

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 18 October 2006

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

Also in attendance: Mrs C Baker, (Assistant Chief Officer), Mrs Naomi Cryer (Assistant Chief Officer) Ms Y Roberts (Board Administrator)

100/06 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs C Jago, His Hon Judge Picton,

101/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Sir William Wratten welcomed members of the public to the meeting and introduced Yvonne Roberts, Board Administrator.

SECTION A STANDING ITEMS

102/06 MINUTES

(i) Minutes of the Meeting Held on 06 September 2006

Subject to one amendment to minute 92/06 iv) there should **not** be a 0% target on disability, these were accepted as a true record of meeting.

(ii) Actions arising from the previous Minutes

91/06 Future Race Equality Seminars

Action: Mrs Ellson/Mrs Cryer – on-going

92/06 Human Resources Information Report – Mrs Ball has drawn Mrs Cryer’s attention to the outstanding actions which will be implemented as soon as possible.

Action: Mrs Cryer – on-going

96/06 Serious Further Offences

RESOLVED

THAT the report be noted

97/06 Inside Justice Week – Court Open Day 25 November 2006 – Mr Marshall has agreed to assist with the Presentation by a Board Member at the Court Open Day.

103/06 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Sir William Wratten reported that the main activity was progression of recruitment of new Board members and Chairs. There has been substantial correspondence which the Chair had copied to members on the subject. The proposal to stagger replacement board members had been declined. New Chairs will be recruited first and existing Chairs or new Chairs will form part of the recruitment panels for Board members. The Chair went on to say that he had been asked by Meg Blumsom, Regional Manager, to set aside some time in the event that a new Chair was not recruited in time which he agreed to do.

There is no extension to time on the Board to beyond six years. The Chair had written to the Home Secretary on the Board’s behalf but had not yet received a reply and did not anticipate receiving one.

NPD asked Board Chairs to be specific about the need for a reduction in the quorum numbers from 7 to 5 members. The Chair, Mrs Ball (Chief Officer) and Mr Limbrick (Board Secretary) have had a discussion about this and the Chair has informed NPD that this Board needs five new members but reserves the right to increase if necessary. Mrs Ball said that there will be 11 members in total.

The Chair reported that the High Sheriff paid a visit two days ago to GPA. He further reported that the staff had been very pleased to receive the news that GPA had come second in national league table, nevertheless Mrs Ball has received a letter from Keith Lockyer expressing continuing concern on GPA’s performance.

104/06 CHIEF OFFICER’S REPORT

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

(ii) **Leadership Meeting**

Mrs Ball attended the Leadership Meeting. There were 8 speakers at the Leadership Forum:

Roger Hill gave input on performance and made a separate commendation to Gloucestershire area.

The Heads of NOMS have now been appointed. The Community Partnership Directorate will include Interventions, and there will be Directorate of Performance and Improvement and Corporate Services. The Heads appointed are: Director of Performance & Improvement – Jonathan Slater; Director of Community and Partnership – Julie Taylor.

Jane Furniss said she has been creating a performance testing regime for the future which she will complete before she leaves, i.e. better set of targets and achievements, also challenging shared targets across the justice system.

John McGovern, Head of Finance in NOMS, spoke about budget increases. There would be an increase of between a minimum of 2.5% and a maximum of 4% in 2006/2007 and no increase in 2008. Roger Hill will look at any overspends in 2006/2007 on a case by case basis. If we underspend we can carry forward up to 2%.

Minister Jerry Sutcliffe said he was trying to raise the public profile of the Probation Service. There will be a bill specified on probation in the Queen's speech. There will also be a UK version of 'Megan's Law'. The Government is reviewing MAPPA arrangements and also looking at approved premises and which information is appropriate to discuss in the public domain.

John Scott, Head of Public Protection for NOMS reported on the thematic for the way ahead for MAPPA and quality of risk assessment. MAPPA Annual Report will be published on Monday 23 October 2006. He went on to say that the Government will be publishing a child sex offender review. BBC Panorama have been conducting an investigation on high risk offenders in Avon & Somerset and our work in public protection. The programme will be broadcast in early November.

