

1. Organisational arrangements and activity

R 1.1. Leadership



Regional leadership drives the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all people on probation.

Requires improvement

Strengths:

- Leaders valued the views and experiences of people on probation. A culture of recruiting volunteer peer mentors to support people on probation was continuing to deepen and mature. That included people on probation meeting with senior leaders, being involved in the delivery of accredited programmes, unpaid work pre-placement workshops and meeting people upon their release from prison. Several people who had formerly been supervised by the Probation Service were now employed by the region.
- Information sharing with police forces in relation to domestic abuse intelligence had improved in some parts of the region. In Essex, administrative staff had been recruited and trained to check police systems for intelligence which could help probation practitioners to make more accurate assessments about risk. Leaders were committed to expanding the approach across the region, based on evidence that showed it was enabling better access to information.
- Most SFO reviews in the region were rated as either 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. In general, reviews were sufficiently analytical and identified learning appropriately. That was supported by robust quality assurance and supportive leadership within the reviewing team. Staff who reviewed SFOs had undertaken human factors training to understand more about how to reduce errors, influence practitioner behaviour and analyse wider systemic issues.
- IOM was governed by a strong strategic oversight group. The region was working very closely and effectively with police and third sector partners in the region. Expectations about delivery had led to consistency in delivery across PDUs. An excellent reporting system had been developed jointly with the police, which demonstrated that the IOM scheme was leading to impressive reductions in both the severity and frequency of reoffending. The system had the potential to act as a deepening source of evidence on reoffending over time.
- Senior leaders were committed to engaging with staff across the region. Communication within the region was supported by an outstanding intranet platform which provided staff with comprehensive and up-to-date information about their work. Senior leaders held regular sessions with all staff for questions and answers. Most staff who responded to our survey felt that the region promoted openness and constructive challenge.