

28/07



GLOUCESTERSHIRE

GLOUCESTERSHIRE PROBATION BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT PROBATION HEAD OFFICE, BEWICK HOUSE

Wednesday 10 January 2007

Present: Sir William Wratten (Chair), Mrs Y Ball (Chief Officer) Mr D Cook, Mr P Rowe, Mr M Howe, Ms J Robinson, Mr D Gooch, Mrs E Abderrahim, Rev A Davies, Mr C Marshall, Ms H Middleton, Mrs C Jago

Also in attendance: Mr G Limbrick (Board Secretary) Mr P Stott (Board Treasurer), Mrs C Baker, (Assistant Chief Officer), Julie Johnson (Human Resources Manager), Mr G Holden (Assistant Chief Officer)

01/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs C Ellson, Mrs M Gardner

02/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

SECTION A STANDING ITEMS

03/07 MINUTES

(i) Minutes of the Meeting Held on 22 November 2006

Subject to the following amendments these were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Minute 130/06 Disagreement as to if the Agreement was approved. Mrs Ball to take concerns to Regional Forum, with comments to go to Mr Limbrick. Mr Gooch has concerns with the paper as it may cause issues regarding Contestability. A document is needed which allows GPA to work with and compete with other Boards. Sir William proposed that member email comments or proposed amendments to himself for either a full board or a sub-committee to agree and approve. Mrs Abderrahim proposed that the Contestability Group be that sub-committee and it was approved by the Board.

(ii) Actions arising from the previous Minutes

129/06 – Mrs Abderrahim advised Board that the Disability Equality Scheme has had positive feedback and has scored 294/400. The deadline for any amendments is 19.01.07 though this may be extended by NPD. The Board

thanked Mrs Abderrahim for her hard work.

04/07 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Sir William reported on a meeting of the Performance Management Panel that had taken place on the 8th January 2007. It was decided that Catherine Jago will remain on the Performance Panel after 31st March 07.

It was advised that a new Chair has been appointed, Mr Tony FitzSimons, that Board member interviews were due to start shortly and Mr FitzSimons will chair the panel. Sir William also advised that he will be inviting Mr FitzSimons to the Board meeting in March and to the next Audit Committee meeting.

Sir William discussed that the final Board meeting will be in March and that he wishes to give thanks to GPA staff via a Buffet lunch with as many staff as possible to attend. Lunch to be funded internally. It will also be an opportunity to celebrate the Probation Centenary.

05/07 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

Mrs Yvette Ball, Chief Officer, reported to the Board on the following items:

NPD-NOM Event – There will be no extra monies to Probation Areas. Funds are needed for Prison populations and the building of new prisons. Probation is waiting the final grant allocation which will be approved in March. ROM has asked area to outline a budget for 07/08.

It was discussed that a new regime for Performance (QSR) will be introduced. It will include sickness, race and ethnic minorities, diversity, partnerships and efficiency.

WMT – The SW Region is assessing whether the national WMT, yet to be fully implemented, can be used for regional benchmarking.

Stress Management Tool - Mrs Cryer (Assistant Chief Officer- Human Resources) is currently contributing to the National HR Strategic Group with Richard Cullen looking at stress within National Probation Service. Mrs Cryer is working on an Area agreement.

ROM-SLA's – It was advised that both current Chair and new Chairs will need to sign the Service level Agreements. It was advised that it need to be clear what the ROM will accept regarding the 10% out of service expenditure on Voluntary, Community and Private Sector (VCPS) provision. UPW are currently looking into outsourcing.

Trusts – It is still very unclear regarding the position of Chief Officers within a Trust. The criteria of Trusts need to be announced for clarity. Small Areas need to show viability.

SMT – It was announced that with the increase of workload over the past 6 years, it is essential to have four Assistant Chief Officer Posts. Extra workload includes MAPP, ROM-SLA's, Diversity, SFO's, 10% VCPS contract delivery.

Peter Blomley – It was advised that Kevin Lockyer had confirmed that he will not end Peter Blomley's secondment until 03/08.

Budgetary Savings – It was advised that savings cannot be made via the Estate. Rob Evans has advised Mrs Cryer that cost of closing Head office alone would cost ¼ million.

Roger Hill has announced that the National Probation Directorate will be changed at the end of this month and will be subsumed into NOMS will come into existence. The Prison service, however, appears less affected.

Inside Justice Week – Mrs Ball thanked all Board Members and staff involved in Inside Justice Week.

