



GLOUCESTERSHIRE

GLOUCESTERSHIRE PROBATION BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT PROBATION HEAD OFFICE, BEWICK HOUSE

Wednesday 11th January 2006

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

Also in Attendance: Mrs N Cryer (ACO), Mr G Holden (ACO), Mrs J Oulton (ACO), Mr G Limbrick (Secretary to the Board) and Mr C Westhead (Board Administrator)

Apologies for Absence: Mr P Stott (Financial Advisor)

01/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

02/06 MINUTES

(i) **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 30th November 2005**

The following amendments were made to the minutes:

89/05 (vi) – The final line to this paragraph was amended to read 'He had also recently attended an Employers Side meeting where it became apparent that a substantial workload would fall on Mrs Cryer relating to Job Evaluation'

91/05 The heading was amended to read 'GPA Directing Diversity Group'

Subject to these amendments the minutes were accepted as a true record at the meeting

(ii) **Actions Arising**

Minute 83/05 (ii) – The Chairman reported that the presentation slides had been forwarded to Members

Minute 83/05 (vi) – The Chairman reported that he had sent an email to the SMT regarding the Performance Panel meeting

Minute 84/05 (ii) –The Secretary reported that the staff involved would not be subject to the TUPE arrangements. A new form of contract will be issued by Tribal for the Area to peruse

Minute 88/05 – Mrs Oulton reported that this was an ongoing action around the timeliness of the Risk Management plans and the Managers involved had agreed that the RM plans would be accepted as soon as the eOASYS assessments had been done. This would ensure that the target was met 100% in future.

Minute 93/05 (i) – Mr Limbrick reported that as Mr Hamblyn had not attended a Board Meeting for over 6 months the Board was entitled to report this to the

Secretary of State and it was up to him to decide what action to take. The Chairman agreed to write to the Secretary of State regarding this.

ACTION: Chairman

The Chairman added that Christine Ellson had been recommended to fill the current Board Member vacancy but confirmation of her appointment was awaited from the NPD

03/06 Chairman's Report

- (i) The Chairman reported that he had attended a meeting of the PBA Board on 6 December 2005 and one of the main topics of discussion was the reaction to the 'Restructuring Probation' document. He added that the PBA's stance was that it was difficult to argue against the theory of NOMS but the practical application of it was causing disquiet and the PBA was opposing the way it was proceeding.
- (ii) He attended a Regional Forum on 8 December 2005 which dealt mainly with the proposed SLAs.
- (iii) He attended a meeting on SLAs with the ROM on 9 December 2005.
- (iv) He interviewed a Probation Officer on 15 December 2005 regarding a discourteous email. The Officer had apologised.
- (v) The meeting of the Performance Management Panel held on 19 December 2005 was attended by the Chairman and a report on this will follow in a later minute.

04/06 Chief Officer's Report

- (i) The Senior Management Team met on 10 January 2006 and discussed the proposed SLA. The Team also looked at the '7S' model of organisation and focused on the goals and shared values of GPA. The following organisational values were identified:
 - Belief in people's capacity to change
 - To treat all people with respect, valuing their diversity
 - Trust that all staff want to do a good job and will be supported to do so
 - To have a culture of openness and honesty
 - Opportunities are given in a fair way
 - To be a learning organisation
 - To provide the best possible service to stakeholders
 - To encourage and value innovation and a proactive approach

The SMT identified that there was no formal policy for reducing re-offending and this deficiency will be addressed this year. The Management style of the organisation was also looked at along with barriers to achievement and it was identified that the SMT was under-resourced. As a result a fourth ACO will be appointed who will particularly be looking at performance and providing performance information. A job description for this post is being drawn up and it is hoped that the person appointed will be in post by 1 April 2006.

05/06 Performance

- (i) **Information Report – April 2005 to December 2005**

Mrs Oulton introduced this and informed the Board that the Information Report in front of them would be given to them regularly in future. The December performance figures were distributed at the meeting and Mr Holden and Mrs Oulton highlighted the areas where GPA was performing poorly and what action was being taken to rectify this.

