

GLOUCESTERSHIRE PROBATION BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT PROBATION HEAD OFFICE, BEWICK HOUSE

Wednesday 5th July 2006

Present: Sir William Wratten (Chairman), Mrs Y Ball (Chief Officer), Mr G, Limbrick (Secretary to the Board), Mr P Stott (Financial Advisor), Mr D Cook, Mr D Gooch, Mr M Howe, Ms H Middleton and Mr P Rowe, Rev A. Davies, Ms. J. Robinson, Mrs. Christine Ellson, Mrs E Abderrahim, Mrs. Catherine Jago, Mrs. Mary Gardner

Also in Attendance: Mr. Tim Fogarty (Information Manager), Mrs. Julie Johnson (HR Manager), Mr. Garry Holden (ACO – Interventions), Mrs. Julia Oulton (ACO – Offender Management), Mr. Roy Bedford (Audit Commission)
Mrs S. Purves (Board Administrator)

57/06 Apologies for Absence: Mr. C Marshall

58/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

SECTION A – Standing items

59/06 MINUTES

1) There were 3 changes to the minutes of the meeting held on 17th May 2006. They were accepted as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

2) Actions:

Minute Items nos.:-

45/06 - Actioned

47/06 - outstanding to be carried forward to next meeting

50/06(i), (ii) - All have been actioned

52/06 - Discharged. Seminar on Stress Management will be held in CMG 7th July 2006.

Due to request for early departure, Item 69/06 under Section B – items for decision was moved before the Chairman's Report.

SECTION B – Items for Decision

69/06 Budget 06/07

The District Auditor's Annual Governance Report was discussed. The Board was informed that there are no issues on GPA's accounts, the audit has been completed and GPA was given a clean bill of health.

Mr. Peter Stott reported that the accounts were due to be submitted to the NPD, after Board approval and signing off by the auditor, by 21st July 2006.

The written statements included a report which gives details of Board members remuneration and pension benefits. An amendment would be necessary as permission was being sought from former Board members to include their details. Mr. Stott outlined the Operating Cost Statement and Balance Sheet and explained the increase and reduction in certain areas to the Board.

The cash-flow statement showed no overall movement in cash balances held between 31/03/05 and 31/03/06 due to efficient cash management.

Virement No 6 - on the application of the Finance Manager, the Audit Committee recommended to the Board for approval a sum of £119k from Staff Salaries to Contingencies.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve

The Final Accounts

- a) Final Statement of Accounts 2005/06
- b) Revenue Budget Outturn 2005/06
- c) Virement recommendation

60/06 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman informed the Board that after 6 months of running the Performance Panel at 6-weeks interval, the format is still not satisfactory for various reasons. The future plan will be to hold a one day meeting which is more focused and direct. The Chairman outlined where we see our difficulties:-

- Capacity
- Internal communication, that is to say, practitioners and admin staff do not appear to be passing on to each other their perceptions of problems and solutions in the context of performance. In short, they are not sharing information in a structured manner.
- Understanding what requirements are

The Chairman mentioned meetings that he will be attending:-

- Performance Management Meeting
- Team visits to GPA offices is ongoing
- 14th July – Roger Hill visit
- 18th July - SLA Review with Kevin Lockyer
- 24th July Dorset, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire Chairs & Chiefs meeting
- 30th August – ROM visit – The Chairman reminded the Board members to join in for tea with Kevin Lockyer at 3:00pm.

61/06 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

The Chief Officer informed the Board that there is now a full set of Senior Managers although an ACO is still on phased return until August. Two Board members who recently attended the PBA conference gave feedback on the role of PBA and future of NPS which are both unclear. Mrs. Ball informed the Board of the Dorset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Alliance and the possible amalgamation at sometime, currently discussing funding work where the three areas can begin to align. There was no response from NPD about the position for Ryecroft on taking paedophiles. Mrs. Ball informed the Board of the plans for Roger Hill's visit on the 14th July which includes a visit to Ryecroft, Q&A with staff and lunch with SMT. The Chairman invited Board members to join in the lunch.

