

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

**106/07**



GLOUCESTERSHIRE

## **GLOUCESTERSHIRE PROBATION BOARD**

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

**Wednesday 18 July 2007**

**Present:** Mr T FitzSimons (Chair), Mr R Burns, Ms J Robinson, Mr S Pritchard, Mrs C Ellson, Mr C Youngson, Mr Mark Blockley, HHHJ Picton (in part)

**Also in attendance:** Mr G Limbrick (Board Secretary), Mr P Stott (Board Treasurer), Mrs C Baker, (Assistant Chief Officer), Mrs L Schoen (HR Manager), Mr G Holden (Assistant Chief Officer)

**82/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
**Mrs Y Ball, Mr M Howe, Mrs S McGrath**

**83/07 INTRODUCTION & CHIEF OFFICER'S UPDATE**

Mr FitzSimons mentioned the proposed changes in the Regional Manager role, which would be much more centralised. It was hoped that there would still be some regional guidance and assistance, but this is not yet clear.

**84/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations.

Mr Limbrick asked for the outstanding Declarations of Interest forms to be returned promptly.

## **SECTION A STANDING ITEMS**

### **85/07 MINUTES**

#### **(i) Minutes of the Meeting Held on 16 May 2007**

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

#### **(ii) Minutes of the Meeting Held on 12 June 2007**

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

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

Mrs C Ellson updated the Board on the fraudulent use of the GPA credit card. Police are interviewing a potential suspect and will update GPA accordingly.

### **86/07 PERFORMANCE**

Report delivered by Mrs Charlie Baker

#### **i) IPPF Briefing**

Mrs Baker updated the Board on how the IPPF figures will be presented. An example was tabled, using last year's figures. The figures for the first quarter will be available in August. To determine positioning in the appropriate band, Areas will first be assessed on their performance in relation to the targets. Then a national comparison is made. Areas will then be placed in performance bands and finally the direction of performance relative to the previous period is indicated. Mrs Baker advised that it has still not been confirmed what national standards they will be measuring

It was noted that Teams are currently preparing for the Offender Management Inspection which will give GPA good standing in IPPF as teams are concentrating on all areas of performance.

The data which is submitted for IPPF is pulled off GPA's own systems. To ensure the quality of the data, measures and processes have been put in place to monitor data quality.

HHJ Picton raised concerns regarding DRR's and the recommendations for DRR's. Mrs Baker is due to meet Ted Yates regarding the lack of DRR starts and will discuss HHJ Picton's concerns. Mrs Baker will then arrange a meeting with HHJ Picton.

**ii) Performance Targets and Report 2008/07**

Mrs Baker advised the Board that performance is being maintained, though there are still concerns regarding compliance. There are also concerns regarding breach resolution. Mrs Baker has had a meeting with the Local Criminal Justice Board to instigate improvements. GPA fair well nationally.

DRR retention is in the red but this is a distortion of figures as it cannot be properly measured until completion. There are no concerns regarding DRR retention.

DRR commencements have dropped, there is believed to be breakdown in trust between probation and providers, as after recommendations for DRR's there seems to be negative responses from the Drugs Assessment team. Mrs Baker will investigate, meet with HHJ Picton and report back to the Board.

Mrs Robinson raised concerns that the holding of vacancies, due to the budget deficit, will affect performance, staff health and morale. Mrs Robinson was concerned as she has been advised that a significant number of administrative posts had not been re-recruited. Mrs Baker advised that a position needs to be 'frozen' for three months and then the Senior Management Team (SMT) will look at recruiting for the post. If a temporary member of staff is brought in, the position is not classed as frozen. Administration posts are the only posts that have temporary staff. Mrs Baker echoed Ms Robinson's concerns that there may be an impact on performance and that staff feel coerced to put more hours in which will affect morale.

Mr FitzSimons advised the Board that it was apparent at the recent Performance Panel that a performance culture is now embedded in the organisation.

**87/07 BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS**

Mrs Baker asked the Board if they had any comments to take back to the Senior Management Team regarding the Business Planning Process Paper which was submitted by Mrs Ball prior to the meeting.

