



GLOUCESTERSHIRE

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

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

**Present:** Sir William Wratten (Chairman), Mrs Y Ball (Chief Officer), Mr G, Limbrick (Secretary to the Board), Mr P Stott (Financial Advisor), Mr D Cook, Mr D Gooch, Mr M Howe, Ms H Middleton and Mr P Rowe, Rev A. Davies, Ms. J. Robinson, Mrs. Christine Ellson, Mrs. Catherine Jago, Mrs. Mary Gardner, Mr. C Marshall

**Also in Attendance:** Mrs. Charlie Baker (ACO – Performance), Mr. Garry Holden (ACO – Interventions), Mrs S. Purves (Board Administrator)

**80/06 Apologies for Absence:** Mrs. E Abderrahim, Judge M. Picton

**81/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**SECTION A – Standing items**

**82/06 MINUTES**

- 1) There was one change to the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2006. The minute were accepted as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.
- 2) Actions:  
Minute Items nos.:-  
64/06 – **Action: Mr. Stott to issue recommended wording for the annual review of Anti- fraud and corruption policy. Mr. Limbrick to action.**

**83/06 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman began his report by informing the Board that the Chief Officer was summoned to London twice in respect of GPA's performance results. On 14<sup>th</sup> July, the Chief Officer and Chair were seen separately. Mrs. Ball was invited to produce a recovery plan in detail and a series of actions to bring GPA back up in the league table. The meeting was followed by a letter from Mr. Roger Hill, Director of Probation with further demands to improve performance. The Chairman wrote to Mr. Hill in response following which he did not receive a reply or acknowledgement. GPA is now 6<sup>th</sup> in the league table which reaffirms the Chief Officer's recovery plan. The Chair will send out a message to all staff from the Board to thank all staff. The Board gave a vote of confidence to the Chief Officer.

The Chairman read a letter from Mr. Roger Hill regarding the Appointment of Board Chairs and members. There was a discussion about concerns from members.

**84/06 Chief Officer's Report**

Mrs. Ball was pleased to report that GPA is 6<sup>th</sup> in the league table. Areas are now measured against targets, family groups have been taken out. Mrs. Ball asked to record her thanks to The Chairman and the Board members for their support. Mrs. Ball requested some resources at her second meeting with Roger Hill, amongst which are:

- Mentoring for ACO's
- HR help extended by maintaining the HR Manager
- Appointment of an external consultant to cover ACO vacancy

Mrs. Ball also reported on the visit to GPA of Mr. Kevin Lockyer, Regional Offender Manager. The Chief Officer provided some feedback about the visit including some negative commentary about Ryecroft and Offender Management. The Southwest Regional Chief Officers and Chairs Forum are looking into governance issues to facilitate pursuance of an NPD directive to work more collaboratively.

All Board members were invited on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2006 to the GPA Staff Conference.

### **Audit Update**

A Board member suggested that the Board should look at the structure of the Committees in the next Board meeting in view of the large scale change in Board membership. Concern was raised about the continuity of a Board member to sit in various committees. Mr. Rowe requested an update of various Audit Committee reports. Mrs. Ball gave a verbal update which will be followed up at the next Audit Committee **Action: Mrs. Ball**

Mr. Limbrick and Mr. Westhead are still working on drawing up a register of contracts.

### **85/06 Performance**

#### **i) GPA Performance**

Mrs. Baker relayed the good news on GPA being 6<sup>th</sup> in the Performance League table for the first quarter. The second quarter looks promising. Significant work has been done but not all targets will achieve a green rating by Nvoember (NPD deadline).

Mrs. Baker ran through the report and explained the figures to the Board and how they were achieved.

#### **ii) Minutes of Performance Management Panel Meeting**

Sir William Wratten reported that the Performance Panel is hitting the right format, it is a small congregation but lasts longer. Statements from the Panel are increasingly searching whereby inadequate answers are probed further to get the right response. We can now open up for other Board members to attend. Mr. Rowe was invited to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> November Performance panel meeting. Mr. Howe added that Managers go away and come back with details, the rapport is excellent. Mrs. Jago mentioned that it is interesting to see that people would like to attend the panel meeting. People who are achieving are going to be invited to talk about how they are achieving.

The minutes of the Panel were welcomed by Board members and will continue to be copied to them. Action: Mrs. Purves

#### **RESOLVED**

**THAT** the minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> July be noted.

### **86/06 SLA Update**

Mrs. Baker updated the Board with a brief verbal report. The feedback from ROM is that they are pleased with GPA's progress and they have discussed commissioning needs for next year.

### **87/06 JNCC**

#### **RESOLVED**

**That** the minutes of the Employers Side Meeting/JNCC be noted.

## 88/06 Safety Committee

### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Safety Committee be noted.

### SECTION B – Items for Decision

#### 90/06 i) Budget Update

Mrs. Ball reported that the budget has been challenging especially the Financial implication of Job evaluations – 6% is set aside to fund this, if the budget cost was 8% it would mean substantial staff savings would be required.

A Board member suggested further discussion with the unions that there is a problem.

#### ii) Standing Regulations for Contracts

Mr. Stott went through the regulations for contracts and recommended that we should get three written quotes and evidence. Over £10k spend require tenders from contractors. Mr. Westhead will put forward the estimate based on quotes obtained to the Board for approval. Mr. Stott added that the Audit Committee should approve and the Board to note.

### RESOLVED

**That the Standing Regulations for Contracts be approved.**

A Board member suggested that approval will depend on the level and area of work and must demonstrate value for money. The Chief Officer will inform the Board. Common sense to prevail and judgment will come from the Chief Officer/Audit Committee or SMT.

