

Throughcare–Developing the Service

Report of The Tripartite Group

TRIPARTITE GROUP REPORT

THROUGH CARE

DEVELOPING THE SERVICE

CONTENTS

Introduction	
Throughcare- Developing the Service	Page 1
Proposal 1: Statutory Throughcare	Page 4
Proposal 2: Voluntary Aftercare	Page 7
Proposal 3: Structural Arrangements	Page 10
Funding Arrangements	Page 12
Annex A: Statutory Throughcare-	
Key Components of a Comprehensive Revised System	Page 14
Annex B: Membership of Tripartite Group	Page 16
Flowchart	Page 17

THROUGH CARE: DEVELOPING THE SERVICE

INTRODUCTION BY DEPUTY MINISTER FOR JUSTICE

The Scottish Executive has done a great deal over the past 3_ years to promote a broad range of community disposals involving the effective supervision of offenders and working with them to help reduce re-offending. Our plans to set up an Accreditation Panel for community programmes will further enhance this work. But we have also become increasingly concerned about the "revolving door syndrome" of prisoners released from jail in Scotland only for them to end up being sent back to prison after committing further offences. If we are to tackle this problem, it is important that we adopt a more co-ordinated approach to helping prisoners when they leave jail.

The membership of the Tripartite Group is drawn from the Scottish Executive, the Scottish Prison Service and local authorities. The Group was established last year with the remit to look at ways of promoting closer partnership working, especially in relation to the transitional arrangements for prisoners moving on release from prison back into the community. It has been recognised for a long time that the successful resettlement of an offender within the community is probably the best guarantee against re-offending and that effective preparation for release from prison is a good investment. The Tripartite Group report has addressed the complexities of the inter-agency relationships involved in this process and has come up with a workable set of proposals to strengthen the way the system can help prisoners to prepare for their release and resettlement.

The Tripartite Group concluded that the present system too often operates as separate elements and that the throughcare partnership should be strengthened to enable the development of a strong multi-agency approach to effective throughcare services in the future. We all recognise that the re-integration of ex-prisoners back into society can be a challenging process. But the work done within the prison setting through programmes to help individuals to change their behaviour can be complemented and built on by the work of criminal justice social work services in improving the arrangements for the throughcare of prisoners.

The enhanced throughcare programme will strengthen partnership working not only between the Scottish Prison Service and local authorities but also with the voluntary sector and other government agencies working with released prisoners. At its core, this Report aims to deliver better public protection through the closer supervision of those prisoners released on licence and better support services to address the issues of social exclusion which leads many to re-offend.

Our goal is to create safer communities. The proposals outlined in the Tripartite Group will play an important part in achieving this aim.

I have pleasure in endorsing the recommendations in the Report.

HUGH HENRY
Deputy Minister for Justice
December 2002

THROUGH-CARE: Developing the Service

Purpose

1. This paper examines the present arrangements for the aftercare¹ of prisoners. It draws on the work of the Tripartite Group which was set up to consider ways of strengthening the present arrangements. The Group identified a need to tackle the structural difficulties which exist with the present service. It also recognised the need to develop a broader agenda for through-care services to manage the transition from prison to the community more effectively.

Nature of through-care

2. The term through-care is used to denote the provision of a range of social work and associated services to prisoners and their families from the point of sentence or remand, during the period of imprisonment and following release into the community. In order to provide the co-ordinated service that is envisaged in legislation, there is a need to ensure closer collaboration between partner agencies, so that policy initiatives can be integrated rather than fragmented and good practice developed which is understood and accepted by all the relevant stakeholders.

Objectives of through-care

3. These services have three main objectives which are:
- to assist prisoners and their families to prepare for release;
 - to help prisoners resettle in the community whether required by statute as part of a licence or because the prisoners seek such a service; and
 - so to promote greater public safety.

