

WEST MERCIA PROBATION BOARD

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Wednesday 12th March 2008 at 2.00pm at West Mercia Police Quarters, Hindlip Hall, Hindlip, Worcester.

MINUTES

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| Members in Attendance | Keith Austin; Libhin Bromley Peter Davidson; Martin Foley; Elaine Hickman; Kenneth Hockenhill; James Kelly (Chair); David Chantler (Chief Officer); Derek Muhl; Leon Murray; Valerie Reynolds and Andrew Strong. | |
| Assistant Chief Officers in Attendance | Graham Mallinson | Head of Business Services & Organisational Development |
| Officers | Secretary to the Board Treasurer to the Board Clerk to the Board | Norman Stott Heather Jasper (deputising for Mike Weaver) Kirsty Johnstone |

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| | Note from the Chair | The Board Chair thanked the Police Authority for their hospitality and agreed that he would write on behalf of the Board to the Chief Constable thanking him for the use of facilities at Hindlip. RESOLVED THAT: The Chair to write a formal letter of thanks to the Chief Constable. |
| 147. | Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1) | Bridget Nisbet and Judge McCreath. |
| 148. | Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 2) | The Chief Officer reported that he was now the Company Secretary (in a voluntary capacity) of Citterslow Ludlow Limited, a small charitable company. The Chief Officer also declared an interest in any review of the terms of employment of the new Chief Executives of Trusts (see minute 163 ante) |
| 149. | Confirmation of Minutes (Agenda Item 3; Papers A) | Minute 129) – Money Matters Third paragraph, fourth line; insert the word ‘and’ before expenditure. Minute 140) – Feedback from Board Members on Visits and Conferences Fourth paragraph, fifth line; insert the words ‘West Mercia as a corporate body’ before the word ‘will’. |

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| | | <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>Subject to the above amendments, the Minutes of the Board meeting held on Wednesday 6th February 2008 be agreed as an accurate record with the Chair being authorised to sign as such.</p> |
| 150. | Matters Arising from the Minutes (Agenda Item 4; Paper B) | <p>The table outlining actions taken following the previous meeting (Paper B) was noted.</p> <p>Minute 130) - Connect</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged that he has still yet to write to the Connect team for their continued hard work.</p> <p>Minute 132) – Probation Boards Association</p> <p>The Chair has yet to submit a report on the PBA Away Day.</p> <p>It was confirmed that Alan Wooderson has been invited to a future Board Meeting, and that a convenient date now needs to be found.</p> <p>Minute 141) – Committee Membership</p> <p>It was agreed to defer the canvassing of Board Members for the replacement of Keith Franklin on the Audit & Scrutiny Committee pending a review of Committees generally.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Paper B be noted. ii) The Chair to write to the Connect team to thank them for their continued hard work. iii) The Chair to submit a report on the PBA Away Day to the next meeting. iv) The appointment of a new member to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee be deferred until a review of Committees has taken place. |
| 151. | Money Matters (Agenda Item 5; Paper C) | <p>The Money Matters Report (Paper C) was noted and presented to the Board by Heather Jasper.</p> <p>The Chief Officer advised that he had received a letter from Roger Hill in relation to the additional funding for Probation. SLA negotiations will continue, based on the planning assumptions that have already been made and will exclude</p> |

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| | | <p>the possibility of additional resources.</p> <p>Roger Hill has been tasked with preparing a national plan for the use of the money which will need to be signed off by Ministers by 20th March. The national plan should be with areas immediately after Easter when areas will then need to produce a local plan to quantify their contribution to the planned reduction of the prison population.</p> <p>The additional money is agreed with the Treasury for the first year and should also be secured for years two and three. The additional funds equates to an increase of around 8.44% for West Mercia.but did not mean that the budget problems had necessarily been resolved.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>i) Paper C was noted.</p> <p>ii) The Budget figures for 2008/09 were approved, recognising that there were still a number of uncertainties to be resolved and that further work was necessary.</p> |
| 152. | Connect (Agenda Item 6) | <p>The Chief Officer provided a verbal report in relation to Connect.</p> <p>Connect in its current form (concentrating on short sentence prisoners) has now come to an end, with the numbers of staff on the project having been reduced to fit the new PPO Project format.</p> <p>The Board expressed their frustration at the demise of Connect and were concerned what the impact on the region would be if no such project continued. The Chief Officer advised that it would affect West Mercia's share of the new money allocated by the MoJ because this would have to make up the shortfall (15%) of short sentence prisoners who then go on to re-offend that wouldn't have re-offended if Connect was still in place.</p> <p>The Board suggested writing a letter to Roger Hill in relation to the current status of Connect. The Chief Officer advised against this at the moment, but accepted that such a letter might be appropriate in future.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>The verbal report and comments be noted.</p> |

