

RESTRICTED

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 19 March 2008

Present: Mr T. FitzSimons, Mrs Y. Ball, Mrs S. McGrath, Ms J. Robinson, Mr M. Blockley, Mr M. Howe, Mr S. Pritchard, Mr R. Burns, Mr C. Youngson and Mrs C. Ellson.

Also in attendance: Mr G. Limbrick (Board Secretary), Mrs D. Bennett (Assistant Chief Officer), Mr J. Bensted (Assistant Chief Officer), Mrs N. Cryer (Assistant Chief Officer) and Mrs C. Baker (Assistant Chief Officer).

30/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

HHJ Picton.

31/08 INTRODUCTION

32/08 CHIEF OFFICER'S UPDATE

Mrs Ball gave the Board an update on the extra money that GPA will be receiving. It was discussed how GPA will use the money to reduce short term prison sentences. One focus will be on recalls, some fairly technical and/or showing aversion to risk. The SMT will encourage staff to use their judgement in a more balanced way. Still awaiting guidance from the centre. This will bring additional work into GPA; part of plan is to look at how we develop FDR's to create space for the additional work.

GPA are still continuing to reduce head count but it has been proposed that TPO's in the current Cohort can now be offered full-time employment, to start in October 2008. This will get GPA back in balance in terms of experienced staff.

Mrs Ball informed the Board that GPA has achieved dispensation to manage the budget deficit over a period of 2 years.

Mrs Ball advised the Board that GPA's Trust Assessment was sent in and reviewed by Meg Blumson, Regional Improvement and Development Manager and Paul Stopard, ROM Performance Manager. Supplementary information has been supplied. NOMS will then decide which Area's will go in to Wave 2. Slightly confused messages are being given that there may be fewer than 42 trusts but nothing is confirmed as yet. Mrs Ball advised the Board that Phil Wheatley has stated that competition still remains but is not

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top of the agenda at present. The focus will be more on performance testing, however, Best Value is coming to the fore.

Mrs Ball updated the Board on the Workload Measurement Tool. There is now going to be a new simplified national version. In the meantime GPA will be using the local version.

Mrs Ball advised the Board about the Association of Chief Executives and Chief Officers which will give CO's a voice. At the meeting last week, they created a constitution and objectives. Mrs Ball thanked the Board for their support.

Mr Pritchard expressed his concerns about demonstrating Best Value when GPA doesn't appear to show unit costs. He also raised a concern about ACECOP and how much of the concerns from the Board are actually listened to.

Mrs Ball informed the Board that we do know unit costs but this needs further refinement building on the information that is there. Mrs Ball also suggested that, should there be any concerns of the Board, the PBA is the Board's representative body and they should discuss their concerns with them.

33/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

34/08 MINUTES

SECTION A STANDING ITEMS

(i) Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23 January 2008

05/08 – Business card fraud matter now closed. No further action.

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

(ii) Actions arising from the previous Minutes

15/08 – Mrs Ball to send Mr Pritchard the ratings booklet – **Completed.**

17/08 – Mr Pritchard to draft article and pass to John Bensted – **Completed.**

25/08 – Mrs Ball and Mrs McGrath to discuss if this is useful – **Completed.**

26/08 – Mrs Cryer to send a revised Organisational Structure to the Board – **Pending.**

26/08 – Mrs Ball to give thought to what messages need to be sent regarding restructure – **Completed.**

35/08 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT 08/09

Report tabled.

Reviewed page 29:

Mr FitzSimons asked whether volumes are higher or lower than last year. Mrs Baker confirmed that overall they are higher. This is based on last years actuals and guestimates for March. Mrs Baker informed the Board that there is a volume increase of 4%.

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A discussion ensued on the fact that the SLA is not legally binding. It was noted that a significant change in volumes would affect GPA costs and there were risks. The Board discussed whether to sign the SLA and the risks of not signing. Mrs Ball said that GPA has had one of the higher increases in the budget compared nationally.

Mrs Ball informed the Board that this is clearly a work in progress and should the Board want the document to look different next year they could go through the PBA expressing their views and concerns.

Mr Howe believes that when GPA have gained Trust status the SLA will change anyway. Mr Limbrick confirmed that when GPA becomes a Trust it will be completely different. Mr Limbrick also confirmed that as a working document the lack of a signature would not be that critical.

Mr FitzSimons suggested that GPA will work with the ROM on a quarterly basis to ensure the increasing accuracy of yearly costs and monitor what we are doing to measure unit costs.

RESOLVED

THAT the final SLA is **APPROVED**

36/08 PERFORMANCE

- i) Performance Update – Mrs Baker handed out the IPPF quarter 3 to the Board. Discussions took place around this.
Mr Pritchard asked if we should be concerned with amber elements which appear to be getting worse. Mrs Baker informed the Board that GPA is still above national average.
Q3 – some results have gone down because of the Christmas period.
Mr Howe stated there are a lot of stars which is great. Mrs Baker has expressed GPA's dissatisfaction about the court target not being changed around the flood period – penalised on something we have no control over.
Mr FitzSimons noted Mr Howe's comments about the great improvement.
- ii) New IPPF – Mrs Baker showed the Board the new format. The targets that matter most are those in the public protection domain. There are bonuses if you do achieve, pro rata in accordance with the Area budget. Mrs Baker confirmed a bonus payment of £95k this year.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

37/08 HR REPORT

Discussions took place regarding the format of reports. Mr FitzSimons thought it had been agreed to have a combined financial and HR report. Mrs Cryer confirmed this will be built for next year's budget reports.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

38/08 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

- **07/08 Budget Update monitoring**
- **08/09 Budget Report**

(Please note that a report was submitted to the Audit Committee on 5.03.08. An updated report will be sent to the Board at a later date and when final figures are notified by NOMs).