Through-care thus comprises 2 elements—work in prison and in the community. The safety of the public is the prime concern of those responsible for the oversight of former prisoners released on supervision. At the same time, the successful resettlement of an offender within the community is probably the best guarantee against offending. As such through-care supports 2 of the Justice Department's key priorities which are:

- to increase public safety through the effective supervision of prisoners released back to the community on licence; and
- to work with prisoners after their release to reduce re-offending.

Present system

¹ Aftercare is used in the report to mean the supervision, support and assistance to prisoners on release.

4. The present arrangements for throughcare are complicated, with a division into 2 main groups of prisoners. The first group is subject to statutory supervision and consists of prisoners:

- serving sentences of over 4 years; and
- serving Extended Sentences or subject to Supervised Release Orders who serve less than 4 years but who are subject to statutory licence on release.

Different arrangements are in place for all other prisoners who receive shorter prison sentences (under 4 years). This group is not subject to statutory post release supervision but is entitled to request **advice, guidance** and **assistance** from local authorities in the twelve months following their release from prison. The group entitled to request voluntary assistance can be further sub-divided into two separate groups namely:

- Schedule 1/Sex Offenders and other high risk offenders who are not subject to statutory licence on release but who may already have contact with social work services and are a priority for service; and
- All other short-term prisoners entitled to request voluntary assistance

Focus

5. The present throughcare service is primarily focused on those prisoners subject to statutory licence or order on release, reflecting the priority given to issues of public protection. Short-term prisoners however form the major group of released prisoners – about 23,000 out of a total 25,000 per year – and re-offending and reincarceration rates are highest amongst this group. Apart from those subject to either a supervised release order or extended sentence, short-term prisoners are not subject to any form of statutory supervision on release, although there is a growing need for voluntary aftercare, especially in relation to Schedule 1 offenders (convicted of offences against children). In looking to the future, the Tripartite Group favours proposals for improving arrangements in relation to both groups, i.e. those subject to statutory post release supervision and those entitled to request voluntary aftercare.

Three Proposals

6. The 3 priorities for future developments are identified as:

- **Extending the present arrangements for Extended Sentences to all prisoners subject to statutory throughcare.**

Different arrangements are in place for the supervision of offenders on extended sentences. A supervising authority and supervising officer is designated at the start of the prison sentence. Whilst experience of extended sentences is limited, this model would offer continuity of service provision during and after a prison sentence, by widening the extended sentence provisions on early designation to all such offenders.

- **Identifying priorities within the group of prisoners eligible for voluntary after care to 3 sub-groups as follows:**

- Schedule 1 offenders and sex offenders who are the highest risk group;
- Young offenders who show the highest rate of re-offending, where effective action would have longer term benefits for the criminal justice system, communities and victims; and
- Those prisoners who have shown a commitment to address their offending behaviour or who have remained in contact with SPS's transitional drugs service.

It is part of the social work function to encourage ex-prisoners, not subject to statutory throughcare, to seek assistance and to facilitate contact. But given the numbers involved, it may be more effective to concentrate resources on specific high risk/vulnerable groups. If this group is to be assisted and diverted from further offending (and it is in the public's interest that they are) their co-operation will rely on the relevance of the services available to them.

- **Formalising liaison arrangements between the Scottish Prison Service and local authority criminal justice social work services** so that the work done with offenders in the community, in prison and back into the community forms a coherent framework which informs and complements previous interventions.

Whilst responsibility for offenders changes as they move through the system, the objective should be to ensure continuity, by managing the transitional process from prison to community in such a way that the work of the different agencies is integrated and enhanced. In the longer term there is the need to strengthen the procedures to connect with other statutory agencies such as the Employment Service and the Benefits Agency and promote consistency in practice across the country.

PROPOSAL 1 : STATUTORY THROUGH-CARE

7. The first priority is to strengthen the system of statutory throughcare which deals with the highest risk groups, i.e. for parole and non-parole licencees, and those serving Supervised Release Orders and Extended Sentences. (1234 offenders including 46 on Extended Sentences).