(iii) **2007/2008 Budget**

The Head of Commissioning will now be Julie Taylor who will be managing ROMS. Half the money will be spent on offenders outside of NOMS and part of the work of Commissioning is to join up the Government's agenda.

ROMS have been given the flexibility to withhold 2% of the budget to achieve targets elsewhere. A discussion took place between members concerning the legality of 2% of the budget being withheld. The Chair said they would return to this matter at a later date.

Kevin Lockyer's letter to Chief Officer dated 11 October 2006 regarding NPD Performance Improvement Processes and SLAs was discussed by members of the Board. David Cook requested an update on SLA targets at the next Board Meeting.

Action: Charlie Baker

105/06 (i) Performance

Charlie Baker, Assistant Chief Officer, went through the performance figures with the Board. The Crown Court reports are in the green. Standard delivery reports were in amber. When looking at the August/September figures, there has been an improvement in timeliness. Only the Crown Court was one day late.

In real terms good completions in interventions and it looks like it will be sustained through October as well.

Mrs Baker reported that she had been in discussion with the Manager for Drugs Performance regarding drugs treatment and the need for a provision for re-testing in the event of a person having a relapse. The Chair requested that Garry Holden, Assistant Chief Officer, attends the next Board meeting to give a report as drugs treatment came in his portfolio.

Action: Mrs Ball to request Mr Holden prepare a report for next Board meeting

Mrs Baker reported that nationally we are struggling with regard to compliance targets. GPA was in the red for PT7. The August figures for NPD were showing amber. NPD are showing GPA's PM2 figures as green. Mrs Baker said that targets for victims were also slow.

Mrs Baker went on to say that if we fall short on any areas it will be on compliance and sickness. Mrs Ball had written to Roger Hill and Kevin Lockyer regarding GPA's sickness figures. GPA has 6 members of staff on long term sick which is out of GPA's control.

Mrs Ball wished to place on record thanks to Mrs Baker for the hard work she has put in since she has been in post.

The Chair requested that Mrs Baker provide a further report to the Board at the next meeting in November.

Action: Mrs Baker

106/06 EMPLOYER'S SIDE MEETING

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes of the Employer's Side Meeting held on 21 September 2006 be noted.

107/06 SAFETY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes of the Safety Committee Meeting held on 05 October 2006 be noted.

108/06 AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

(i) Audit Committee Minutes – 04 October 2006

55/06 Mr Peter Rowe reported that an amendment was necessary after an internal audit of the Annual Review of Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy. The Policy was now ready for approval by the Board.

RESOLVED

THAT the Annual Review of Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy be approved.

72/06 R Bedford has produced a VFM Questionnaire for completion. Mrs Ball will seek clarification from the Audit Commission as to their requirements.

Action: Mrs Cryer

76/06 Mr Peter Stott wished to draw to the attention of the Board that when considering its actions regarding the Regional General Ledger System or remaining with GCC there would be cost implications. Full information will be available by next February for a decision to be made in time for the new financial year. The Chair asked Mr Stott to produce a brief report on options and up date the Board at the November meeting. Mrs Ball will communicate this to Meg Blumsom

Action: Mr Stott/ Mrs Ball

Mr Peter Rowe pointed out to the Board that at the end of the financial year the Audit Committee will have only 2 members of the present Audit Committee and as a consequence there will be no continuity from one financial year to the next. Mr Rowe put forward the suggestion that new members be co-opted for two meetings prior to the new financial year.

The Chair thanked Mr Rowe for pointing this out.

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on 04 October 2006 be noted.

(ii) **Virement**

Mr Rowe stated that when this year's budget was formulated steps needed to be taken to produce a balanced budget.