07/08 Update: Budget Monitoring Report 07/08

The Board discussed the format of the report. Pegasus will eventually allow reports to be built for each team/location etc. Mr Burns confirmed that the Audit Committee asked for reports to highlight anomalies. Mr FitzSimons confirmed that if the Board have agreed a format this is what should be used. Mr Burns stated that Mr FitzSimons requested a change in format at a previous Board meeting. Mr Youngson then confirmed that the Board agreed that the report would include a more detailed breakdown of OM/Interventions and support costs.

It was concluded that the format was to be agreed at a later date.

Mrs Bennett gave a verbal update on the 07/08 budget monitoring report presented. It was explained that there is a problem with Pegasus reports not showing revised budget and the variance of £208,500 on income relates to grant from NPD not yet showing in the budgetted income of £7,165,000. The £208,500 variance is detailed in the report. There is a pay variance forecast overspend of £310,000. However this is largely offset by grant income.

Central Pension Liability – NOMS funding for 07/08 only of £107,000 now been confirmed.

Flood impact – GPA receiving £25,000.

Whilst the written report shows a 07/08 forecast deficit of £95,500 the projected deficit is now £55,000 at year end.

08/09 report and forecast:

Mr Burns stated that in terms of the budget, there are still a lot of dependencies where information from the centre is awaited. The report is therefore still in draft.

Discussed.

The report shows a projected shortfall for 2008/09 of £310,000.

Mr FitzSimons confirmed that the Board are not in a position to approve the budget.

Mr Burns said that the Audit Committee in June could discuss the Budget.

Mrs Ball confirmed that the position is not satisfactory but asked the Board to note that the priority is to achieve closedown and unqualified accounts in the context of the finance system, Pegasus, which is new and creating problems.

Mrs Bennett confirmed that the final budget pack from the NOMs has yet to be issued and late notification of £314,000 additional funding on 11th March was not in the reported figures but would considerably ease the 08/09 deficit position. Final agreement of the number of TPO's is awaited and also prison figures. Boards with overspends are now able to recover deficits over the two year period by 31/03/2010.

07/08 Final Accounts:

Mrs Bennett explained to the Board that there needs to be a meeting to discuss the adoption of accounts 07/08.

Mr FitzSimons advised that the Board will await formal approval of the budget 08/09.

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It was agreed that Mr FitzSimons is to attend the Extra Ordinary Audit Committee on the 20th June 2008 to confirm the finalised accounts 07/08.

RESOLVED

THAT the reports be **NOTED**

39/08 AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING – 5th March 2008

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes and Terms of Reference be **APPROVED**

40/08 BUSINESS PLAN 08/09

Improvement objectives have been devised based on performance targets and the priorities drawn up by Roger Hill. The objectives were discussed and suggested amendments were noted.

Objectives need to be clearly outlined and prioritised. Mr FitzSimons stated that there is concern that GPA have not got enough resources to achieve all the objectives and that a realistic approach is needed. Subject to final review with the SMT and once decided, Mrs Ball will re-send electronically to the Board for approval.

Mrs Ellson is to liaise with Mr Holden regarding the partnership matrix.

RESOLVED

THAT the plan be **APPROVED**

41/08 OUTCOMES AND EXPECTATIONS OF STRATEGIC TOOLKIT

The Board needs to set a strategic three year plan. A date for early July will be set to do this piece of work. Mrs Riches-Jones will be asked to circulate some dates for meeting.

The action was **NOTED**

42/08 SAFETY COMMITTEE – 24th January 2008

Minutes were amended to show Mrs Ball was present at the meeting.

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes be **NOTED**.

43/08 JNCC – 24th January 2008

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes be **NOTED**

44/08 In accordance with paragraphs 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.

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45/08 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2008

These were accepted as a true record of the meeting

46/08 GPA RESTRUCTURE PROJECT – see exempt

47/08 OMI REVIEW, CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The OMI report was circulated to the Board prior the meeting.
Mr Pritchard was given clarification that the Improvement Plan will be completed prior to the report being publicised.
A press release will be completed by Mrs Ball.

RESOLVED

THAT the report be **NOTED**

48/08 AOB:

CUSTOMER AND STAKEHOLDERS POLICY AND STRATEGY.

Mr Fitzsimons asked the Board for a comments.

RESOLVED

THAT the Policy and Strategy be **APPROVED.**

49/08 Date of Future Meetings

21 May 2008
2 July 2008
10 September 2008.

The meeting closed at 13:25pm.

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CHAIRMAN