8. Research has consistently shown throughcare to be the “cinderella” element in 100% funded services at a time when there is an increasing number of non-consensual licencees, often with multiple additional requirements, and rising levels of recall on Non Parole Licence. There is an increased focus on risk assessment and risk management issues (MacLean and Cosgrove) and particular problems in relation to the post-release supervision of sex offenders. This is compounded by recent difficulties in relation to the accommodation needs/intentions of long term prisoner and sex offenders. It all contrasts with the more extensive arrangements which are in place for throughcare and for the provision of a supervising officer throughout sentence in England and Wales.

9. At the moment, the criminal justice social work case file may be closed when the offender (other than those on extended sentences) receives a custodial sentence and there is no continuity through the custodial term. This affects not only the offender but also his or her family.

10. The present system creates a number of significant difficulties in relation to assessment and planning for release for this group around:

- **Integration:** the present arrangements do not span the work of the prison service and of criminal justice social work.
- **Timing:** limited advance notification of the prisoner’s release date and late changes to these plans can severely limit the provision of accommodation and any opportunities for work, such as extended risk assessments.
- **Continuity:** it is difficult for the local authority Social Work departments which will assume statutory responsibility for prisoners on release, to **keep track** of them through the prison system.
- **Planning:** the absence of a system for notifying local authorities of admissions to prison combined with the difficulties in initiating direct contact makes **individual case planning** and planning of throughcare services difficult. It is thus difficult to plan the release of prisoners on a geographical basis and further difficulties arise where prisoners are likely to be **homeless** on release;
- **Contact:** the pre-release meeting will often be the first meeting between offender and supervising officer.
- **Information:** does not transfer routinely from the community to the prison when a custodial sentence is imposed nor back to the community at the point of release. Thus, work done on risk assessments and with offenders on programmes to address offending behaviour is not carried through at the points of transition.
- **Funding:** current funding mechanisms do not reflect the extended nature of supervision.

The extended sentence model

11. Arrangements for extended sentence prisoners introduced important differences, which have generally been well received by authorities and other agencies, although the standards can be difficult to meet in practice. Key practice differences include:

- Designation of both the supervising authority and a supervising officer *from the point of sentence*;
- An enhanced role for the supervising officer throughout the sentence including prison visits, family contact work, an increased emphasis on co-ordination and case management;
- Greater attention to the importance of information and assessment exchange between the prison and the supervising authority.

There is now broad agreement that this constitutes good practice and a good case can be made for extending these more rigorous arrangements to all offenders receiving long term sentences.

Options

12. The problems with the present statutory system are fundamentally that we have 2 distinct, parallel systems, one for long term and one for the other prisoners subject to mandatory post-release supervision in operation and they can be difficult to synchronise. Given the positive reaction to the guidance on extended sentence and the apparent unanimity on broadening much of this to sex offenders, there seem to be two options for the future. Either there is a split system with enhanced arrangements for extended sentence prisoners and/or sex offenders, or an enhanced system for all those subject to post-release supervision is introduced.

13. On balance, it is preferable to introduce enhanced arrangements for *all prisoners subject to post-release supervision*. To do so, would bring a number of clear and measurable practice advantages. These would include:

- Prisoners, prison staff, supervising authority and all involved in the process including voluntary agencies, operating within a clear and unitary system;
- Improved assessments and supervision plans for the Parole Board and the Risk Management Authority when it is established;
- An increased understanding for prisoners and families of the requirements of, and potential benefits from, post-release supervision;
- Increased expertise and confidence among community-based practitioners and first line managers in a complex and important specialist area of work;
- Improved continuity in sharing of information and risk assessments between authorities and SPS; and
- A reduction in late notification of arrangements for release and improved coherence of supervisory arrangements in the first weeks of release.

It would also help with the small but difficult group of cases where, because no supervising authority has been designated, last minute changes of mind or a deliberate

attempt to exploit the system by the offender about where he or she wants to live after release, cause great difficulty and can impact on public safety.

Drug Addiction

14. This proposed new focus on statutory throughcare would also allow the service to develop, where appropriate, drug throughcare services for this group of offenders, complementing the work being done by SPS with prisoners not subject to statutory throughcare. The assessment and care management for drugs throughcare in respect of prisoners serving long term sentences would thus be led by criminal justice social work services, liaising with community addiction services and the DATs.

