



HM Prison & Probation Service



National Probation Service
Business Strategy and Change
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
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Ms Alison Mutch OBE
HM Senior Coroner
Coroner's Court
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Stockport
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1 February 2018

Dear Coroner,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report, dated 12 January, which was sent to Colin Allars, Director of Probation, following the inquest into the death of Christopher Stewart Hutton. Mr Allars has now moved to a new post. His replacement as Director of Probation is Ms Sonia Crozier, who has asked me to reply.

We are grateful for your comments and recommendation for improvement. You are concerned that the sex offender treatment programme that Christopher Hutton was to undertake had not yet commenced at the time of his death. You will be aware that there has been a significant increase in the number of persons convicted of sexual offences: this has resulted in increased demand for sex offender treatment programmes. To address this high demand, work is in progress nationally to increase the number of staff delivering sex offender group work. In the North West, the staff profile is increasing from 23 facilitators to 35. (These are full time equivalents: some of the new staff will also have offender management responsibilities as part of their role.) We envisage that the 11 new facilitators who are currently being trained will be in post by June 2018. A further 10 staff will then be trained and in post by the end of 2018. In addition, the North West Division is undertaking a scoping exercise for a central referral system to streamline the allocation process.

I hope that the measures I have described above provide the assurance you are seeking of the National Probation Service's commitment to addressing the issue you identified in your report.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Hughes

RICHARD HUGHES
Head of Governance & Strategy