



PROBATION BOARD
22nd February 2007
10.00 a.m. to 1.05 p.m.

PRESENT: O. Gleadall (Chair)
A. Abbasi, D. Clark, J. Hinchcliffe,
M. Ismail, A. Khayum, B. Maslen, F. McCready,
H. Redhead, L. Taylor, H. Williams, K. Wyatt.

Also in attendance: J. Fox, B. Kerslake, M. Wright, D. Thomas and J. Tarr.

154. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from R. Brown, S. Harrison, M. Murphy and G. Wordsworth, Chair Designate, who had been invited to attend as an observer.

155. Election of Chair

RESOLVED: That O. Gleadall be elected as Chair for this meeting in the absence of S. Harrison.

156. Declarations of interest

L. Taylor and the officers present declared a pecuniary interest in the Local Government Pension Scheme and the Pay Review (referred to in paragraph IV of the Chief Officers' Report (agenda item 17) and in agenda item 8 'Provisional resource allocation 2007/08' respectively.

F. McCready declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9 'Sub-Contracting Plans and developments'.

157. Items to be considered in the absence of the public

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded during consideration of paper B - 'Towards a procurement strategy' appended to the report 'Sub-Contracting Plans and developments' at agenda item 9, and whilst Members were expressing comments about one of the Panel Hearings referred to in paragraph VII of the Chief Officers' Report

UNCLASSIFIED

(agenda item 17) by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

158. Area Performance

i) Area Performance

D. Thomas said the quarterly report on trends in performance was no longer produced, partly because the Information Services Unit was prioritising work on the Regional Performance Improvement Project (to be referred to later in the meeting) which was currently more important. The 'traffic lights' were considered each month by the Strategic Management Meeting and whilst he did not have detailed comparative data readily available he recalled that those produced in April 2006 had been largely in amber or red. Overall the position had improved markedly.

He went through the two sheets and commented on how the Service was performing against the individual targets - in many cases how it was expected to perform at the end of the financial year – and also explained actions being taken to maintain or improve performance. In some instances work was already being done which would meet the target and careful recording meant that the correct picture was reflected in the data, which previously had not been the case.

D. Thomas and Chief Officer colleagues answered Members' questions. B. Kerslake said Amanda Cullen, when she took up her post as Director of HR and Organisational Development, would address the forecast increase in ethnic minorities living in South Yorkshire and Sheffield in particular. He added that managers would bear in mind when reporting on performance in the next financial year the suggestion by Members that the new Board may welcome a 'milestones' document indicating planned actions and timescales.

Sickness absence was also discussed. B. Kerslake reiterated that this was high on the priority list for Amanda.

RESOLVED:

1. That D. Thomas be thanked for his verbal report on performance.
2. That B. Kerslake's offer to try to provide a detailed breakdown for the next meeting of the ethnicity of staff and how it related to that of the community in the county be welcomed.

ii) Review of Top 10 Business Risks

UNCLASSIFIED

J. Fox said the schedule reflected the discussion and comments made at the last Strategic Management team. He noted that business risk would be reported in a different format from April 2007.

RESOLVED: That the Board record its satisfaction that the business risks appeared to be well controlled at the moment.

159. Minutes of last meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th December 2006 be approved, subject to the following amendments:

- i) the deletion of 'would' and the substitution of 'could' in the first line of the last paragraph of Minute 141.A on page 3,
- ii) the deletion of 'JK' and the substitution of 'DC' in the brackets in the third line of the preamble in Minute 148 on page 5.

160. Matters arising

i) Chair Designate and new Members (Minute 140)

J. Fox reported that following the recent round of interviews the names of four potential new Members, together with Gordon Wordsworth had been put forward and were awaiting approval by the Home Secretary.

ii) Regional Management of Approved Premises (Minute 141)

J. Fox said that he understood that all the Boards in the Region had approved the proposals in principle but that there were questions of affordability to be addressed. A report on this may come to a future meeting.

161. Draft Business Plan 2007/08

B. Kerslake pointed out that there were three elements still to be provided – planned workload, the budget and how the Financial Services Unit would contribute to delivering the Plan. He noted that some targets remained to be confirmed and some of them would be subject to ongoing negotiations with the Regional Offender Manager.

The draft Plan contained a lot of detail which was only really of relevance to managers but it had been included so that the Board could see it. The final version would have that detail omitted – he explained exactly what would be removed – and it would instead be in a management Action Plan. He added that under the high level Plan R. Brown intended to have agreements with each Chief Officer setting out what needed to be delivered within their area of responsibility,

UNCLASSIFIED

noting resources available, targets to be met and workload. Board Members would then be able to see more easily if areas of work fell below target. Members noted their pleasure that the mission statement had been revised.

RESOLVED: That the work on the Business Plan 2007/08 be endorsed.

162. Provisional resource allocation 2007/08

B. Kerslake said that the settlement appeared to be 'very tough' but noted that there was no detail available yet on how managers intended to spend the money. There appeared to be a 'resources gap' of £500,000 and it was intended to meet this from the staffing element of the budget.

