while there was support for the overall aims of the pilot there was concern about its focus. Respondents also spoke of the difficulties arising from the characteristics of the POP cohort, the perceived lack of discretion around its composition, the ‘churn’ in the caseload, and the difficulty of getting chaotic offenders to engage. While respondents felt that the POP pilot had improved services available to the cohort, this did not extend to a belief that it would impact on their engagement or levels of reoffending, linked to feelings that there was a need to address underlying factors, notably the lack of accommodation. The timing of the implementation of POP at a time of wider organisational change in the police and probation was also questioned.

Communication about the pilot, while it was felt to be good at a strategic level, was criticised at the borough level, particularly in the early stages, with associated concerns that this contributed to poor awareness of the services available for the cohort, in turn leading to low levels of referrals. However, there was a feeling that awareness about the pilot had improved. Respondents’ views on the policing, mentoring and employment services were largely negative, those on the prison co-ordination role were more mixed, and the views on the CBT and family services, while initially poor, seemed to be improving over the last four months.
Over the next six months, the evaluation will continue to gather the views of staff involved in the pilot, particularly around the operation of the POP pilot at a borough level. The evaluation will also seek to capture the views of individuals receiving the enhanced services to get their experiences of the pilot and the perceived benefits of the enhanced services on themselves. The long-term aim for the evaluation is to robustly examine the impact of POP on reoffending and a range of other outcomes; however, this will be dependent on the number of offenders who access the enhanced services, the quality of data received, and the identification of an appropriate comparison group.
References