Key Components of a Comprehensive Revised System

15. The key components of a revised system are set out in annex A.

Recommendation

16. That the enhanced arrangements in place for prisoners subject to extended sentences be introduced for *all prisoners subject to post- release mandatory supervision*.

PROPOSAL 2: VOLUNTARY AFTERCARE

17. The present throughcare arrangements in Scotland contrast with England, where the system of statutory throughcare is more widespread, covering all prisoners sentenced to over 1 year in prison. This supports an early release scheme, which is electronically monitored (Home Detention Curfew). Only those sentenced to custodial sentences of less than 1 year are not subject to mandatory aftercare.

18. The Tripartite Group recognised that the resource implications would be enormous if Scotland wanted to move to the English system. Instead it considered where the priorities should lie, once the more rigorous arrangements for prisoners serving over 4 years were in place. The choice lies between moving the threshold downwards to cover say all sentences of three years or more, or targeting support at priority groups. The Group favours the latter approach, starting with the offenders who pose the highest risk to the public and then the offenders where re-offending rates are highest. Within these groups, services might be targeted at those who had shown willingness to pick up services in prison, for example STOP2000 (sex offending programme), and who wished to continue with this work in the community. The continuity of services is crucial since the problem with short-term prison sentences is the limited time available to initiate programmes. They could however be taken forward on release. With repeat offenders, the plans should be kept so that there was no need to start again each time. This is consistent with the recommendations made in the report of short prison sentences, prepared for the Criminal Justice Forum.

19. The Group identified the following 3 groups as priorities for voluntary aftercare:

- High risk offenders not at present subject to statutory throughcare;
- Young offenders; and
- Those who show a commitment to address their offending behaviour or take up and continue with the offer of assistance under the SPS's transitional care scheme.

It was also agreed that for women offenders included in these priority groups the approaches taken should specifically address their particular needs.

20. **High Risk Offenders:** Priority should be given to Schedule 1/Sex Offenders and other high risk offenders (1462 including 109 young offenders under 18) not subject to statutory licence on release. This responds to growing concerns about the supervision of this group of offenders. The primary concerns are that of public safety and child protection in particular and the need for local authorities to engage with these offenders for monitoring purposes. As well as providing practical help for the offender (and their families) in assisting with benefits/housing needs etc. services also extend to advice on specific issues such as registration requirements under the Sex Offenders Act. Unlike the Statutory Group, there is no lever for dealing with this category of prisoner and so local authorities must be pro-active in their approach, recognising that engagement with groups such as sex offenders can lead to resource intensive arrangements.

21. The extended sentence model as described in paragraph 11 would be good standard practice for this group too. The importance of the case being allocated in the prison at an early stage as well as in the local authority and of having a **named** supervising officer is considered essential in order that risk assessments can be passed on. A more robust system of aftercare for this group would represent a positive response to some of the concerns expressed in the Cosgrove report.

22. **Young Offenders:** the second priority is to take forward work with young offenders (about 400 releases per year) with the objective of reducing recidivism in a group where re-offending rates are high. Figures prepared by SPS showing return to custody rates within 2 years of release indicate that offenders aged less than 21 years of age have the highest return rates (59% males and 60% females). There would be real advantages in persisting with work involving this problematic group even although past experience suggests they will not be an easy group to work with. Early intervention strategies, particularly those involving cognitive skills, work well with this younger group. It might be helpful for young offenders to be subject to a period of statutory supervision on release but this would require legislation and the implications of breach would need to be considered fully. However, some Sheriffs already seem to be using SROs in this context as a means of ensuring a period of supervision in the community. Priority should be given to those sentenced under 18 years of age especially those who have been looked after children with the option of including those between 18 and 21, e.g. where those under 21 are experiencing custody for the **first** time. This would support the work being done in the context of the Youth Crime Action Programme.