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| 153. | Association of Chief Executives and Chief Officers of Probation (ACECOP) (Agenda Item 7; Paper D) | <p>The budget contributions or ACECOP for 2008/09 (Paper D) were noted. West Mercia's contribution will be £3,613)</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>Paper D be noted.</p> |
| 154. | Probation Boards Association (PBA) (Agenda item 8) | <p>The Chair advised that West Midlands had put their Board Chair forward to represent the West of Midlands region on the PBA Board. As West Mercia are also keen for their Board Chair being on the PBA Board it was now necessary for an election to take place. The Secretary explained that this would be organised by Richard Steer, Secretary to the West Midlands Board</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The verbal reports be noted.</p> |
| 155. | Performance (Agenda Item 9; Paper E) | <p>The Performance Dashboard (Paper E) was noted.</p> <p>Graham Mallinson advised the Board that this was still very much a "work in progress" document, and that there were some things we currently don't or can't measure. The dashboard is based on the European Excellence Model.</p> <p>Commissioning and Value for Money (marked red on the dashboard) will be picked up in the next planning round. The Chief Officer advised that the 10% target set by the Government for commissioning had effectively been abandoned. The Chief Officer also wanted to make the Board aware that monies to fund the Delius project were taken out of funds allocated for commissioning. Funds for commissioning have been allocated to the baseline budget for 08/09.</p> <p>The Chair commented on the benefits of a presentation which highlighted the key points in colour, but wondered if it could be produced in A3 size to make it easier to read.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Paper E be noted. ii) The Performance Dashboard be provided to the Board on a monthly basis, in size A3 if possible. |
| 156. | Delius (Agenda Item 10: Paper F) | <p>An update on Delius Progress (Paper F) was noted. The Board asked that Graham Mallinson change the word 'issues' to 'learning points' in his report.</p> |

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| | | <p>Graham Mallinson informed the Board that 96% of data records had been moved across from IOSS, and that any had been mostly in relation to historic data. The transition between Oasys and Delius was presenting some minor problems, but working was in hand to address this.</p> <p>A formal review of the implementation of the Project is being held on 1st April with representatives from Steria present.</p> <p>The original estimated costs for Delius were £200k. Total costs to date are in the region of £240k £250k, including capital for the new server. Final costs would be advised to the Board after the formal review meeting on 1st April.</p> <p>Feedback received from staff using Delius has been very good, Graham Mallinson commented on the tremendous performance and achievements of the IT team in implementing Delius.</p> <p>Peter Davidson thanked Graham Mallinson and the IT team for all their efforts, and noted that there was potential to use our experiences in relation to Delius as an income generating opportunity in the future.</p> <p>The Board agreed to the suggestion that the Chair write to the IT staff to thank them for their hard work during the implementation of Delius.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>i) Paper F be noted.</p> <p>ii) The Chair to write to the IT staff expressing the Board’s thanks for their hard work</p> |
| 157. | Transition to Trust (Agenda Item 11). | <p>a) The Chair updated the Board on Transition to Trust progress.</p> <p>All Board members (including himself) were being re-appointed by the Secretary of State with consideration apparently being given to minor changes in relation to terms and conditions.</p> <p>The Secretary reported that discussions with the MoJ on the Contract and Schedules were continuing, but that these should be in good enough state to be signed soon after 1st April 2008. The Chair thanked Norman Stott and his colleagues for their efforts</p> |