The Chairman asked what, in general, Board Members could do to take the performance message to teams when they visited them. Mrs Oulton suggested that Members actively promoted discussion on performance, particularly when they attended team meetings.

(ii) **Notes of the Meeting of the Performance Management Panel held on 19 December 2005.**

The Chairman commented that at the first meeting of the PMP he felt that staff were suspicious of the motives for convening the PMP and they were tentative about coming forward, but it was explained to them that the Panel wanted to understand how managers went about their tasks. The Chairman felt that the meeting held on 19 December 2005 had been much more constructive and rewarding. The managers involved were more frank about how they approached their tasks but there was a lack of awareness amongst them of the challenges that faced GPA, and it was evident from them that they were not managing their staff to ensure that they were performing.

Mrs Jago commented that at the second meeting managers admitted that mistakes had been made and they recognised that management, the SMT and the Board had to work together as a team. She added that the value of the PMP had been recognised when it had highlighted to managers that they were not managing their teams effectively.

Mrs Ball reported that she was leading a new Performance Information Group which would ensure that managers had the necessary information to be able to manage and she had asked the Business Systems Information Manager to prepare some simple guidance to managers to enable them to identify where they could find the information they need.

The Chairman commented that at the next meeting of the PMP managers will be invited to tell the panel what actions they have taken to address the problems, and in particular if they have identified any weak points where help from the SMT or the Board may be required.

Mrs Cryer commented that to improve management skills all managers would be required to achieve a management qualification. Mrs Gardner felt that the push for more managers to achieve such qualifications may not result in improved skills and she advocated the adoption of a training schedule linked to the Living Leadership programme.

Mr Cook asked what the Board Members who did not sit on the PMP could do to promote the issue of performance. Mrs Ball commented that the message needs to get across to teams of the Board's involvement with performance and Members links was a valuable but less formal way of engaging with teams on this issue. Mrs Abderrahim commented that her link with the ETE team has proved invaluable and it has enabled her to understand what the issues were for the team in terms of performance.

06/06 Audit Committee

Mr Rowe presented the draft Audit Committee minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2006 and highlighted points of note to the Board

RESOLVED

THAT the draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting be noted.

07/06 Members Feedback

- (i) Mr Cook reported that he had attended a recent meeting of the Public Protection Team to which he had been warmly welcomed. The meeting included a workshop to improve the understanding of eOASYS. Mr Cook also attended a meeting of the Substance Action Group in Gloucester which was attended by Kevin Lockyer. The issue of housing funding for drug using offenders was raised at the meeting and this was going to be taken up at a national level.
- (ii) Mrs Abderrahim attended a meeting of the Tewkesbury Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership where the possibility of merging with the other CDRPs was discussed. It was felt that merging CDRPs would not be advantageous but there were opportunities for collaboration.
- (iii) Mr Davies reported that he had recently met the Ryecroft Approved Premises Manager and he had been impressed with the way he was keeping in touch with the community. The first high risk offenders were due to be accommodated at the Ryecroft Approved Premises from April and the Community Liaison Group was being used to discuss issues of concern. This Group includes representatives of the Board and the local community. He added that there had been a promise from the NPD that the exterior of the property would be decorated when the weather improves.
- (iv) Mrs Middleton reported that the Cheltenham CDRP was having a restructure and as a result there will be monthly Working Group meeting, quarterly Executive Committee meetings and full CDRP meetings every six months
- (v) Mrs Jago attended the last meeting of the Audit Committee and the PMP. She added that she had heard nothing about the Cotswold CDRP and it was now fifteen months since the last meeting had been held.

08/06 Business Plan 2005/06

Mrs Ball introduced this and invited questions and comments from Board Members.

Mr Cook asked for an explanation of item 2. on page 6. Mrs Ball commented that currently GPA must meet the Court deadline for producing a report but new measures may be introduced by the NPD which may require us to go back to the old 15 day deadline.