23. **Drugs and addictions throughcare:** to support the work done by the SPS in prisons and in particular its Transitional Care Service to help resettle released prisoners. The service is contracted out to an independent provider who is responsible for linking prisoners to local services on their release. This builds on the work being done by in-prison addictions workers. A key worker is to be based in the area where the prisoner is to be released and their role will be to assist the clients to link speedily with existing services (housing, education, health and finance, as well as addiction services.) The Service lasts for a maximum of 12 weeks after release.

24. Of the 23,000 prisoners released without statutory supervision after a short term sentence, it is estimated that 75% will have a drugs problem and that 5,000 of these will return to Greater Glasgow. Thus, success in engaging prisoners in treatment and throughcare can make a significant contribution to reducing the number of people with drug problems in the community if it can successfully link them to appropriate throughcare services. Since criminal justice social work often acts as gatekeepers for other services, there is both an opportunity to consolidate and build on the SPS work but also potential for confusion in respective roles and responsibilities. Protocols and agreements to co-ordinate the work and to share information would strengthen the system. The success of the SPS venture will thus be more certain if there is a flow of shared information and joint working arrangements between SPS, penal establishments, criminal justice social work, addiction services and the DATs.

25. The practice advantages of extending voluntary aftercare to these 3 groups would include:

- Continuity of service provision between prison and the community, in particular with higher risk offenders, including sex offenders;
- Enhanced programme integrity with consistency of models including risk assessments, consistency of purpose and consistency of assessments;
- Reduced risk to children from sexual and other abuse;
- The opportunity to continue work started with young offenders into the community, with the aim of reducing their re-offending and re-imprisonment;
- Consolidating the work being done by SPS and others to support prisoners to remain free of drugs after release and to support their resettlement and rehabilitation.

Recommendation

26. That voluntary aftercare should be targeted at

- those prisoners who present a high risk and are not subject to statutory throughcare;
- those prisoners where re-offending and reincarceration rates are high (young offenders); and
- those who have demonstrated a commitment to address their offending behaviour by actively opting into services while in prison, or by taking up and continuing with the offer of assistance under the SPS Transitional Care Scheme when the service ends after 12 weeks.

PROPOSAL 3: STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS

Policy development

27. Developing policy in relation to Throughcare Services is particularly complex because of the number of different agencies involved. The Scottish Prison Service has responsibility for prisoners whilst in prison. Local authority criminal justice social work services carry out a number of functions. Social workers may already know the offender in the community, may prepare a social enquiry report for the court before the sentence is imposed and may interview some offenders sentenced to custody at court. They provide reports for the Parole Board and are then responsible for mandatory throughcare when the prisoner is released. The social work units in individual prison establishments also have a role in preparing prisoners for release. **The Tripartite Group concludes that the present system tends to operate as separate elements and that it would operate much more effectively if throughcare was delivered as a more integrated service.** This would require a shared commitment and agenda, and continuity in practice supported by arrangements for transferring information between the main agencies.

28. In order to support this new approach, it is recognised that resources need to be invested in the development of specialist throughcare services within the local authority groupings in order to complement the work being done in prison. There would also be benefits in employing out-reach workers to provide a more proactive service to engage with priority groups. In effect, this might represent an extension to the existing, yet underdeveloped, provision for offenders to seek “advice, guidance and assistance” on a voluntary basis, within 12 months following any period of imprisonment (s27 Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968). The outreach function would enable this service to be actively promoted for the priority groups such as young people where intervention may be effective in reducing future court appearances and custodial experience. Such a service would thus target offenders with a relatively high risk of future offending. The service would seek not only to tackle offending behaviour, but also to promote re-integration to a range of socially inclusive services, as further protection.

29. The One Stop (Throughcare Centre) initiative in Saughton is an example of a good initiative which offers a model for the development of better throughcare services, making the links with community services before the prisoner is released. This is particularly useful in an urban setting and may need special arrangements for prisoners from rural areas.

