

Dear Councillor/MP,

On Tuesday, a pre-SCG meeting was held by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (CPLRF) about the Ministry of Justice's prison release scheme that was announced last Friday.

The meeting was called by myself and Assistant Chief Constable Martin Brunning, strategic chair and vice chair of the CPLRF, to bring partners together to consider the impact of the scheme on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and many of the organisations that are part of the resilience forum.

As you will know from recent media coverage, from September the government will reduce the proportion of certain custodial sentences served in prison from 50% to 40%. Sentences for serious violent offences of four years or more, as well as sex offences and domestic abuse connected crimes will be excluded.

Plans to manage those released safely in the community will be drawn up with wraparound support for individuals in areas such as housing and mental health support.

You can read more about the plans here on the government website - [Lord Chancellor sets out immediate action to defuse ticking prison 'time-bomb' - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/lord-chancellor-sets-out-immediate-action-to-defuse-ticking-prison-time-bomb)

The first tranche of prisoners – those serving sentences under five years - will be released on 10 September. A second tranche – those serving over five years – will follow in October. There are no plans to extend beyond this point currently.

The Prison Service is now looking at who will be in scope for release as part of the scheme. It is estimated that 300 people serving time in prisons in the East of England could be released in tranche one. Not all of those will live in Cambridgeshire of course, but equally there could be people released from prisons outside of the East of England who will return to Cambridgeshire.

There was also discussion during the meeting about the impact this will have on local services, particularly local authorities who will likely need to find homes for people at short notice and support with substance misuse issues. There will also be extra demands on health services, particularly around mental health support, and of course the police.

A further meeting will be held once we have more information and data available so that the impacts can be better quantified and planned for.

In addition, a Multi-Agency Information Cell (MAIC) is being established to ensure there is common understanding and awareness amongst partner agencies. It was also agreed that information sharing with neighbouring LRFs will be encouraged, in view of the fact the

support required locally will be dictated by what is happening in other parts of the East of England.

In terms of communications, it was agreed that this is a national scheme led by the Ministry of Justice and therefore any questions from the media on the scheme itself should be directed nationally.

If there are questions locally around ability to manage extra demand for services, reassurance for communities, these would be questions answered by individual agencies and comms colleagues who are part of the Warn and Inform group on the CPLRF are fully briefed.

I hope this briefing was helpful and I will continue to keep you in the loop.

Kind regards

Matthew Gladstone

Strategic Chair of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum