

MINUTES SUBJECT TO THEIR  
ACCEPTANCE AS A CORRECT  
RECORD AT THE NEXT MEETING



GLOUCESTERSHIRE

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE PROBATION BOARD

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT PROBATION HEAD OFFICE, BEWICK HOUSE

Wednesday 2 July 2008

**Present:** Mr T FitzSimons, Mrs Y Ball, Mr R Burns, Mrs C Ellson, Mr M Blockley, Ms J Robinson, Mr S Pritchard, Mr M Howe, Mr G Limbrick (Board Secretary), Mr C Youngson

**Also in attendance:** Mrs D Bennett (Assistant Chief Officer), Mr J Bensted (Assistant Chief Officer), Mrs Lynne Schoen (HR Manager), Mrs Charlie Baker (Assistant Chief Officer), Mr John Bensted (Assistant Chief Officer), Mr Garry Holden (Assistant Chief Officer)

#### 75/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

HHJ Picton, Mrs S McGrath,

#### 76/08 INTRODUCTION

The Board offered their condolences to Mrs Sheila McGrath on her recent bereavement

Mr FitzSimons advised the Board that today's meeting will concentrate on the Community Payback Strategy. It was agreed that it is beneficial for the Board to be part of the process of writing policies and strategies.

#### 77/08 CHIEF OFFICER'S UPDATE

Mrs Ball updated the Board on local and national matters.

The Board were sent the June Communications Bulletin. Mrs Ball explained that there are two key pressing issues; 1) Performance and, 2) Trust Capability Assessment.

Performance at the end of year for 2007/08 was green. However, after scrutiny it was noted that GPA are one of 20 Areas that are green. Mrs Ball stated that GPA would be a 'long way down' if it was in a league table format. It was agreed that GPA needs to continue with a strong effort and focus on performance. Mrs Ball advised that Board that Mrs Baker will update on Quarter 1, 2008/09, later on in the meeting. It was noted that there were data quality issues and that the SMT are currently unsure if this is masking any other performance issues. Mrs Baker is working on an Outcomes Project Plan which is focussing on external results and staff motivation. The Plan will be delivered at the September Board meeting.

Mrs Ball informed the Board that she and Mr FitzSimons will be meeting with Stuart McPhillips in July regarding the Trust Capability Assessment. GPA should improve the way it presents itself. In the self assessment not enough thought and attention was given at the time as it was in the middle of the OMI. A discussion ensued and it was agreed that at the meeting with Mr McPhillips, Mrs Ball and Mr FitzSimons would request specific resources from the centre, offer thanks for the help and move on. Mr Mike Howe commented that it was important that GPA control the areas in which Stuart McPhillips will be offering help and Mrs Ball advised that they will be looking for help in the areas of finance, budget devolution and possibly stakeholder surveys.

Mr FitzSimons summarised by stating that GPA must have a clear specification of the outcomes of any interventions. It must be monitored by the Board and not just the PIU. Mr FitzSimons also said that:

- We need to be more conscious of what GPA does, record it and GPA should not undervalue itself.
- We should invest the resources in reputational management.

The monitoring of the assessment will be featured quarterly on Board agenda. **Action: Mrs Riches-Jones**

Mrs Ball informed the Board that the Budget Devolution Plan will be ready for the September Board.

Regarding the National Plan, local results are good and GPA is heading in the right direction to attract the money next year.

The 2007/08 Annual Report will be sent to the Board when finalised.

Mrs Ball asked members for any initial ideas for the Board away day on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2008 to be sent to her or Mr FitzSimons.

## **78/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations.

## **SECTION A STANDING ITEMS**

### **79/08 MINUTES**

#### **(i) Minutes of the Meeting Held on 21 May 2008**

There were some amendments under item 55/08, End of Year Financial report. Mr Pritchard was not present at the closed session.

After amendments, the Minutes were accepted as accurate and were signed by the Chair.

#### **(ii) Actions arising from the previous Minutes**

51/08 - Mrs Ball will send an email to all staff advising of the links (COMPLETED) and Board members were requested to contact team managers within the next 2-3 weeks.