30. Some of the foundations are therefore in place for collaboration between prisons and communities to improve throughcare services but the scale of the throughcare task to be addressed outweighs the resources available in the community. The additional funding for the SPS transitional care service (£10m. over 3 years) has marked a step change in the way throughcare for prisoners with drug problems is being tackled. But to protect this investment, it is necessary to build a corresponding support network within criminal justice social work. Effective throughcare is dependent on a joint approach.

31. Successful throughcare is also dependent on the exchange of information about individual prisoners, especially at the point of admission and discharge. It is therefore necessary for penal establishments and criminal justice social work to agree processes and protocols setting out the principles for the exchange of information, concerning their individual need and care plans. A national framework of protocols should be agreed for referral and information exchange between the 2 services for:

- Sharing information about the aims of the service and the content of programmes;
- Protocols to govern referral processes and information exchange and visits; and
- Multi-agency training about throughcare, processes, protocols and training.

32. Strengthening the throughcare partnership between the Scottish Prison Service and local authority criminal justice social work services would have clear advantages. It would bridge the transitional process and enable the partner organisations to develop a strong multi-agency approach which would share the common goals of improving service delivery and promoting public safety, all in line with the aim of better integration within the criminal justice system.

Recommendation

33. In the longer term, the Tripartite Group recommends that a Throughcare Alliance be developed involving all statutory agencies working with prisoners on release to co-ordinate the assistance which is offered and to pool expertise and resources to produce a more efficient and effective system. This is very much in line with the work being done in England by the Cabinet Office on tackling the social exclusion experienced by prisoners on release, which is yet to be published.

Funding Arrangements

34. Existing arrangements for service delivery are complicated by current funding arrangements. The funding of Throughcare Services comes from two separate sources.

- The Scottish Prison Service funds social work services to serving prisoners. The current policy, as outlined in the Throughcare Standards, is that the determination of priorities for social work in prison must reflect the interests and responsibilities of each of the partners in the provision of social work services to prisoners, i.e. SPS, the Scottish Executive and local authority social work departments. Priorities are expected to take account of national considerations but should also reflect the needs of the local prisoner population and the scale and function of each prison establishment. The intention of the Throughcare Standards is that the determination, application and review of priorities for social work services in prisons should be agreed between the Governor in charge and the Chief Social Work Officer for the local authority in the area local to each establishment or, with the introduction on a pilot basis, subject to the contracting arrangements in four pilot prison establishments.
- Funding of community based Throughcare Services comes to local authorities through the 100% funding mechanism. The funding of Throughcare Services is allocated on the basis of the nationally applied formula, which takes account of population/needs factors as well as workload factors. Some local authorities perceive a weakness in the formula approach in that they feel that it does not take into account rural issues, which can be particularly pertinent to the provision of Throughcare Services. The formula approach to funding of throughcare replaced the use of workload measures which assumed that each newly commenced order or licence would involve 30 hours of social work input and that each home background report would involve 4.5 hours of work. These workload measures are still however used locally and viewed by the local authorities as unrealistic, given the length of time over which supervision must be sustained and the profile of risk of offenders which, in a number of cases, points to the need to deploy two members of staff. The local authorities also take the view that 100% funding has been provided at an historically low level for throughcare.

35. At the moment, throughcare is generally provided within fieldwork criminal justice teams undertaking court reports and supervision of community disposals. Any additional grant in respect of the wider role proposed should be predicated on the expectation of a degree of specialism on post-release matters. This would have the twin advantage of assuring “ring fenced” time and attention for the work, while freeing up some capacity to undertake other criminal justice work. According to the scale of the authority or grouping, this should be on the basis of specialist teams or individuals and first line managers. Each grouping or authority could be asked to nominate a senior manager with specific responsibility for these operational matters.

36. If Ministers agree to the strengthening of the service as recommended by the Tripartite Group, the additional costs of extending provision would be a matter for consideration in this year’s Spending Review.

Implementation

37. Implementation should be planned on the basis of a short/medium strategy with a longer term vision.

Tripartite Group

Statutory throughcare : Key Components of a Comprehensive Revised System

In order to realise the above advantages the revised system would have the following features:

(i) the role of the supervising officer would be broadly the same as envisaged for extended sentence i.e.

