



AREA POLICY: 35/08

CHESHIRE MENTORING SCHEME

1. POLICY STATEMENT: VOLUNTEER MENTORS

The Home Office and the National Offender Management Service recognise that volunteer mentors can make a significant contribution to the range and quality of work undertaken by the Service. Cheshire Probation Area is therefore committed to developing and implementing systems for effective recruitment, training, management and use of volunteer mentors. In particular volunteer mentors:

- Contribute to the reintegration of offenders into the community;
- Increase community awareness of the work of Cheshire Probation Area;
- Contribute towards a balanced workforce more closely representing the local community.

The essential purpose of volunteer mentors is to complement and enhance the services provided by employed staff. Volunteer mentors provide a valuable link between the Probation Service and the local community, and can thus contribute towards the successful integration of offenders within the community.

The Civil Renewal Strategy also seeks to reinforce the rich source of volunteering found within our local and diverse communities. As part of this agenda, Cheshire Probation Area is committed to creating alliances with the community, voluntary and faith sectors as an integral part of its work with adult offenders and the victims of serious crime. The area recognises that people from the local community can play an important role in supporting the work of the service by contributing real 'added value' to supporting offenders in custody and in the community and in fulfilling its duties under the Victims Code of Practice. With proper training and support, volunteer mentors will be better placed to contribute to reducing re-offending and meeting the needs of victims.

ADOPTION BY BOARD:

Date: 22.2.08

RESPONSIBLE SENIOR MANAGER:

Name: K Thornden

IMPLEMENTATION:

Date: January 08

NEXT REVIEW:

Date: January 08

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All staff working with adult offenders or with the victims of serious sexual or violent crime should consider whether the use of a volunteer mentor would be of benefit to the service user. The volunteer mentor may be used to support work targeted at the offender's criminogenic needs, supporting positive lifestyle changes, raising their self-esteem and assisting their reintegration into the community.

By involving volunteer mentors from local communities the work of Cheshire Probation Area can be better understood and the public have greater confidence in the work of the service and its ability to protect them.

2. AIM

To ensure that staff understand their specific responsibilities for ensuring that the value of volunteer mentors is considered in maximising the service provided to offenders and the victims of serious crime.

3. OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the respective responsibilities of offender managers/supervisors, interventions' staff and victim contact officers in ensuring that volunteer mentors are considered in relation to the work undertaken with offenders and victims of crime.
2. To clarify how mentors may support the work of the service with offenders and victims.
3. To identify the referral process, support, supervision and training arrangements for volunteer mentors.

4. RESULTS & RISK

The risk issues associated with the Cheshire mentoring scheme sits primarily with offender management, accredited programmes and the management and supervision of the volunteer mentor themselves. Failure in effectively implementing policy and procedures in relation to the operation of the scheme may result in a less than satisfactory service to offenders and victims of serious crime, and at worst damage the credibility of the service.

The successful implementation of this policy will reduce the risk by supporting the delivery of the Area Annual Business Plan 5.2 and 5.3 and the wider Civil Renewal Agenda. In addition, the policy supports the delivery of:

- ✓ Accredited programmes
- ✓ Basic skills
- ✓ Offender management

The performance of the policy will be monitored using a mentor database to be developed by the Information Services Unit.

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Result (target/outcome)	Source of monitoring/Evaluation	Reporting arrangement
To have maintained the number of volunteer mentors at 50 (+/- 10%). Volunteer mentor profile to be representative in terms of age, gender and ethnicity.	Quarterly Monitoring of Mentor Database	Bi-annual report to ACO and teams.
To have provided volunteer mentor support in 20 victim contact cases and 20 WSW cases per annum.	Quarterly Monitoring of Mentor Database	Bi-annual report to ACO and teams.
To provide volunteer mentor basic skills support to 25 offenders attending accredited programmes per annum.	Quarterly Monitoring of Mentor Database	Bi-annual report to ACO and teams.
To provide one-to-one volunteer mentor support to 25 offenders per annum.	Quarterly Monitoring of Mentor Database	Bi-annual report to ACO and teams.
To support the delivery of basic skills within Unpaid Work.	Quarterly Monitoring of Mentor Database	Bi-annual report to ACO and teams.

5. DEPLOYMENT & STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

This policy and supporting statements have been shared with CLINKS and the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (North West) as part of the consultation process. The policy will be disseminated to offender management and interventions units via team briefings. Teams will receive a bi-annual report identifying the use of volunteer mentors within their team and the area.

6. ASSESSMENT & REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed no less than two years from implementation. An earlier review will be conducted if necessary due to legislative changes or relevant Probation Circulars.

The implementation of the policy and procedures will be assessed via bi-annual reviews against results. Earlier review of the policy will be considered should significant performance problems emerge.

7. SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

✓ Impact Assessment under the Race Relations Amendment Act

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- ✓ Guidance on using the Cheshire Mentoring Scheme
- ✓ Volunteer Mentor Training Strategy
- ✓ Standard Forms/Letters

Steve Collett

**Steve Collett
Chief Officer**

Date: January 2008

NOMS National Offender
Management Service
Working together to reduce re-offending