

Delivering Justice in a Changing World

Introduction

Crime harms all of us. Recent estimates put the likely costs of crime at around £3000 for each household each year¹, but the social and emotional costs of crime are incalculable.

For those individuals whose lives are directly affected – whether victims or offenders – and for their families the impact is severe, but the effect ripples out to the wider community in terms of fears about safety and the erosion of social capital. And of course economic recovery and growth depends on having a safe environment that can attract and retain businesses.

The Justice sector is tasked with preventing, detecting and punishing crime so that individuals and communities are - and feel - safer. The Fire and Rescue Service makes a pivotal contribution to community safety through dealing with emergency situations and has a growing role in prevention.

The sector's workforce is vital to public safety, social cohesion, economic recovery and growth, and their skills are the most important investment their employers will make.

The current economic situation will squeeze budgets across the sector, while public scrutiny will rightly maintain the pressure for high performance. How can the workforce deliver excellence through hard times?

Recent research by Skills for Justice sets out the issues facing the workforce in Justice and Community Safety. It reviews the state of the workforce, identifies major drivers of change, and uses a scenarios based approach to paint challenging pictures of what the future might look like, and how employers might respond to ensure that the sector has the skilled workforce it needs.

Composition of the Workforce

Our research shows that

- Employment in the justice sector has grown by over a third in the last 10 years
- Almost a third of the workforce will retire or leave the sector over the next 10 years
- The sector employs a far lower proportion of young people than the wider economy – about half
- There is a far higher proportion of people employed in the associate professional and technical group than in the wider economy – 53% as opposed to 15%
- Private and third sector organisations are playing an increasing part in delivering services.

Drivers of Future Skills Needs

The future for the workforce will be shaped by powerful external forces:

- **Policy and legislative changes** will continue to drive the sector, with a move to greater local accountability and significant developments such as the devolution of policing and justice to the Northern Ireland Assembly
- **Economic circumstances** will bite as the aftermath of the recession pinches budgets at the same time as triggering a possible increase in acquisitive crime
- **Social and demographic trends** will have an increasing impact as services strive to understand the needs and to reflect the diversity of the communities they serve
- **Environmental and technological changes** mean that services must find new ways of responding to new issues – ranging from flooding to cyber crime.

¹ Policy Exchange, Less Crime Lower Costs, May 2009



Skills for Success

We looked at three scenarios with our employers

- (i) *joined-up justice* – the dominant theme is a sector working smarter to improve outcomes and save money
- (ii) *essential justice* – many ambitions must be kept on hold to focus on working cheaper to sustain core services despite budget cuts
- (iii) *traditional justice* – a tougher “back to basics” justice agenda driven by Government policy.

Of course there are significant overlaps between these scenarios, and certain workforce issues stand out as crucial:

- The sector needs effective **management and leadership** at all levels, focussing on change management, performance assessment and risk response.
- More focus will be needed on **business and performance management skills** to enable better commissioning, procurement, and accountability.
- **Multi-agency working** skills will continue to lie at the heart of a joined up justice system focused on offenders, victims and witnesses.
- Employers will need to ensure that people are equipped with the **right skills at the right level** to deal with situations swiftly and accurately, and to raise levels of autonomy for staff lower down the command chain.
- Developing skills at the **associate professional level** – where the bulk of the workforce is found – will remain a central concern for the sector.

- **Greater specialist knowledge** needs to be promoted to work effectively with specific groups of people – e.g. those with mental health issues.
- Recruiting and retaining a **diverse workforce** will continue to be a priority.

We will continue to work with employers and Governments across the UK to help them understand the present and get ready for the future.

Further Reading

Recent reports we have published flesh out these issues in more detail. The reports include:

- **Employment and Skills within the Justice Sector - Workforce needs, skills priorities, and scenarios** (Skills for Justice 2010) - a series of reports focussing on the UK as well as England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- **Skills Priorities and Scenarios in the Justice Sector** (Skills for Justice 2009) - a research report commissioned from the Institute of Employment Studies which contributed to the wider research detailed in the Employment and Skills reports above. The report contains details of drivers of change, skills needs and scenarios specific to Justice sector strands.

The reports are accessible on our website at www.skillsforjustice.com/template01.asp?pageid=721

For printed copies please contact us.

For more information

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