- Working closely with the prisoner, family, prison officers, social work staff in prisons and a variety of other specialist agencies or staff, including benefit and welfare agencies, towards effective pre-release planning and the reduction of social exclusion;
- Assisting the Parole Board in assessing the need for, and value of, any additional supervision requirements;
- Formally reviewing and re-affirming the supervision plan on a regular and thorough basis;
- Where appropriate (post-release) seeking to vary or delete specific additional requirements, or even supervision itself through progress reports and updated assessments.

(ii) Designation of the supervising authority in accordance with “ordinary residence” principles, as for extended sentence. The supervising authority would *retain responsibility for case management* of community-based pre-release planning throughout sentence. In practice however, where there is clear agreement that the offender will reside in another authority post-release, for example in a hostel, it may prove more effective to *voluntarily transfer responsibility* for much of the detailed activity to that other authority. Where agreement to this effect is reached, this must be communicated in writing to the prisoner and prison governor, together with the reasons why.

(iii) Allocation of a **named** supervising officer from the outset of the prison sentence, again, as for extended sentence.

(iv) Allocation of the case at an early stage, in the prison.

(v) Given the intention to widen arrangements to cover all prisoners subject to post-release supervision, it makes sense to give some discretion to the local authority in determining the level and form of contact with most prisoners during sentence above minimum baseline standards. The following arrangements might operate:

- The prison would alert the appropriate local authority that an individual from their area had received a prison sentence and where he/she was located.
- For all those subject to extended sentence provisions and all other long term sex offenders, the schedule of visits and minimum contacts outlined in the extended sentence guidelines would apply.
- For all other relevant prisoners, the supervising officer must make contact/arrange a visit to the prison within the first *3 months of sentence*. This visit would involve an interview with the prisoner and a meeting with the social worker in the prison,