## **SECTION B PERFORMANCE**

### **80/08 i) Operational Performance**

Mrs Charlie Baker reported on Performance.

#### **2007/08**

Mrs Baker has received the final IPPF Publication of Quarter 4 2007/08. GPA was green as predicted. However, GPA was not green on Interventions national standards. Work is focusing on bringing the target up. Intervention Managers are to take lead on specific Interventions issues. Performance has been better in April and May but is not consistently good. A plan is in place to improve.

#### **2008/09**

Overall performance so far is disappointing. This is, in part, due to the direct extraction of data by NOMS centre and some inadequate attention to the detail of data quality on GPA's part. A lot of work has gone into improving this which should make GPA considerably 'greener'. However, in part it is due to slippage in performance in relation to targets not impacted by the new reporting tool, e.g. timeliness of PSRs on remands in custody, compliance etc. Mrs Baker is in discussion with the centre regarding clarification of what exactly is being measured, as it is not currently known. Mrs Baker has also called an emergency meeting with Operational staff regarding data quality and what affect this has on targets. Due to national issues with the new way of extracting data, the first quarter figures will move to management information status only.

The Board discussed if a national debate regarding the amount of targets is required. Mr Howe will discuss with his Probation Association colleagues, as will Mrs Ball with her Chief Officer Association colleagues. Mr Burns also suggested writing to ROM.

Mrs Baker reassured the Board that the OMI action plan ties in with data quality and management.

It was resolved:

- to pay more attention to 'getting it right first time'
- To make the Chief Officer Association, Probation Association and the ROM aware of concerns.

### **ii) HR Report**

Mrs Lynne Schoen reported on HR issues.

Regarding sickness absence, the latest figures (including June) have fallen but not far enough. Figures for the year to date is 18.3 days per FTE, it should be 9. Mrs Cryer is currently revising the Sickness Absence Policy, it will be going to the JNCC on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

There are currently 6 long term sickness absences. Mrs Schoen is hopeful that 5 will return in July. There were concerns regarding 1 County office as a significant population of staff were off sick due to a viral infection. Mr Chris Westhead has checked that the air conditioning service unit is not water based, filters are ok so the virus has not spread through the air conditioning. Mr Westhead will be discussing hygiene issues, notices in toilets, antibacterial hand wash etc to help alleviate the problem.

HR are using a more robust process in dealing with sickness absence including home visits, case conferences and line managers reinforcing the sickness management procedures.

iii) **Financial Report**

Mrs Darrill Bennett presented the financial report

The Final Accounts for 2007/08 and Statement of Accounts has gone to the Audit Commission and was approved by the Board on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2008. Mrs Bennett has received the unqualified opinion of the external auditors. There were some minor changes to the statement and the accounts and statement were signed and sent to NPD by the deadline.

The year end report on the Pegasus Finance System is fully completed, as is the month end for April and May, in spite of sickness within the team. The budgets are not yet on Pegasus, tests have taken place to check that the data has uploaded ok. The monitoring report will go to the Audit Committee in July.

The major expenditure streams and the relationship to the budget have been monitored and there is no suggestion of significant variances.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be **NOTED**

**SECTION C ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

**81/08 ADOPTION OF NNC GUIDANCE ON STATUTORY ADOPTION, PATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE AND PAY**

The guidance has been through the Employers Side and they were satisfied that GPA have not deviated from the guidance or the statutory legislation.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the guidance be **APPROVED**

## 82/08 COMMUNITY PAYBACK STRATEGY

The Strategy was prepared by Mrs Charlie Baker.

The Board was asked how it sees Unpaid Work as part of the Probation Service, i.e.:

- 1) Visibility
- 2) How can we link better to LAA's
- 3) How do we monitor it

After a discussion it was agreed that public and sentencer perception is good as it tangible and easy to understand. To summarise Unpaid Work :

- engages with the community
- is obvious punishment
- cost effective
- reduces reoffending

It was asked what does the Board want to prioritise from it?

