No meltdown!

Napo Anti Cuts Campaign

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napo
The Trade Union and Professional Association for Family Court and Probation Staff

PROBATION UNDER STRESS

Successful regional MPs briefings

Napo members from the Midlands, North East, North West, South West Regions and Wales attended a regional briefing event at the House of Commons on 19th May.

The purpose was to explain to MPs the impact of the cuts, the affect on trainees and subsequent consequences for crime. By the end of the day, 25 MPs from all Parties had attended the sessions. They included a majority of MPs who do not normally come to Napo events. All were sympathetic to the plight of staff and the service.

MPs attending included Philip Dunne (Ludlow), Michael Fabricant (Lichfield), Rob Marris (Wolverhampton), Meg Munn (Sheffield Heeley), Ann Winterton (Congleton), George Howarth (Knowsley North and Sefton East), Andrew Mller (Ellesmere Port), Robert Key (Salisbury), Doug Naysmith (Bristol North West) and Dan Rogerson (North Cornwall).

All MPs agreed to write to Jack Straw to express concerns and to table parliamentary questions about the effect of cuts in their area, and most will sign an Early Day Motion on Probation resources.

A second event is now planned for London, Southern and North Thames regions, probably in June.

From the Frontline

No Compulsory Redundancies!

As we go to press we have just heard that Napo and Unison members in South Yorkshire Area have overwhelmingly voted for industrial action on the issue of compulsory redundancies.

We will know over the coming days whether action will be necessary and what and when it will be. Meanwhile the unions jointly will be holding an open meeting on the Probation cuts for the Yorkshire and Humberside Region in the Victoria Hall (Chapel Walk) Sheffield from 2.00pm – 3.30pm on Friday, 5th June. [For more information contact your local branch or Ranjit Singh rsingh@napo.org.uk].

Latest cuts information

Budget information has now come in from two more areas.

North Wales - The area has indicated that it needs to find savings of up to £1.9 million over the next three year period. Staff have been told that they are not likely to make redundancies this year but that the position will need to be reviewed in 2010/11 and 2011/12. The area is currently looking to lose up to 6 posts through early retirement and these will not be filled.

Dorset - The area says it is likely to be in deficit by £280,000 in the current financial year. It has not been recruiting externally since September last. It has indicated however that compulsory redundancies will be a last resort. Staff have been told however that over the three year period to 2011/12 somewhere in the region of £3 million savings will need to be found.

TPO jobs scandal

Returns from branches suggest that two-thirds of the TPOs due to qualify in September will not have permanent jobs, or even jobs at all. This would be a waste of talent and over £25 million of taxpayers' money. Napo is making urgent representation to the Secretary of State and through regional MPs to try and stop this catastrophe from occurring. Branches should keep Head Office aware of any changes in either the budgetary or TPO position.

Management of Change

Regular contact with politicians has also assisted the national negotiations on the Management of Change framework, with ministers explicitly stating their support for an agreement. This has been key to moving our somewhat recalcitrant national employers from a position of resistance to the union proposals to a point where we are very close to agreement.

This may not seem directly relevant to our campaign, given that the agreement relates to potential redundancy situations, but implementation of this policy will place far greater pressure on areas to justify any proposed cuts and ensure genuine consultation with unions.

All of this shows that the local and national campaigning and lobbying by Napo is making a positive difference. There is a very long way to go but we are clearly moving collectively in the right direction.

EDM 1521

Neil Gerrard, Chair of the Justice Unions Parliamentary Group, has tabled an Early Day Motion, which we hope will get considerable all Party support.

The wording is: "*That this House urges the Government to ensure that the Probation Service in England and Wales has sufficient resources to ensure that it can carry out its statutory duties in an effective and efficient manner*."

At the time of writing 29 MPs had already signed the motion. Members of Napo are urged to write to their MPs asking them to join the signature list. You can check who has signed and email your MP via the Napo website www.napo.org.uk

Model Letter

Dear

I would be grateful if you would consider signing EDM 1521, which calls on the government to properly resource the Probation Service. The service, as you probably know, is facing cuts of between 15% and 25% over the next three years, which will have a severe impact on service delivery and is likely to lead to an increase in criminal behaviour and a rise in crime.

I hope you feel able to sign this motion. I thank you in advance for your support.

FIGHT THE CUTS DEFEND PROBATION

Join the campaign to fight the cuts

Check if your MP has signed EDM 1521 and if not email them direct via the Napo website to ask for their support
www.napo.org.uk