

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 13 May 2009

Present: Mr T FitzSimons Mr J Bensted (Chief Officer), Mr R Burns, Mrs C Ellson, Mr M Howe, Mr S Pritchard, Mr C Youngson, Mrs S McGrath

Also in attendance: Mr G Limbrick (Board Secretary), Mrs Charlie Baker (Assistant Chief Officer), Mrs D Bennett (Treasurer), Mrs Debra Maloney (Finance Manager)

47/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

HHJ Picton

48/09 INTRODUCTION

Mr FitzSimons welcomed members to the meeting. It was formally noted that Mr Mark Blockley and Mrs Jude Robinson has resigned from the Board.

Mrs Ellson was nominated as the representative for the Supporting People Board.

49/09 CHIEF OFFICER'S UPDATE

Mr Bensted updated the Board on local matters, concentrating on GPA's 4 key priorities;

1. Public Protection
2. Reducing Re-offending
3. Performance
4. Frontline Delivery

Public Protection

Mr Bensted advised the committee that GPA have submitted the OMI progress report. It was a positive report. There has been a continued improvement. Mr Bensted informed the Board that guidance has been released for dealing with Sex Offenders at Approved Premises. Ryecroft have been quoted in the guidance for good practice. This is especially notable as Ryecroft have only been accepting sex offenders for 12 months. Mr Bensted advised that he has met with Chief Constable Tim Brain and the Public Protection Bureau was discussed. Both Dr Brain and Mr Bensted agree that liaison between Probation and Police is key

Reducing Re-offending

Mr Bensted reported that there have been some positive changes from the OMI progress report. GPA can evidence that GPA has positively influenced reducing re-offending figures by lowering OASys scores, successful terminations etc. The new reconviction data is being released shortly and it is worrying as it does not give the whole picture. It is on the IPPF but is not a target. GPA's reconviction predicted rate (9.94%) is high and the actual rate (11%) is higher. Mr Bensted advised the meeting that what is emerging is Gloucestershire is a high crime area and the rate of recorded crime is high (mainly low level alcohol offences). Mr Bensted and Mr FitzSimons met with Chief Constable Tim Brain last week and he confirmed that his priority is a high crime detection rate. Mr Bensted said that the centre and the DOM are analysing the data. Mr Bensted is prepared and has a brief in case of local media interest. Mrs McGrath asked that due to the current recession it would be useful to include deprivation data in the briefing. It is a GCJB issue, and is an LAA target. It was agreed that the data needs further discussion and will be put on the agenda for the June meeting. **Action: Mrs Riches-Jones.**

Performance

Performance must be maintained. It is key that performance remains a priority.

Frontline Delivery

Mr Bensted advised the committee that he and Mr FitzSimons are visiting team to discuss budget, concerns etc. Updates are also being communicated via communication bulletins, consultation with Unions and via meetings such as County Managers . Keeping staff morale positive is important for frontline delivery.

50/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

SECTION A STANDING ITEMS

51/09 MINUTES

(i) Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18 March 2009

The Minutes were accepted as accurate and were signed by the Chair.

(ii) Actions arising from the previous Minutes

All actions were completed or on the agenda.

SECTION B PERFORMANCE

52/09 i) Operational Performance

Mrs Charlie Baker reported on Performance.

Mrs Baker tabled the final IPPF for last year and GPA is green star. There are some deficits, e.g. the PPO target started badly at the beginning of the year; though it improved it was too late.

It was noted that there has been some slippage on Intervention targets. Mr Holden will be concentrating on this and will be working with Intervention managers.

Mr Howe congratulated Mrs Baker as these are the best year end figures GPA have had.

Mrs Baker reported that there is currently a lot of working taking place on new targets. There are 68 performance targets. There are currently no final figures available but indicative figures have been produced. These figures are being fed to managers so any issues can be addressed. Performance will be discussed in depth at the Performance Panel next week. It was asked that Mr Bensted and Mr FitzSimons discuss the high number of targets with MPs when they meet over the coming months.

Mrs Baker advised the meeting that the reducing re-offending rates are being published soon and that the DOM is looking into the validity of the statistics.

Sickness absence for April is 11.2. Though this figure is still not good, it is an improvement. One member of staff will be returning next week from long term sickness. It was noted that the management of sickness is coming into fruition.

Mr FitzSimons advised the Board that the format and focus of the Performance Panel is being revised. It has been agreed that the focus will be on accountability against a zero failure approach and recognising trends. The panel will ensure efficient communication between offender management and interventions. Sally Herniman will now coordinate the Performance Panel.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

ii) **HR Report**

Mrs Naomi Cryer report on HR issues was noted.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

iii) **Financial Report**

Mrs Darrill Bennett presented the financial report.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

SECTION C ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

53/09 2009/10 BUDGET

Mrs Bennett presented the 2009/10 budget in detail. The Audit Committee have agreed the report subject to Table A and Annex 5 which they had not had sight of.

There was some discussion regarding the availability and accuracy of FTE figures. Mrs Bennett explained that the FTE figures still required confirmation from by HR. Mr Bensted will discuss with Mrs Cryer and Mrs Bennett a reconciled figure will be produced at the Trust meeting on the 19th May. **Action: Mr Bensted.**

It was noted that budget has been well managed as well as maintaining performance. The Board congratulated management.

The Budget was approved and it was recognised that the action plans will be further developed in regards to the £443k attrition savings and the £168,000 carry forward from 08/09. The latter is earmarked to support expenditure to facilitate these savings. The £443,000 represents savings that will be required from turnover, freezing and deleting posts as part of the restructuring.