The Chief Officer attended the Clinks conference on 29th June. Clinks are the coordinating body of the voluntary sector.

Mrs Ball also reported on the following:-

- Basic Skills provision has been taken over by OLASS and now have Tribal funding
- GRS has been disbanded and integrated into the Community Integration Service
- Adults for Education (A4E) – we have a private contract to allow offenders to work in prison then into the community for 4 weeks.

There was a discussion about the tendering process for A4E.

The function of the COMPACT Steering Group was explained.

62/06 Performance

i) NPS Annual Performance Information Report 20

There was a discussion from various Board members on performance. Our weakness is that we are no. 42 in the league table. The challenge is in turning round the culture in GPA.

ii) GPA Performance Report to May 2006

Mr. Fogarty presented the Performance Report on behalf of ACO – Performance. The report covers the May Final Report and shows figures from the end of month NPD returns. Mr. Fogarty explained that there is a disparity between what the reporting tools capture/extract out of CRAMS and what the managers have recorded in local paper systems. The ACO has picked up process and profiling issues that mean we still appear to be undercounting some successful completions. However work is in hand to address this.

Mr. Fogarty explained the red marks in the May report that if the appropriate tasks (in CRAMS and IAPS) were done in time some of the May performance targets might be amber, but that ongoing progress should mean the interim June report showing more amber and green results.

The Board expressed concern that resourcing is not being correctly presented as a reason for performance shortfall. Mrs. Ball explained that staff are clear that our budget is set and no further resources are available.

iii) Minutes of Performance Management Panel Meeting

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 30th June be noted.

63/06 SLA Update

The Chairman and Chief Officer will meet with Mr. Lockyer on 18th July. Mr. Blomley will be visiting GPA on 10th July to sit in MAPPA and Unpaid work meetings.

64/06 Audit Committee

Mr. Rowe said that the Financial Review & Remuneration Report and Financial Statement have been checked by the auditors and request the Board to approve.

55/06 Annual review of Anti-fraud and corruption policy – Mr. Rowe recommended that the policy be approved as it stood. The Board Secretary was asked to indicate suggested wording of one paragraph. Mr. Limbrick and Mr. Stott agreed to recommend wording.

56/06 Final Report - Budgetary Control System 2005/06. The Budgetary control system is well controlled throughout. Mr. Rowe thanked the effort of Mr. Stott and Mrs. Maloney.

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2006 be noted.

65/06 Employers Side Meeting/JNCC

Due to lack of attendance and agenda items, recent meetings were cancelled. Mr Limbrick commented that the situation is the same in Avon & Somerset Probation office. The next meeting will be held on 11th July 2006.

47/06 Members Feedback

The Board members reported their activity to the Board:-

- Mrs. Jago attended the Performance Panel and Directing Diversity meetings.
- Mrs. Robinson made contact with her link team and found it very encouraging.

- Mrs. Abderrahim attended the Tewkesbury CDRP and the Gloucestershire Compact. Copy of report provided.
- Mr. Davies attended the Forest CDRP and also attended the PBA conference 29th June on behalf of the Chairman.
- Mrs. Middleton sat in a disciplinary hearing and grievance procedure meeting, concern was expressed about resources of Probation and the Chief Officer's workload.
- Mr. Howe attended the Performance Panel meeting and investigation into a grievance.
- Mrs. Ellson attended the Audit Committee as a substitute and spent half a day with the Community Payback Manager. Mrs. Ellson visited one of the projects.
- Mr. Gooch attended the Stroud CDRP

Sir William Wratten asked the Board members to feedback to the Chief Officer on team visits.