D. Clark said that despite the reported overspend she believed the 2006/07 budget had been very well managed.

RESOLVED: That the difficult resource settlement be noted.

163. Sub-Contracting Plans and developments

B. Kerslake submitted a paper providing an update on the Sub-Contracting Plan and information about the regional context in which developments were taking place. He answered Members' questions and noted that the procurement strategy referred to in the supporting papers would come to a future Board meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That the engagement strategy be agreed subject to the Board's position being reiterated to the constituent Boards that it wished to retain the right to provide Offender Management services.
2. That the proposals outlined in paper B be noted and supported.

164. Regional Performance Improvement Project

M. Wright commented on the commissioning and purpose of the Project and J. Tarr gave a visual demonstration of processes on the Service's intranet. M. Wright noted that the Project had been well received by staff and it had led to both an improvement in performance, as reported earlier, and more consistency in practice. She added that text messaging to offenders' mobile 'phones had also been introduced as part of the Project. This was intended to remind them, amongst other things, of appointments, Court appearances and Accredited Programme events and would hopefully lead to improved compliance. Early indications were that it was already being effective. Whilst the

UNCLASSIFIED

Project was due to finish in April 2007 management intended to continue to apply the approach it had introduced to all relevant areas of practice and performance for the future.

RESOLVED: That the report on the Improvement Project be noted.

165. Premises planning

J. Fox submitted a report on the current thinking on premises planning and noted that a number of significant developments may take place over five years or so and that the inevitable disruption involved would have a significant effect on Service performance.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and endorsed as a reasonable position on premises planning to leave for consideration by the new Board and the Home Office Estate function.

166. Expenditure Monitoring

B. Kerslake submitted a report indicating the Service's actual and net expenditure positions, comparing them with relevant budgets. Information was shown for Offender Management Services, Intervention Services and for the Area.

RESOLVED: That the actual and projected year end position be noted.

167. Audit Committee – 16th January 2007

RESOLVED: That the report on the Audit Committee be noted.

168. Regional Partnership Board

J. Fox said the constituent Boards were almost ready to agree the draft Constitution with a slight change to paragraph 5.1. This was to the effect that the Chair and Vice-Chair would rotate rather than being elected.

RESOLVED: That the Chair, in consultation with the Chair Designate, the Chief Officer and Secretary, be authorised to agree a final version of the Constitution on behalf of this Board with the other three Boards in Yorkshire and Humberside.

169. Reports back from Members and Working Groups

D. Clark thanked J. Tarr and other officers involved for the very positive and celebratory nature of the Awards Ceremony held on 24th January.

UNCLASSIFIED

M. Ismail said that he had taken part in a new staff induction event on 9th January. He usually attended these with S. Harrison but on that day she had been unable to be present.

170. Chair's diary

RESOLVED: That the diary be noted.

171. Chief Officers' Report

i) Appointment of Representative to PBA Council

RESOLVED: That K. Wyatt be nominated as the Board's representative to the PBA Council, with effect from April 2007.

ii) Annual Accounts: Disclosure of Members' Remuneration

RESOLVED: That the changed arrangements be noted and Members notify the Director of Finance and Partnerships if they wished their remuneration details to be withheld from the 2006/07 Accounts.

iii) Members' Expenses

RESOLVED: That the request for prompt submission of Members' expenses claims be noted.

iv) Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – Consultation

RESOLVED: That the update on the consultation exercise be noted and the decision not to respond to the latest consultation due to significant competing workload pressures be supported..

v) Investigation into a complaint by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

RESOLVED: That the decision of the Ombudsman not to uphold the complaint be noted.

vi) South Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board (CJB)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the CJB held on 18th January 2007 be noted.

vii) Board Hearing Panels

RESOLVED: That the decisions of the Panels held on 9th and 26th January 2007 be noted.

UNCLASSIFIED

Members who had sat on the Grievance Hearing Panel on 9th January expressed concern about the way the case had been managed in the lead up to the grievance being registered and particularly that procedures appeared not to have been followed and timescales had not been adhered to. They speculated on the possible reasons. J. Fox said the Acting Personnel Officer had been present at the Panel hearing. Although the Acting Personnel Officer was not in any way responsible for any of the matters of concern, he was aware of them and would no doubt speak to A. Cullen when she took up her post. B. Kerslake said he would speak to R. Brown about the concerns and she would also follow them up with Amanda.

viii) Board Farewell Dinner

J. Fox said he would e-mail the menu options to Members and ask them to indicate their choices.

ix) Documents received

RESOLVED:

1. That the documents received be noted.
2. That the Board place on record its congratulations to Sam Chu on being awarded the 2007 Butler Trust Award for Excellence.

x) Schedule of likely Board agenda items – March 2007

RESOLVED: That the schedule be noted.

172. Essential Car User Allowance

RESOLVED: That Members who were attending that afternoon's JNCC consider relevant issues during their pre-meet.

173. Next Meeting: Thursday 22nd March 2007 at 10.00am in the Board Room, 45 Division Street, Sheffield.

AV/JF/A5/4
Feb07mi
20.2.07