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| | | <p>b) It was noted that the Governance Handbook had been sent previously to Board Members prior to the meeting, and that draft model standing orders would be considered in detail in April.</p> <p>c) The Chief Officer updated the Board as to progress in relation to the launch events.</p> <p>The Chair and Chief will attend the House of Commons on 1st April to meet with local MPs. The Chief Officer asked Board Members to write to their local MPs to encourage them to attend.</p> <p>The official launch of the Trust will take place on 2nd April prior to the Board Meeting at Leswell Street. Mark Johnson will attend representing the service user voice. Local launches will then take place at all offices. The Chief Officer asked that if possible, local champions could make themselves available for these events.</p> <p>The Chair asked Board Members to review their postings on the website and to contact Jackie Bell with any changes so these would be implemented in time for 1st April.</p> <p>Martin Foley raised the issue regarding the letter sent to all staff in relation to the change of employment status. This had been discussed at the recent HR Committee meeting and it was felt that the letter had not been well received by staff. The Chief Officer advised that the letter was consistent with those sent out in the other five Trust areas, but accepted that the matter had not been handled particularly sympathetically by the centre.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>i) The verbal reports above be noted.</p> <p>ii) Board Members write to their local MPs to encourage them to attend the House of Commons on 1st April.</p> <p>iii) Local Champions to attend local launch events if able.</p> <p>iv) Board Members to check the website and ensure that all postings are up to date, then pass any amendments to Jackie Bell.</p> |
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| <p>158.</p> | <p>Chair's Briefing (Agenda Item 12; Paper G)</p> | <p>The Chair's Briefing (Paper G) was noted.</p> <p>The Chair explained that he had written an article to be published in the Guardian Public magazine on the move to Trust status.</p> <p>The Chair advised that it is his intention to carry out annual reviews for Board Members in the coming year.</p> <p>The Chair asked Board Members to contact Jackie Bell if they felt they still required an induction into any specific parts of the Service.</p> <p>The issue of the regional PBA representative was discussed again, with Libhin Bromley suggesting a regional 'get together' in the future. The Chair said he would discuss this possibility with the Chief Officer.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Paper G be noted. ii) Board Members to contact Jackie Bell regarding any induction to the Service still required. iii) The Chair to discuss the possibility of a regional 'get together' with the Chief Officer. |
| <p>159.</p> | <p>Reports from the Committees and Groups of the Board (Agenda Item 13; Papers H, I and J)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Minutes from the HR Committee meeting held on 17th January 2008 (Paper H) were noted by the Board. b) The Minutes from the JNCC Management meeting held on 17th January (Paper I) were noted by the Board. c) The draft Minutes from the Audit & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27th February 2008 were tabled on the day (Attached to these Minutes as Appendix A) and noted by the Board. d) The Minutes from the Health & Safety Committee meeting held on 19th February 2008 (Paper J) were noted by the Board. e) The draft Minutes of the Resource & Performance Committee meeting held on 3rd March 2008 were tabled on the day (Attached to these Minutes as Appendix B) and noted by the Board. f) The Minutes of the Diversity Strategy Group meeting |

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| | | <p>held on 14th January 2008 were tabled on the day (Attached to these minutes as Appendix C) and noted by the Board.</p> <p>g) The Minutes of the Diversity Strategy Group meeting held on 22nd February 2008 were tabled on the day (Attached to these minutes as Appendix D) and noted by the Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>i) All papers be noted.</p> |
| 160. | Feedback from Board Members on Visits and Conferences (Agenda Item 14) | There was nothing to report. |
| 161. | Risk Register (Agenda Item 15; Papers K and L) | <p>a) The report in relation to changes to the Risk Register (Paper K) was noted.</p> <p>Martin Foley advised the Board that single manning at Castle House had now ceased. The Health & Safety Committee advised UPW Supervisor Staff to use their discretion with regard to the number of offenders on work parties.</p> <p>b) The Risk Summary (Paper L) was noted.</p> <p>Elaine Hickman stated that at the recent HR Committee, consideration had been given to adding Sickness Absence and Appraisals as new Risks. The Chief Officer said that the Board Meeting on 2nd April would be used to review the Risk Register generally and to add any risks for the new Trust, if thought necessary.</p> <p>The Board discussed the possibility of adding Connect as a Risk but ultimately decided against this due to the limited life of the project</p> <p>c) There were no new risks arising from the Meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>i) Papers K and L be noted.</p> <p>ii) The Risk Register be reviewed at the Board Meeting on 2nd April with a view to adding new risks if necessary.</p> |
| 162. | Closed Session (Agenda Item 16) | The Board met in closed session to discuss restricted and “in confidence” matters. |

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| 163. | Any Other Business (Agenda Item 17) | <p>i) The Chair advised that under the new terms of employment for Chief Executives, existing Chief Officers would not receive any uplift to reflect their new status.</p> <p>The Chief Officer declared an interest as potential Chief Executive of the new Trust, but was invited to stay and participate to assist the Board with a dispassionate analysis of the likely new role.</p> <p>The Chief Officer said that changes in role would not be realised until Chief Executives are in post and carrying out the role. The Job Description for Chief Executives may need to be reviewed after 6 months, which might then affect terms and conditions.</p> <p>The Chair went on to say that he felt it was imperative to devise a template that clearly set out how the Board was going to work with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team in the future.</p> <p>The Chief Officer stated that there was a lack of clarity regarding the changes between the Chief Executives and their new employing bodies, following which the Board agreed that this should be taken up with the PBA.</p> <p>ii) The Draft Communications Strategy (Attached to these Minutes as Appendix E) was tabled. The Chair asked Board Members to review the document and provide comments back to Jackie Bell.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>i) The verbal reports be noted.</p> <p>ii) The Chair on behalf of the Board to write to the PBA asking them to look into the lack of clarity in role regarding Chief Executives and their new employing bodies.</p> <p>iii) Board Members to provide comments back to Jackie Bell in relation to the draft Communications Strategy.</p> |
| 164. | Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 18) | Wednesday 2 nd April 2008 2.00pm, Leswell Street |
| 165. | Meeting Ended | The meeting closed at 16:50 |

Signed:

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Board Chair

Dated:
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