#### 89/06 Members Feedback

The Board members reported their activity to the Board:-

- Mr. Gooch sat on a Complaints Appeal panel and reported that 99% of the previous handling of the complaint was satisfactory but picked up on 2 areas. The complainant withdrew the complaint. Complaint procedures worked well as it was all dealt with in-house and did not need to go to the Ombudsman.
- Mr. Cook attended a CDRP meeting and reported that Gloucester has started a community based partnership trial on neighbourhood projects whose aim is to break barriers within the community.
- Mr. Marshall also sat on the Complaints Appeal panel which had a successful outcome. He also visited the new Visitors Centre at the Prison.
- Ms. Robinson also took part in the Complaints Appeal panel and mentioned that the process was meticulous and the notes were very clear which helped with the outcome.
- Mrs. Jago sat on the Performance Panel meeting which she will continue to attend however she will step down from other Committees i.e. Directing Diversity, Audit Committee and Contestability Group due to personal pressures. **Action: Sir William Wratten to email the Board to seek replacements.**
- Rev. Davies attended CDRP Coleford and informed the Board that we can get funding from CDRP to fund Community Payback programmes or to publicise CP projects. Rev. Davies also expressed his concern that staff are being left on their own at the Coleford office.
- Mrs. Gardner met with her allocated HR team and was not impressed with the archaic computerised Personnel system as it takes so much time to work on. Mrs. Ball mentioned that there is NPD money to spend on a new Personnel system.

- Mr. Rowe proposed that Mrs. Ellson replace Mrs. Jago in the Audit Committee. The Chairman appointed Mrs. Ellson as full member of the Audit Committee. **Action: Sir Wratten to email the Board.**
- Mr. Howe sat on a Job Evaluation panel and conducted the exit interview of the ACO – Offender Management. Mr. Howe also had a session with Mrs. Baker on Performance Management and processes.

#### **91/06 Revised Race Equality Scheme**

The report was accepted as compliant by the NPD.

A Board member questioned why we did not participate in this year's Asian Mela as it is an important link for GPA with the Asian community. Mrs. Ball responded that we only had 2 – 3 weeks notice and the format was different from last year so we were unable to attend. **Action: Mrs. Ball to ask Mrs. Abderrahim about the format of Asian Mela next year.**

Mr. Gooch suggested that we inform members of the IAG regarding the Board member vacancies. **Action: Mrs. Ball to contact IAG.**

The Chairman asked the Board members if they know anyone who wishes to apply.

Mrs. Ellson asked if there is any future Race Equality Seminars. Mrs. Ball suggested that she contact Mrs. Cryer and maybe wait for new members to come on the Board. **Action: Mrs. Ellson to email Mrs. Cryer.**

#### **RESOLVED**

**THAT the Revised Race Equality Scheme be ratified.**

#### **92/06 Human Resources Information Report**

Mrs. Ball explained the HR report and explained that the August figure on sickness absence was not completed if GPA could manage to reduce half of long term sickness we could achieve the target of 9 days. Staff turnover is broken down by grade of staff, there is a high turnover of Operational staff. Year to date there were 4 grievances. A Board member questioned the Posts held by women and the proportion within the overall workforce.

#### **Actions to note:**

- i) Proportion of total workforce needs refinement, it should have a comparison figure**
- ii) figure of 80% on men and women employed – what is the reason?**
- iii) Nature of grievance should be included**
- iv) there should not be a 0% target on disability**

#### **RESOLVED**

**THAT the report be noted and proposals actioned. Action: Mrs. Cryer**

#### **SECTION C – Items to note**

#### **93/06 Business Plan 2006/07 Update**

A Board member commented that Mrs. Oulton's name should be removed from the Business Plan and questioned page 17 – Development plan states "awaiting regional project plan and notification of Project Leader/Manager. Mrs. Ball replied that the Project Manager is in post and works within Meg Blumson's Regional Management team. There is no regional project plan as yet as it is collaborative to meet the ROM's SLA. Where we cannot achieve something we put in the plan due to outside constraints we need to be clear, eg with ROM's business objective.

Another question from a Board member relating to page 11 – Custody Plus. Mrs. Ball informed the Board that Custody Plus is currently on hold and no date has been given for implementation.

There was a question on acronyms used i.e. Clinks and VCPS. Mrs. Ball explained.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the update be noted.

**94/06 LAA (Local Authority Agreement) Update**

Mr. Holden presented a report on Local Authority Agreement which outlines progress in developing the Gloucestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA), in particular:

- The timetable for developing the Local Area Agreement
- The initial list of LAA outcomes
- The mechanisms being used to involve and inform partners

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the Local Authority Agreement (LAA) Report be noted.

**95/06 Complaints Monitoring update**

Mrs. Ball gave an update of the complaints logged for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 – 30<sup>th</sup> August 2006.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT** the update be noted.

**SECTION D – Exempt Items**

**96/06 Serious Further Offences update – A report on serious further offences was received and noted.**

**97/06 Any Other Business**

**Inside Justice Week – Court Open day 25<sup>th</sup> November 2006 , Presentation by a Board Member**

Mrs. Jago briefed the members of what happens during the day and mentioned that the day will be a good opportunity for TPO's to present what it is like working with offenders. **Action: The Chairman will email the Board members to seek a volunteer to assist.**

**98/06 Date of Next Meeting** – The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at 9.45a.m. in the Boardroom.

The Meeting closed at 13:00

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Chairman