Mrs Ball said that we need to make a virement because of shortage in offender management which is now separate from interventions. Mrs Ball said that this issue has arisen because of the way GPA has to present the budget to feed into the SLAs. Mrs Christine Ellson asked Mrs Ball where savings will be made. Mrs Ball said that recruitment for staff vacancies were managed for up to 4 months to balance the budget.

RESOLVED

THAT the virement be approved.

Mrs Ball asked Mr Stott to advise ROM of the virement.

Action: Mr Stott

109/06 MEMBERS' FEEDBACK

- **Mr Chris Marshall** had again visited the prison probation team.. He said that someone from the team, (possibly K Barratt) should be invited to a Board meeting to outline what they do.
- **Mrs Lizzie Abderrahim** and Mrs Hazel Middleton were working together and were both aware of merger of CDRPs for Cheltenham & Tewkesbury. Mrs Abderrahim will go on behalf of Probation Service, with Mrs Ball's agreement. Mrs Abderrahim has attended a

PBA group meeting where a presentation was given on CLINKS. Mrs Abderrahim will circulate a copy of the presentation to Board members. If members approved, Mrs Abderrahim will also release a copy to Garry Holden. Mrs Abderrahim is leading work on the GPA Disability Scheme.

- **Rev Alan Davies** reported he had attended a Team meeting and was impressed. He has also been involved in the recruitment exercise.
- **Mrs Hazel Middleton** has attended a two day media workshop in Weston-super-Mare. She had also attended the CDRP meeting with Mrs Abderrahim.
- **Ms Jude Robinson, Mrs Christine Ellson Mr Mike Howe and Mr David Cook** had all attended the Staff Conference and gave positive feedback.
- **Mr Howe** has completed two grievance investigations, and said these appear to have grown in number. Mr Howe has also been supporting Mrs Naomi Cryer, Assistant Chief Officer, in a number of HR issues.

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DECISION

None

SECTION C – ITEMS TO NOTE

110/06 BUSINESS PLAN 2006/07 – SECOND QUARTERLY REVIEW

Mrs Ball said that progress has been made under all the objectives of the Business Plan. The Chair requested that both the Business Plan and Risk Register be tabled at the November meeting. Meanwhile if Board members had any queries they should contact Mrs Ball or the relevant ACO.

RESOLVED

THAT the Business Plan half year review and Risk Register review be tabled at the November meeting of the Board

111/06 GPA REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

Mr Chris Westhead presented his paper on Review of Health & Safety Policy and Procedures to the Board. Mr Westhead said Health & Safety training courses were being put in place for managers. Mr Dan Gooch expressed concern at the level of H & S procedures being carried out. Mr Westhead said there was a need for these to be documented and will discuss with Mrs Ball. Mr Gooch pointed out that Board Members should raise the question of health and safety when visiting teams. The Chair said that Mr Westhead should draw up a questionnaire to assist Board Members.

Action: Mr Westhead

RESOLVED

THAT the paper be noted

112/06 BOARD RECRUITMENT MONITORING

Mr Graham Limbrick, Board Secretary, presented to the Board a paper on Board Recruitment Monitoring. Mr Limbrick said that nationally to date 255 applications had been received for chairs and 513 for board members. The final date for receipt of applications is

now Monday 23 October 2006. Mr Limbrick said that he did not have application figures for Gloucestershire. Barkers have been appointed as consultants for NPD to handle the process.

RESOLVED
THAT the paper be noted

113/06 UPDATE ON AUDIT REPORT

Mrs Naomi Cryer, Assistant Chief Officer, gave an update to the Board on the Audit Report. Mr Rowe noted that 2 items were outstanding from 2003/2004. Mrs Cryer said that this had been due to sickness absence. At present there were two reports outstanding.

RESOLVED
THAT the paper be noted

114/06 SECTION D – EXEMPT ITEMS

In accordance with paragraph 3a 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 item **115/06** because of the confidential nature of the business considered.

116/06 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

117/06 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday 22 November 2006 at 0945 am in the Boardroom at Bewick House.

The meeting closed at 13:00pm.

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CHAIRMAN