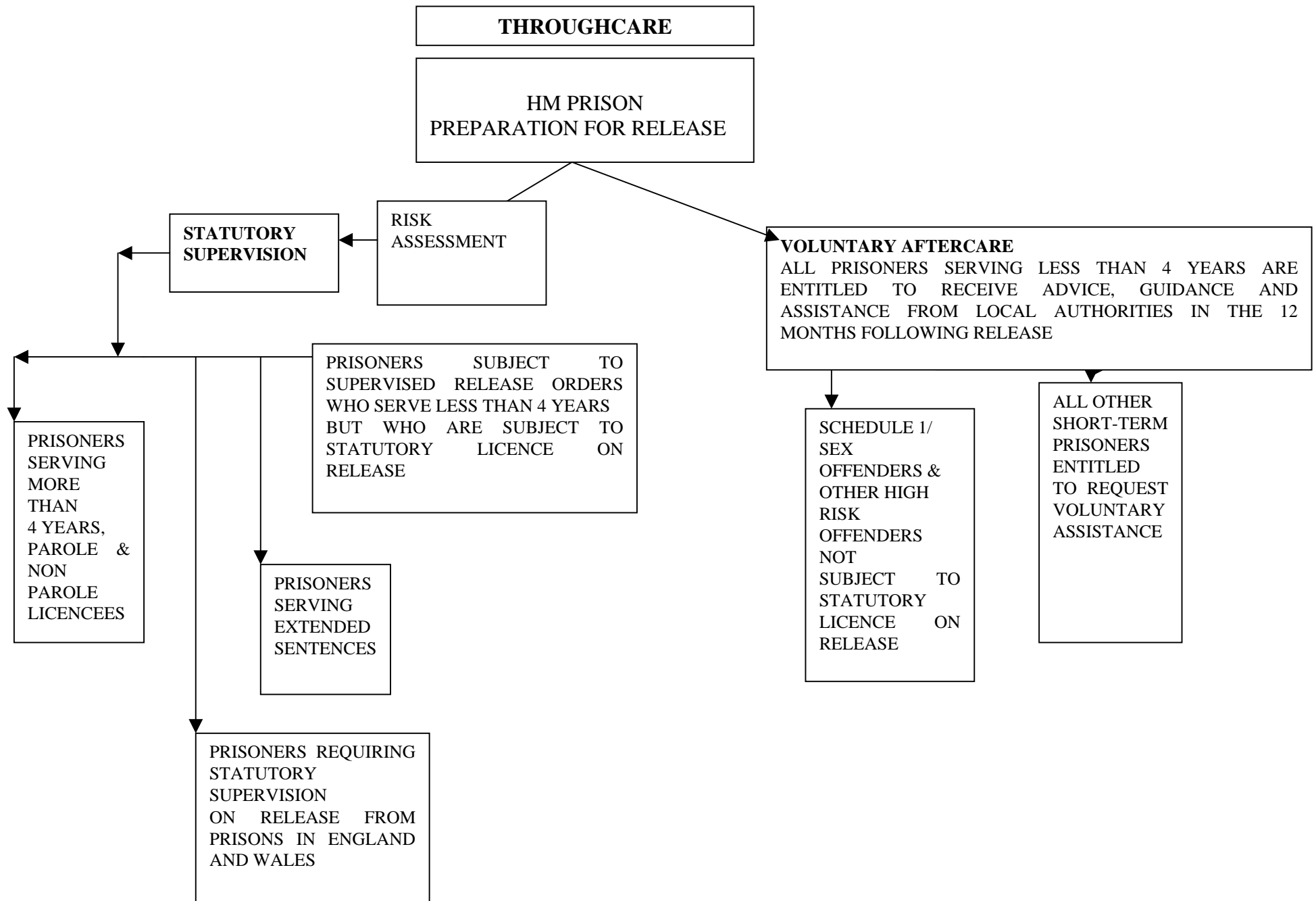
personal officer and any other relevant staff. The purpose of this visit would be to reinforce for the prisoner the role of the supervising officer during sentence, the nature of obligations post release and to extend an offer of appropriate assistance from the authority. For the supervising officer, the visit would offer the opportunity to meet the prisoner, social worker and other relevant staff at the establishment, and to gain first hand knowledge of sentence planning intentions.

- With agreement from the family this initial visit should be preceded by requesting a visit to the prisoner's family, for the purposes outlined in the extended sentence guidance, other than where the SER or other information indicates that this would be inappropriate.
- After this initial visit, the supervising authority, (in the case of an officer in consultation with the first line manager) should determine the future frequency and method of contact with the prisoner. While there may be potential value in an annual prison visit, actual decisions would be influenced by a number of factors including, the attitude of the prisoner towards supervision, length of sentence, outcomes from prison based work or programmes, changes in personal or family circumstances and demands on operational resources.
- In all cases, a clear offer of contact, if only by letter, should be maintained with the prisoner. *In all cases a visit must be made* to the prisoner and relevant prison staff *prior to the first HBR* for Parole purposes. Thereafter the need for further visits would be a matter of discretion for the supervising authority.
- The detailed arrangements for confirming the eventual release date would remain the unaltered responsibility of the prison Governor and likewise the responsibility for convening the pre-release meeting with the social worker from the prison.
- Proper communication with the prison on transfers; and
- Case allocation in the prison social work unit.

Annex B

Members of the Tripartite Group are as follows:

Mrs E Carmichael (chair)	SEJD
Mrs J Knox	SWSI
Mr A Spencer	SPS
Mr T McNulty	SPS
Mr T Reid	Social Work, HMP Barlinnie
Mrs M Anderson	Criminal Justice Social Work, Falkirk Council
Mr C Hawkes,	Lifelong Care, Scottish Borders Council
Mrs C Thomson (Secretary)	SEJD



THROUGHHCARE
 PROVISION OF A RANGE OF SERVICES TO PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM POINT OF SENTENCE OR REMAND, DURING THE PERIOD OF IMPRISONMENT AND FOLLOWING RELEASE INTO THE COMMUNITY.

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