71/06 Human Resources Information Report

Mrs Johnson, new HR Manager, was introduced to the Board. Mrs Johnson explained the quarterly HR report figures. Questions were raised about the level of sickness and if we monitor patterns of absence. The sickness absence target for 2006/7 is 9 days per FTE whereas last year the GPA had sickness absence of over 14days. Mrs Johnson agreed to report on progress to target which is not on current report. Causes and frequency of sickness is being monitored more closely to identify trends and take necessary action in order to reduce sickness levels.

Mrs Johnson felt that a nil return for disability wasn't correct and HR would take appropriate action to rectify this. As the Public sector have a duty to promote Disability Equality using the Statutory Code of Practice from December 2006 it is important to have the correct information. A Board member agreed to progress this to the Directing Diversity Group and for Mrs Johnson to attend future Board meetings.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be noted and proposals approved.

70/06 Business Plan 2006/07 – Quarterly Review and Risk Register

To be tabled for September Board meeting. Mrs. Ball presented the items in the Risk Register. A Board member noted that GPA has a high proportion of risks which is a big load for an organisation to bear. Another Board member responded that other areas have the same pressures.

RESOLVED

THAT the Risk Register be noted.

SECTION C – Items to note

72/06 GPA Annual Report 2005/06

Mrs. Ellson pointed out that she wishes to be addressed as “Mrs” – noted.

73/06 Prolific and Priority Offender (PPOs)

Mr. Holden – ACO Interventions presented an update on PPOs. There are 3 separate teams which was established to work with PPOs. The teams cover the 6 CDRP's in Gloucestershire namely Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Gloucester, Forest of Dean, Stroud and Cotswolds. Each team is made up of staff from the Police, Probation and Gloucestershire Drugs and Alcohol Service (GDAS). How it works is that each team has a caseload of 30 PPO's comprising of the 15 most prolific offenders from each CDRP area.

The PPO scheme works on 3 strands – prevent and deter, catch and convict and lastly rehabilitate and resettle. The last strand is the main focus of probation and examples of significant results were presented to the Board.

Mr. Holden explained the impact on crime with the new scheme, there was a 30% decrease in crime compared to the last 17 months prior to the implementation of the scheme. Although Mr. Holden is satisfied with current work, more work can be done i.e. appropriate accommodation for PPO's. Mr. Holden also mentioned that we should thank CDRP for funding the scheme.

RESOLVED

THAT the Prolific and other Priority Offender Report be noted.

74/06 Public Protection Report Update

Mrs. Oulton – ACO Offender Management informed the Board that the MAPPA Annual Report will come out in October. Mrs. Oulton presented statistical information for the period 1st April 2004 – 31st March 2005. Current figures are being collated and will be included in the October Annual Report. Mrs. Oulton provided an update on the two HMIP Reports – Hanson & White and Anthony Rice. NPD have published new guidance following recommendations from HMIP. Based on this guidance, all Probation Areas have produced action plans to implement. GPA have submitted our Action Plan and are integrating these actions into performance improvement plans.

Boards are required to receive regular reports on progress to implement this action plan. A report will be prepared following the audit in July.

RESOLVED

THAT the Public Protection Report be noted.

75/06 Directing Diversity Group (DDG)

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes of the DDG meeting on 23rd June 2006 be noted for information only.

SECTION D – Exempt Items

See Separate Section

78/06 Any Other Business

The Chairman requested the Board members to note the following dates:
14th July 2006 – Mr. Roger Hill, Director of Probation visit to GPA
30th August 2006 – Mr. Kevin Lockyer, ROM visit to GPA

79/06 Date of Next Meeting – The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday 6th September 2006 at 9.45a.m. in the Boardroom.

The Meeting closed at 13:00

Chairman

SECTION D – Exempt Items

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

- In accordance with paragraph 3a 3g and 3i 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.

76/06 Complaints Monitoring Annual Report 2005/06

A report was circulated, but needed revision and was to be re-issued. **Action:**
Revised papers to be circulated.

77/06 Serious Further Offences Annual Report 2005/06

The Chief Officer reported on this and her report was noted.

A Board member commented that the papers should have been printed in pink paper.
Noted. **Action: SP**