

15 WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CUSTODY UNIT – DIJB46-2017

On 14th September 2017 the Cabinet Secretary for Justice announced that the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) intend to build one of the first two Community Custody Units (CCU) for women in Scotland within the city of Dundee, with a specific site yet to be identified. These new community based units will provide facilities for around 20 women. The women who will serve their custodial sentence in the CCU will be appropriately assessed as suitable for serving out this part of their sentence closer to their community and with greater community access. Crucially, the CCU will take a new approach to the management of women in custody with a strong focus on partnership working and co-production.

The Scottish Prison Service plan that the first two CCUs will be open by the end of 2020. This work is part of a wider transformation within prisons, professionalising the role of prison officers, ensuring a focus on rehabilitation, and supporting the re-integration of people leaving custody. SPS' ambition is that CCUs will become part of their local communities and recognise that collaborative working with council, health and third sector organisations will be required to deliver radical new ways of caring and supporting those women who have found themselves within the criminal justice system. Getting it right for those in custody is a key step in ensuring the safety of the entire community. By successfully reintegrating offenders we reduce risk and create safer communities. The CCU will be subject to the planning process and public consultation events will take place in due course.

Further detailed discussions regarding how the SPS intend the CCU will interface with community resources, including health and social care resources will take place. However, the intention is that the CCU encourages and facilitates planned re-integration into the community, suggesting that there will be an expectation of the use of / access to a range of community resources. It is recognised that NHS Tayside currently provide health services within HMP Perth and Castle Huntly and that there will be a need to involve both NHS Tayside and the Health and Social Care Partnership in planning for the CCU as this progresses, particularly with regard to the balance between in-unit health and social care provision and out-of-unit provision. The establishment of the CCU is an important opportunity to shape services for women in a different way, including examining issues such as continuity of prescribing and GP registration. However, there will also be a need to consider some of the challenges the CCU model may present; for example, not all women within the CCU will be from Dundee so there will be a need to ensure appropriate links and contributions are made from Health and Social Care Partnerships in their home area.

As yet there is no detailed plan available regarding how planning for the CCU will be progressed. A full report will be submitted to the IJB describing planning and consultation arrangements, opportunities and risks when more detailed information is available.

The Integration Joint Board is asked to note the position.