Mr Burns expressed a concern that GPA need to have clear vision of goals in the long term and that GPA need to discover inhibitors and develop a structure to overcome these inhibitors. Mr Burns would like to see a 3 year plan but agreed that the paper is a 'work in progress'.

It was agreed that the Senior Management Team need to have a common understanding and the Board need to be involved.

It was decided that a workshop with the Senior Management Team and Board would take place, promptly and possibly at the September Board meeting. A date will be arranged after Mrs Ball has advised the Board regarding the Senior Management Team capacity. It was asked that the Senior Management Team discuss what involvement they would like from the Board i.e. demands, direction of regional structure, what alternative strategies are available, to establish key areas and what the future is going to look like.

Mr Pritchard discussed ideas where extra resources can be generated, i.e. LAA's and CDRP's – to develop and look outside own budget. Mr Pritchard advised that in a previous role the service used students as a resource. Mr Fitzsimons asked Mr Pritchard to look into a suitable institution to create such a relationship.

Mrs Baker commented that we will be starting on the Trust self assessment process, which will be reported back to the Board. It was asked that the Senior Management Team produce an action plan and timetable which should be circulated to the Board before next meeting.

#### **RESOLVED**

that the report be **NOTED**

#### **88/07 HR REPORT**

Report delivered by Mrs Lynne Schoen

There were some concerns raised regarding the quality of the data. Particularly the ethnic monitoring, sickness figures and staff turnover.

**Action:** The Board requested that there is clarification of the figures for Ethnic monitoring, the figures for 'days lost' due to sickness. It was asked the report is reviewed and re-sent to the Board including the forecast for staffing assumptions i.e. holding vacancies and turnover for the year. Mrs Schoen to liaise with the Senior Management Team.

#### **89/07 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

Report delivered by Mr Peter Stott

Mr Stott advised the Board of the timetable of financial reports and when they will be submitted to the Board.

The accounts for 2006-07 have been signed off by auditors and sent to NPD. Mr FitzSimons, Mr Burns and Mrs Ball have approved them. Mr Stott gave a brief overview of the accounts:

- There is a provision for successful Job Evaluation appeals of £20K.
- Balance sheet – there is a significant increase in pensions liability, from £6 to £9 million. This is due a change of financial assumptions and not down to the pension fund's performance.
- Trade debtors, - there was one off large debtor of £94k relating to Glos Primary Care Trust in 2006-7, accounting for a significant increase in trade debtors.
- Creditors – these had increased significantly due to unspent external funding for various projects at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007. The balance would be spent during 2007/08
- Cash flow statement - is highly summarised. Bank balance down by £11k on a turnover of over £7m, from £175k to £164k..

## **RESOLVED**

that the accounts be **APPROVED**

Budget monitoring statement - Mr Stott asked the Board if they were content with the new report format. It was requested that the report shows the whole budget, NOMS + external funding, any trends and a commentary highlighting anything of note with supporting actions / plans.

**Action:** The Board requested that Mr Stott provide a forecast to year end as result of first quarter actions and that it is circulated to the Board by mid august.

Mr Stott updated the Board on the Regional Finance project implementation group meeting. There is an updated, detailed implementation plan produced by Rachel Longbotham which includes role responsibilities and processes. There are some issues whilst working to a tight deadline.

Issue 1- chart of accounts, deciding a coding structure for the new system between 5 regions by end of the month. Then looking at mapping from the existing system to new system. The group anticipate completion by mid August.

'Real' data will be loaded onto a test system, which will allow retrospective parallel running. The test system will hold 2-3 months data and will allow errors/issues to be resolved before going 'live' in October.

It was noted that additional resources will be required in the Finance unit and that the Finance Manager will submit a recruitment request to the Senior Management Team. Managerial support will be provided Phil Laws for ten days as part of the migration.