Mr Cook also asked why GPA was not Race Equality Scheme compliant (page 24). Mrs Ball indicated that a compliance plan was in place but due to the lack of staff time the plan had not been fully implemented yet.

Mr Marshall asked if GPA was proposing to work with Gloucester City Council regarding the provision of accommodation for drug misusers (page 16). Mrs Ball commented that the Supporting People budget did not cover this provision.

Mr Gooch commented that there were a number of new acronyms in the Business Plan Review and he asked if an updated list of all acronyms could be supplied to Members. Mrs Ball agreed to arrange this.

ACTION: Mrs Ball

Mrs Ball then went through the Risk Register highlighting any changes. With regard to Risk No. 1, Peter Blomley's secondment was likely to be extended until March 2007 and as a result she intended to offer Garry Holden an ACO post on a permanent basis. The Chairman agreed with this action

09/06 Effective Supervision Inspection

Mrs Oulton introduced this report and took Members through it highlighting the positive and negative findings.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be noted

10/06 Preparation for Extraordinary Board Meeting on 14 February 2006

The Chairman reported that the purpose of this meeting was for the Board to endorse the signing of the SLA with the ROM. The current sticking point was that GPA has not yet been allocated a budget and without this the full impact of the SLA cannot be identified. It was intended that copies of all the pertinent documents for the meeting would be sent out to Members about one week prior to meeting. The Chairman commented that the SLA was a national template which could not be changed, but the supplementary letter accompanying the SLA could be changed. Once members had perused the SLA they would be invited to notify the Chairman of any questions they wished to raise, the questions would then be sent to Kevin Lockyer in advance of the meeting.

The Secretary commented that the position with regard to the legality of the SLA had been clarified and it was clear that it was not legally binding.

11/06 Revenue Budget 2005/06 & 2006/07

Mrs Cryer reported that a deficit budget of £14,000 was projected for 2005/06. An indicative budget had been received for 2006/07 and a deficit of £416,000 was projected. It was estimated that the pay and conditions award would cost GPA around £250,000 in 2006/07.

Mr Howe requested that GPA and the South West Region puts pressure on the NPD for the NPD to fund the additional costs of the pay award for 2006/07 and it was agreed that Mrs Cryer would write to the NPD about this.

ACTION: Mrs Cryer

12/06 Human Resources Information Report

Mrs Cryer presented this information and she proposed to bring similar reports to the Board on a regular basis in future. She invited comments from Members as to the content of the report. Mrs Gardner commented that under staff turnover she felt it would be better to have a percentage figure rather than numbers of staff. She added that it would also be useful to have a narrative highlighting the changes from the previous quarter. Mrs Cryer agreed to implement these amendments for future reports.

ACTION: Mrs Cryer

13/06 VFM Conclusion

Mrs Cryer presented this report and advised that such information had to be provided to the Audit Commission on a regular basis. The progress column on the report had been inserted for the benefit of the Audit Commission and the intention was to review

and update progress in this column. On behalf of the Board the Chairman thanked Mrs Cryer for the production of this report.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be noted

14/06 European Excellence Self-Assessment Report

Mrs Cryer introduced this report and reported that there had been a slight increase in the Area score but this was a good achievement in light of the current organisational changes taking place. Mr Howe commented that whilst the increased score was welcome he was concerned that for the second year running the report highlighted leadership in respect of the management of change as being an area for improvement.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be noted

15/06 Complaints Monitoring

Mrs Ball reported that out of the seven complaints only one of them was substantiated and action had been taken to address the issues this complainant had raised.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be noted

16/06 Community Integration Service

Mr Holden presented this report and explained the background to it and what was proposed. The intention was to produce a further report for the next Board meeting which would look at the risks involved. If the risks were too great the project would not proceed.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be noted

17/06 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board will be the Extraordinary Meeting to be held on 14 February 2006 commencing at 9.45am. The next ordinary meeting of the Board will held on Wednesday 15 March 2006 at 9.45am

The meeting closed at 1.10pm

Chairman