- Maintain the total number and reducing the cost per person
- Credibility of UPW with sentencers
- Enhance visibility

Further discussion ensued regarding the type of projects. It was discussed that the key area in credibility is having CP projects urban centre based, an obvious benefit to the community. GPA need to be more selective about the nature of the project, make it more cost effective for giving back to community and work closer with LAA's. It was noted that the Board felt that projects need to be visibly 'badged'. Mrs Baker will investigate.

It was discussed that there is not a forum where the community can express themselves and have a direct influence on what projects should be undertaken. Mrs Baker to look into linking with Inspector of Neighbourhood Areas and neighbourhood wardens, through the press, radio programmes and parish councils.

Mr Fitzsimons summarised by saying that the priorities should be:

- The relevance to the community, part of process is to ensure that there is some method that can make sure it is relevant
- A form of promotion to the community of the Probation Service
- Activities that would promote to the case of the beneficiaries.
- Promote to sentencers all the virtues of UPW
- To ensure that we measure performance aspects

It was asked that there is a quarterly review of CP presented to the Board against the mandate agreed, via the CP Link, Mr Sid Pritchard. **Action: Mr Pritchard**

## **SECTION D ITEMS TO NOTE**

### **83/08 AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**(i) Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting Held on 20 June 2008**

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the minutes be **NOTED**

### **84/08 BUSINESS PLAN AND RISK REGISTER 08/09 QUARTER ONE REVIEW**

A Report was delivered by Mrs Yvette Ball

It was discussed that the Board and ACO risk registers are different templates. Mrs Ball explained to the Board that the registers template is a directive from the centre via a Probation Circular. Mrs Ball will speak to the auditors regarding the acceptability of amending the ACO template. **Action: Mrs Ball.**

There are several risks at 25 and are still rising. Mrs Ball explained that these risks are in terms of scored targets and lack of clarity from the centre. Mrs Baker is aware and working on it.

The Business Plan quarterly review will focus on outcomes. The Project Plan will be brought to the Board in September.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be **NOTED**

### **85/08 INTERVENTIONS RISK LOG**

A Report was delivered by Mr Garry Holden

Mr Mike Howe asked Mr Holden if there were any significant concerns about any risks which Mr Holden said there were not.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be **NOTED**

**86/08 OFFENDER MANAGEMENT RISK LOG**

A Report was delivered by Mr John Bensted

Risk 3. The contract with HMP Gloucester has still not been signed. The Regional Prison manager is to be approached as an 'honest broker' to get the contract signed off. The HMP Gloucester Governor wants to TUPE staff over and the chances of doing that this financial year is are low. Mrs Ball will be raising the issue with the ROM.

The Board requested a quarterly review on the national plan.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be **NOTED**

**87/08 PROBATION KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE**

A Report was delivered by Mrs Yvette Ball

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the statement be **ADOPTED**

**Action: Mrs Riches-Jones**

**88/08 PC03/2008 CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER AND CORPORATE HOMICIDE ACT 2007**

A Report was prepared by Mr Graham Limbrick.

Mr Limbrick apprised members of their responsibility regarding the Act. The Act only applies to employees and not offenders.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the Act be **NOTED**

**SECTION E – EXEMPT ITEMS**

**89/08**

In accordance with paragraph 3(a) of the National Scheme for Meetings in Private approved by the Secretary of State it was **RESOLVED THAT** the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items because of the confidential nature of the business considered.

**90/08 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2008**

These were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

**91/08 SFO QUARTER ONE REVIEW**

A Report was delivered by Mrs Charlie Baker

**RESOLVED**

**92/08 THAT the report be NOTED  
COMPLAINTS END OF YEAR (2007/08) REVIEW AND QUARTER ONE (2008/09)  
REVIEW**

A Report was delivered by Mrs Yvette Ball

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report be NOTED**

**93/08 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

See exempt.

**94/08 FUTURE MEETING DATES**

10 September 2008

5 November 2008

21 January 2009

The meeting closed at 13.00

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CHAIRMAN