

## WEST MERCIA PROBATION TRUST

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Wednesday 24th September 2008 at 10.00am at the Training and Development Suite, Leswell Street, Kidderminster.

### MINUTES

<b>Members in Attendance</b>	Keith Austin; Libhin Bromley; David Chantler (Chief Executive); Peter Davidson; Martin Foley; Kenneth Hockenull; James Kelly (Chair); Derek Muhl; Leon Murray; Bridget Nisbet; Valerie Reynolds.	
	Bridget Nisbet assumed the Chair from Minute 221 to the end of the meeting.	
<b>Assistant Chief Officers in Attendance</b>	Graham Mallinson Julie Masters Alec Rudd	Head of Business Services & Organisational Development Head of Offender Management Head of HR
<b>Officers</b>	Norman Stott Lynne Coombes Heather Jasper	Secretary to the Trust Board Clerk to the Trust Board Deputy Treasurer to the Trust Board
<b>Also in attendance</b>	Mark Johnson	Service user adviser to the Board

<b>216.</b>	<b>Apologies (Agenda Item 1).</b>	Apologies were received from Elaine Hickman (Member), Keith Austin (Member), Mike Weaver (Treasurer to the Board) and Helen Allen (Head of Interventions).  HH Judge McCreath (Member) and Andrew Strong (Member) were not in attendance.  Julie Masters joined the meeting at 12.00pm for Minute 221.
<b>217.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 2).</b>	There were no declarations of interest,
<b>218.</b>	<b>Confirmation of Minutes (Agenda Item 3; Paper A).</b>	<b>Resolved that:</b>  <b>The Minutes of the Board meeting held on Wednesday 30th July 2008 were agreed as an accurate record with the Chair being authorised to sign as such.</b>
<b>219.</b>	<b>Matters Arising from the Minutes (Agenda Item 4; Paper B).</b>	<b>Minute 208) – Risk Register</b>  The Chief Executive confirmed that he had contacted Christine Lawrie but was not able to provide any updated

		<p>information. He had also raised the property issue both with the ROMs office and Andrew Langdon-Ellis from the Central Contracting Unit (CCU) who had agreed to take the matter forward. The Secretary said that at a recent Probation Secretaries meeting, reservations were expressed by probation areas up and down the country of their concerns about the new central estates contract.</p> <p><b>Minute 201) – Committees of the Trust Board</b></p> <p>The meeting noted that Committee Chairs would now be submitting reports of the main strategic issues arising out of the minutes of committee meetings</p>
<p><b>220.</b></p>	<p><b>Performance Dashboard (Agenda Item 5; Paper C).</b></p>	<p>The Head of Business Services &amp; Organisational Development said that most of the Dashboard data had been discussed at the Resources &amp; Performance meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008. A number of new measures will be the subject of reports in the future which will probably result in West Mercia being scored ‘red’, but this was likely to be a national pattern. Information on Tier 4 OASys and PPO assessments is now drawn directly by the Centre which has resulted in issues of application. This may remain an issue for the remainder of the year. Some Programme completions are scored as ‘green’ because there are currently no set targets for August. This will change for September/October figures.</p> <p>The Head of HR reported on People Results and noted that absenteeism was still an area for concern. Long term absence was mainly stress related. HR continue to work on reducing short term absence. Appraisals were running at a 35% completion rate and would continue to be monitored. It was noted that appraisals had been due for completion by end of September and that confidence issues may emerge if not all staff are appraised. Members were advised that there had been delays connected with Manager counter-signatures. The Chief Executive advised that all top level appraisals had been completed.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p><b>i) Paper C be noted.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p><b>i) Head of HR to submit a report on appraisals for November’s meeting.</b></p>

<p><b>221.</b></p>	<p><b>OMI Inspection (Agenda Item 6).</b></p>	<p>The Head of Offender Management gave a verbal report and an update on the initial OMI Inspection feedback. The inspection takes place every four years across all probation areas. The criteria covered were assessment, risk management, supervision and offender planning, and leadership and strategic management. The cases were randomly selected. Interviews were held with Offender Managers lasting between 1½ to 2 hours. Questionnaires were sent out to offenders (39 out of 100 had given feedback) and prison staff were also interviewed. Inspectors also interviewed groups including senior management, Board Members and Chair, middle management, strategic partners such as SMB, CAB, court staff and people delivering programmes. Thirteen inspectors were located in four different offices and five staff were trained to work as assessors.</p> <p>The initial feedback was restricted to strengths and weaknesses with a more comprehensive report due in October. Some of the areas for improvement (e.g. sentence planning and quality of reports to court) had already been identified from a previous risk assessment. The Inspectors had also raised some issues around MAPPA and diversity, but the Chief Executive confirmed that there had been no 'alert' cases</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p><b>i) The verbal report be noted.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p><b>i) OMI Inspection report to be submitted to November's Board meeting.</b></p>
<p><b>222.</b></p>	<p><b>Business Plan (Agenda Item 7; Paper D).</b></p>	<p>The Chief Executive gave an overview of the plan and advised that a more comprehensive report had not been available because of continuing uncertainties about the future direction of the service generally and for Trusts in particular. He explained that the plan had evolved from the current budgetary situation, and that the framework was based on a three year period incorporating a facilitative, leading and co-ordinating approach.</p> <p>The Head of Business Services &amp; Organisational Development gave a presentation on budget information. First year figures incorporated five months of 'real' performance data and a projection for the following 7 months. The figures assumed no increase in the expected grant or a performance bonus but did assume a share of the £40 million</p>