Mrs Bennett explained the Budget Outturn report at Annex 5. The figures had not been audited and there may be some adjustments as a result. The previous Board report minutes of 18th March 2009 indicated a maximum under spend of £280,000 but this excluded the anticipated redundancy/early retirement provision approved by the Board on 18th March 2009.

The early retirement provision has now been finalised and shows as part of the over spend and expenditure type 11 "Revenue non-cash costs".

Other main factors bringing the under spend down further included additional ETE savings on staffing and loss on the sale of the telephone system.

RESOLVED

THAT the recommendations of the Budget report be **APPROVED**

54/09 2009/10 BUSINESS PLAN

Mr FitzSimons asked how GPA rate, manage and record risk. Are the risk registers meaningful and useful? Are they being utilised well? There was some discussion regarding the risks that are in the business plan and it was felt that they are too generic and are 'business as usual' risks. Mr Pritchard commented that it could be perceived that GPA cannot run the business. Mr Bensted advised the meeting that there is a requirement to have 10.

Overall, it was suggested that the focus should be on the action or issue that is causing the risk and the issue that needs to be managed. There needs to be a direct connection between the issue and what we are working on.

Mr Burns and Mrs Ellson will work with SMT to 'clean up' on all risk registers. Mr FitzSimons asked that the Audit Committee to review the risk register and its supporting schedules at the next meeting. **Action: Audit Committee**

RESOLVED

THAT the Business Plan be **APPROVED**

55/09 PENSION SCHEME – STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Scheme has been to Employers Side and has been subject to comments. The comments have been included. It was noted the the scheme is a requirement.

RESOLVED

THAT the Scheme be **APPROVED**

56/09 RE-APPOINTMENT OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

The appointed Committee members for 2009/10 are Mr Burns, Mrs Ellson, Mr Youngson and Mr Pritchard.

SECTION D ITEMS TO NOTE

57/09 AUDIT COMMITTEE

(i) Draft Minutes of the Meeting Held on 29 April 2009

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes be **NOTED**

58/09 SAFETY COMMITTEE

i) Draft Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23 April 2009

There will be an annual report submitted to the Board in the form of an action plan. This will be submitted to the June meeting. **Action: Mrs Riches-Jones**

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes be **NOTED**

59/09 JNCC

i) Draft Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23 April 2009

Mrs McGrath apprised the Board of the breach of confidentiality. It was noted that the Union concerned apologised and gave assurance that confidentiality will be kept. If a guarantee cannot be given, the item will not be discussed.

Staff side also requested that the deadline for expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy be extended so they could attend redundancy training. This was granted.

In regards to the Sickness Policy, NAPO requested extra time to look at the policy as a final national model has been published since Mrs Cryer had completed the GPA Policy. **Action: Mr FitzSimons to ask if any further amendments have been made, if not, the policy can be approved.**

UNISON was unhappy with the adverse weather statement. It was requested that Mrs Cryer look at other public sector policies, to achieve equity.

There was some discussion regarding the necessity of Alcohol Policy as it is mentioned in the Code of Contact.

It was also noted that some Community Payback supervisors had concerns regarding wearing badged clothing.

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes be **NOTED**

60/09 TRUST UPDATE

Mr Bensted advised the meeting that the application is all consuming. A meeting took place yesterday with Brian Clarke who is proving very effective. The Board were advised that Wiltshire Probation Area have got through to Trust status. There is a sense that GPA can do it as well. It was noted that the third year of indicative budgets have been withdrawn. SMT are working to complete the 4 plans that need to be a part of the portfolio. It is felt that GPA is on the right track. It is aimed that the application will be completed by the end of June.

Mr Pritchard has met with the Chair of the bench and Mr Bensted has met with Chief Constable Tim Brain and they are supportive of the application. Mr Bensted has an agreement from the University of Gloucestershire who will be doing a DVD of messages of support from Chief Officers in partner agencies. The independent Impact Assessment Group will be doing an assessment of the application.

Mr FitzSimons updated the Board members who are not part of the Trust group on the work that has been undertaken. Mr Youngson will send his papers to those members who are not part of the sub group. **Action: Mr Youngson.**

RESOLVED

THAT the update be **NOTED**

61/09 BUSINESS PLAN & RISK REGISTER 2008-09 QUARTER FOUR UPDATE

RESOLVED

THAT the update be **NOTED**

62/09 INTERVENTIONS QUARTER FOUR UPDATE

RESOLVED

THAT the update be **NOTED**

SECTION E – EXEMPT ITEMS

63/09

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

64/09 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 MARCH 2009

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

65/09 SFO QUARTER FOUR REVIEW

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

66/09 COMPLAINTS END OF YEAR REVIEW

Mr Bensted reported on Complaints for 2008/09.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

67/09 PRISON AND PROBATION OMBUDSMAN REPORT

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

68/09 DEATHS OF OFFENDERS UNDER SUPERVISION ANNUAL REPORT

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

69/09 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

i) AUDIT COMMITTEE CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Mr Burns advised the key areas of comment are the risk register as previously discussed and to continue to work on the accounting reports format.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

ii) SENTENCER REPORT

Mr Pritchard sent his report, after meeting with Ken Minshull Bench Chair, to the Board. Sentencers are very positive about the relationship between Probation and Sentencers. Mr Bensted and Mrs Baker will be attending the Bench Management Group quarterly.

RESOLVED

THAT the update be **NOTED**

iii) SLA 2009/10

It was asked that Mr Bensted ensures that on any new invitation to tender opportunities there is a clause stating that GPA 'particularly welcomes tenders from women owned businesses and disabled owned businesses'.

RESOLVED

THAT the SLA be **NOTED**

70/09 FUTURE MEETING DATES

24 June 2009

2 September 2009

4 November 2009

The meeting closed at 13.35

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CHAIRMAN