06/07 PERFORMANCE

Mrs Charlie Baker, Assistant Chief Officer, tabled latest draft figures for December. She advised that GPA is currently 7th in the league table and that this quarter was weaker than the last.

She drew attention to the new DRR service which will be implemented in February 07. It will bring treatment into a Probation setting and will allow for more starts and therefore more completions. The improvements should show quickly and therefore GPA will be able to hit target.

Court Reports need improvement. The process in one team was not robust enough which caused a dip, now the new process is in place, an improvement should be shown.

Compliance. Though GPA is fair in National comparison our performance is stagnant. There is ongoing work with managers to improve. Gary Mead, OMM for SAC showed initiative which is apparent in his teams performance and was asked to discuss his ways of working with his colleagues at Operational Managers.

Sickness is still below target. Mrs Baker is to work with HR to improve efficiency and process within HR and with managers. It has been decided that HR will provide monthly sickness figures to managers to address with staff. There are currently 11 people on long term sick. Mrs Ball has emailed NPD to advise of this. Human Resources are concentrating on repetitive short term sickness. Mr Cook commented that monthly sickness reports may be detrimental to staff morale and needs to be sensitively dealt with. Mrs Baker acknowledged this and will bring the issue to the attention of Operational Managers.

UPW is on target.

Enforcement is on target.

Risk Assessments on target.

Race and Ethnic Data on target.

Programmes and ETE on target. ETE employment starts have already reached annual target.

Victim Contact has increased to 82% but is lower than was expected. There

have been problems with continuity with the Police. A meeting between Police and Probation has taken place to ensure continuity and that our target is also improved with them. This has shown some improvement.

The LCJB targets, relating to the speed of breaching, had been good monthly, however year to date is below target.

RESOLVED

that the report be **NOTED**

07/07 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

Mrs Charlie Baker reported that the next SLA visit and review is due at the end of the month. All reports to the ROM team have been provided on time to date

RESOLVED

that the paper be **NOTED**

08/07 AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

Audit Committee Minutes – 03 January 200

Minutes not prepared and therefore unable to be approved

Mr Peter Stott discussed 06/07 budget and advised Board the deficit was not as much as originally thought. As some Jobs were not originally matched in the Job Evaluation, they were rematched to a lower level. The cost of the Job Evaluation was £427k rather than the expected £¼ million.

07/08

Even with savings, the Pay award and Job Evaluation has meant a deficit will be carried over to next year's budget. Fixed term contracts could be ended but GPA would not wish to do this. The risk of cutting staff to save money could affect performance. It was also noted that GPA may not receive funding for increased pension contributions in 07/08.

Mr Peter Rowe reported that the change in the County Council's financial systems will have major implications for GPA. There was some discussion if GPA should join with other South West Regions and use an in house system like Devon and Cornwall, a regional system or to stay with the County Council and the new system. Some concern was raised as it is believed that GPA would have to make decision to either stay with County Council by October 2007. Board members were asked to be conscious of problems and that it would be discussed at next meeting when more information will be available. Peter Stott is to discuss with Bob Potter for clarification.

Sir William asked Mrs Ball to ensure that Bob Potter was invited to the next Audit Committee.

Action - Mrs Ball

RESOLVED

that the report be **NOTED**

09/07 JNCC

Minutes from 21st November 2006 noted and approved.

10/07 ESTATES COMMITTEE

No meeting was held in October 2006 and next meeting due on 30th January 07. It was mentioned that there is a proposal of rent increases in 08/09.

MEMBERS FEEDBACK

Ms Jude Robinson - Advised that Inside Justice Week received positive feedback and the day went well. Ms Robinson did suggest more preparation for next year.

Rev. Alan Davies - Rev Davies has attended a Community Payback Supervisor meeting and a Coleford team meeting which were both positive.

Mrs Catherine Jago – Mrs Jago has attended 2 disciplinary hearings, Sentencers liaison meeting and a Performance Panel meeting. It was noted that Mrs Jago will remain a seconded member of the Performance Panel.

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DECISION

11/07 DRR UPDATE

At the last Board meeting the under performance of DRR's was discussed (134/06). Negotiations at that time had not yet been conducted for a new assessment and delivery of services. The Drug Action Team and GPA have devised a new system which will be implemented 15.02.07. With the new system GPA report writers will assess offenders for DRR's during the preparation of court reports; this was previously done by Countywide Specialist Substance Misuse Services (CSSMS). The new system will also allow treatment to take place in a Probation setting rather than at one location.