		<p>resource for “probation improvement”. The recently commissioned consultancy reports demonstrated potential areas where staff may be removed without detriment to the effectiveness of the organisation. It was noted that Head Office costs accounted for 14% of the total budget and costs need to be reduced by approximately £300,000.</p> <p>Braley House Hostel also had cost implications and really needed to be self funding. One option being considered is running Programmes from Braley House instead of Castle House at Worcester. There were further resource benefits to be fed into the data although these had not been included at this stage because negotiations were still in progress.</p> <p>Income generating opportunities were still being explored, for example, Rural Regeneration Zone and Advantage West Midlands. At this point the Chair declared an interest in Rural Regeneration Zone projects.</p> <p>Following a wide-ranging discussion of the plan during which a number of members expressed their concern about the content, it was agreed that the Chief Executive would revisit the plan and incorporate some of the suggestions made by Members. In particular, it was agreed that the document needed to be based on a one year plan, identify a specific ‘audience’ , be concise, focused, proactive and explain the implications for staff, service users and local communities The amended plan would then be reviewed at a Resource &amp; Performance meeting scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008.</p> <p>The Chief Executive reported that opportunities for external funding continue to be investigated and that significant opportunities have been identified</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p><b>i) Paper D be noted.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p><b>i) Chief Executive to amend Business Plan for discussion at the Resource &amp; Performance committee meeting scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> November.</b></p>
223.	<p><b>Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams: Report on Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Youth Offending Service</b></p>	<p>The Board received the report on the joint inspection of the YOT teams in Shropshire. The Chief Executive also explained that scores of 3 across the board were a credit to the YOT and represented good overall performance. It was agreed that the YOTs Manager should be invited to a future ‘informal’ Board meeting.</p>

	<b>2008 (Agenda Item 8; Paper E).</b>	<p><b>Resolved that :</b></p> <p><b>i) Paper E be noted.</b></p>
<b>224.</b>	<b>Risk Register (Agenda Item 9; Paper F).</b>	<p>There were no new risks to be considered by the Board.</p> <p><b>Resolved that :</b></p> <p><b>i) Paper F be noted.</b></p>
<b>225.</b>	<b>Probation Chiefs Association (Agenda Item 10).</b>	<p>The Chief Executive said that all 42 Chief Officers/ Chief Executives and 140 Assistant Chief Officers were now included in membership of this group.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p><b>i) Verbal report be noted.</b></p>
<b>226.</b>	<b>Probation Association (Agenda Item 11).</b>	<p>The annual report which had been previously circulated was noted.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p><b>i) Previously circulated report be noted.</b></p>
<b>227.</b>	<b>Committees of the Trust Board (Agenda Item 12; Papers G, H, I, J, K, L, M and N).</b>	<p>a) HR/JNCC Committee</p> <p>i) Committee Chair's Report</p> <p>As recommended by the Committee Chair in her report, Members agreed to endorse the new JNCC structure, to approve the new terms of reference and Board involvement in formal dispute matters. The Head of HR said that the upgrading of HR Information systems was likely to be a collaboration with Staffordshire, but that a delay has occurred because Staffordshire were currently upgrading their system.</p> <p>The Executive Team would make a decision regarding procurement of the new system and the head of HR would keep the HR Committee informed of progress.</p> <p>ii) The draft Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2008 were noted.</p> <p>b) Health &amp; Safety Committee</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2008 were noted. It was also agreed that as a sub-committee of the HR</p>

		<p>committee, the decisions of future Health &amp; Safety meetings would be reported to the Board through the HR committee meeting minutes.</p> <p>c) Resource &amp; Performance Committee</p> <p>i) The Committee Chair's report was noted.</p> <p>ii) The draft Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008 were noted.</p> <p>d) Audit &amp; Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>i) The Committee Chair's report was noted.</p> <p>ii) The draft Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008 were noted.</p> <p>e) PR/Communications Group</p> <p>The main work concerning strategy had been agreed and approved by the Board and future monitoring and evaluation would now be overseen by the Resource &amp; Performance committee. Members were invited to suggest how future targets could be measured</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p><b>i) Papers G, H, I, J, K, L, M and N be noted.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p><b>i) The Head of Business Services &amp; Organisational Development to be invited to the HR committee meeting when the HR Information system is to be discussed.</b></p>
228.	<b>Information Items (Agenda Item 13).</b>	<p>The information items were noted, the Secretary explaining that copies of the annual reports of the Parole Board and the Prison and Probation Ombudsman were available through him.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p><b>i) Information items were noted.</b></p>
229.	<b>Closed Session (Agenda Item 14).</b>	<p>The Board met in closed session to discuss restricted and "in confidence" matters.</p>
230.	<b>Any Other Business (Agenda Item 15).</b>	<p>There were no additional matters to discuss.</p>

<b>231.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 16).</b>	Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2008, 10.00am, Leswell Street.
<b>232.</b>	<b>Meeting Ended.</b>	The meeting closed at 1.30pm.

Signed:

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Board Chair

Dated:

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