Mr Stott advised that ideally Steria will be hosting the new system, Phil Laws is in dialogue with Steria on a regional basis but this issue may take several months to resolve. Until it is, the system will only be available on one terminal, which will have work planning implications for the Finance Team which will need to be addressed..

There has not yet been an announcement to who the payroll provider will be.

The Audit Committee are content that risks are being monitored and plans are in place.

## **90/07 AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **Audit Committee Minutes – 21 June 2007**

Mr Burns advised the Board that the Audit Committee are still looking at the format of the risk register. The Audit Committee feels that the register does not highlight the overall assessment of all risks in the organisation, just the 'top ten'. However, the current register is a NOMS directive.

It was agreed at Audit Committee that virements under £72k would need to be approved by the Board rather than virements over £66k.

Mr Burns reported that there are some outstanding items from the external audit, which took place over 12 months ago. The Board agreed that this was not acceptable and all items as a result of audit must be completed with 12 months.

**RESOLVED**

that the minutes be **NOTED**

**91/07 DIRECTING DIVERSITY GROUP**

**Directing Diversity Group Minutes 26<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

**RESOLVED**

that the minutes be **NOTED**

**92/07 ESTATES COMMITTEE**

**Estates Committee Minutes 28<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

Mr Colin Youngson raised considerable concerns that the Estate Committee seems to have no strategic focus and the lack of strategy re properties.

**Action:** The Board requests an updated strategy for the next Estates Committee meeting.

**RESOLVED**

that the minutes be **NOTED**

**SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DECISION**

**There were no items for decision**

**SECTION C – ITEMS TO NOTE**

**93/07 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Report delivered by Mr Garry Holden

Mr Holden gave an overview of Business development work including , 10% Voluntary Community and Private Sector target and Best Value, Regional Business Development and local Business Development.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be noted

**94/07 INTERVENTIONS UPDATE**

Report delivered by Mr Garry Holden

Mr Holden updated the Board on Interventions. Interventions are currently the financial performance measures. There is restricted performance data on SLA metrics performance measures, those available indicate performance targets are being met.

Mr Holden recognises that there are issues within Programmes, DRRs and UPW but are they being addressed.

Intervention Managers are working on action plans for the Offender Manager Inspection.

Since May 2007 three areas of Interventions have been subject to external audit/ inspections focusing on quality: Programmes; Ryecroft Approved Premises and Employment Training and Education. The latter related to an inspection for renewal of the ETE MATRIX award. The former two had scorings of 96% and 95% respectively. Whilst the audits/ inspections were successful, areas for improvement were identified, and action plans have been produced

GPA interventions are focussing on;-

- i. Performance, efficiency, effectiveness, quality and innovation by deploying a partnership approach which meets national, regional and local strategic objectives
- ii. Commissioning the voluntary community and private sectors
- iii. Successfully bidding/negotiating for additional funding

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be noted

**95/07 BUSINESS PLAN AND RISK REGISTER QUARTER ONE REPORT**

The Board requested that headings for improvement priorities and objectives were swapped around. It was also requested that there is a summary of all risks throughout the organisation

**Action:** Mrs Baker to liaise with the Senior Management Team

Mr Youngson raised that he felt that there are still 'gaps' regarding Board induction. Mr Youngson asked if other members could advise him if they feel there are 'gaps and he will collate the information and report back to the Chair

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be noted

**96/07      SECTION D – EXEMPT ITEMS**

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.

**97/07      EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 MAY 2007**

These were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

**98/07      SERIOUS FURTHER OFFENCES**

A report delivered by Mrs Charlie Baker

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be noted

**99/07      COMPLAINTS**

A report delivered by Ms Elizabeth Riches

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the report be noted

**100/07     ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs Baker advised the Board of 'Kiddi Vouchers', a scheme which allows employees to sacrifice salary part of their salary for childcare vouchers. There is no financial cost/implication to GPA.

**RESOLVED**

that the scheme be **APPROVED**

**101/07     FUTURE MEETING DATES**

26 September 2007  
28 November 2007  
23 January 2008  
19 March 2008

The meeting closed at 13.00pm.

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CHAIRMAN