Mrs Jago commented that this was good news for sentencers.

RESOLVED

that the paper be **NOTED**

12/07 PC33 SUB CONTRACTING PLANS REPORT

Please see exempt minutes

13/07 PC15 PROGRESS REPORT

Following the Hanson and White Report, probation areas were required to implement identified actions to ensure practice was in line with recommendations given in the report.

GPA has been audited twice and all actions have been implemented with the exception of:

The Risk register in OASys not routinely checked

ACTION: A monitoring system has now been introduced by the Data Quality Officer.

Breach Reports were not routinely carried out following a full OASYS assessment.
ACTION: Managers have been informed and have instructed staff accordingly. A new monitoring system will be devised with the middle managers following the appointment of a new ACO-Offender manager and consultation with Regional Manager/

RESOLVED

14/07 that the paper be **NOTED**

SLA PLANNING FOR 07/08

SLA meeting on 8th February 2007. A commissioning plan is being devised by the ROM in relation to SLA's for 2007/08. The targets for the SLA's are likely to be similar to that of 2006/07 with a greater emphasis on public protection and service delivery partnerships.

RESOLVED

that the paper be **NOTED**

SECTION C – ITEMS TO NOTE

15/07 BUSINESS PLAN 2006/07 3rd QUARTER REVIEW

The review of the Business Plan was tabled and there were no further additions.

Mr Howe queried the progress on accommodation for offenders. Mrs Ball added that progress has been made and work has been done on the admissions to Approved premises. Mrs Ball stated that it is still difficult due to the media attention with approved premises.

Mr Howe also asked about employment starts. Mrs Ball advised that the ETE team have been successful with employment starts.

Mrs Abderrahim noted that the ETE team have worked exceptionally hard with the absence of Erik Wilkinson, the Board acknowledges the good work of the ETE team.

RESOLVED

THAT the paper be noted

16/07 RISK REGISTER REVIEW

Carried forward to next meeting 14.03.07

17/07 COMPLAINTS REPORT

It was reported that there seems to be a much greater increase in complaints. Where a complaint is raised about an officer's practice, the line manager is being alerted and expected to address it.

RESOLVED

THAT the paper be noted

18/07 PBA REPORT ON COALITION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMENT

Report delivered by Mr Garry Holden.

The coalition on Social and Criminal Justice published, "Neighbourhood by Neighbourhood: local action to reduce re-offending". The report highlighted the need to embed offender management in local area agreements, local partnerships and for Probation to be locally accountable to build public trust and confidence. GPA is engaged in the development of the LAA. Once the LAA is developed and agreed Mr Holden will meet with the leads which will provide an opportunity to identify what GPA is providing and what is required to meet the Gloucestershire LAA requirements.

RESOLVED

THAT the paper be noted

19/07 BOARD MEMBER REPRESENTATION ON A RANGE OF BODIES AND COMMITTEES

Sir William requested that the Board members advise on which bodies and committees they sit for the new Chair.

20/07 HR UPDATE

Oral report delivered by Mrs Julie Johnson

The Board was advised that a more simple process for HR and Managers is being devised regarding sickness. Mrs Johnson is working with Charlie Baker and Sally Herniman. This in turn will provide a more efficient and streamlined way of dealing with sickness.

Mrs Johnson advised that a new provider of Occupational Health is being looked into by Naomi Cryer.

Long term sickness cases are being addressed. Regular short term sickness is also being concentrated on. HR is to send monthly reports to Managers of team's sickness.

Grievances – 3 grievances have been resolved. There is one appeal outstanding which is to take place in February 07.

Mrs Abderrahim commented that there seems to be an increase in grievances. Board noted that this may be due to a shift in culture of the organisation.

RESOLVED

that the report be **NOTED**

DIRECTING DIVERSITY GROUP

Previous minutes of meeting held on 6th December 2006

21/07 RESOLVED

THAT the paper be noted

22/07 **SECTION D – EXEMPT ITEMS**

In accordance with paragraph 3(a) and 3 (i) respectively 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.

EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2006

These were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

23/07 **SERIOUS FURTHER OFFENCES**

Report delivered by Charlie Baker

RESOLVED

THAT the paper be noted

24/07 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

25/07 **DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

14 March 2007
16 May 2007
18 July 2007
05 September 2007
28 November 2007

The meeting closed at 12.55pm.

.....
CHAIRMAN