

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SUB COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting of the Criminal
Justice Sub-Committee held in HM
Prison, Inverness on Tuesday 27
August, 2013 at 2.00pm.

PRESENT

Mrs M Davidson

Ms J Douglas

Mr M Greene (substitute)

Mrs L MacDonald

Mrs D Mackay

Mr G Mackenzie

Mrs M Paterson

Officials in attendance:-

Ms F Palin, Head of Social Care, Health and Social Care Service

Ms L Millar, Team Manager (Substance Misuse), Criminal Justice, Health and Social
Care Service

Ms A Macrae, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Service

Mrs L Macdonald in the Chair.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr A Christie, Mr T MacLennan,
Ms L Munro, Ms F Robertson, and Ms J Slater.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Presentation by Governor of HM Prison, Inverness

Ms Caroline Johnston, Governor, HM Prison, Inverness gave a presentation during which she provided an overview of the footprint of the Prison and its capacity in terms of prisoner numbers. She advised that the prisoners located at the Prison were usually serving 4 years and under, and included males aged between 16 and 21 years (remand young offenders), males over 21 years (remand/convicted), and females (convicted) who were housed in the Community Integration Unit (CIU) located at the Prison. In response to questions she provided an update on the referral process and eligibility for the CIU, noting that while currently there were no prisoners who met the criteria, it anticipated that there would be an intake of four prisoners in September 2013.

Thereafter, Ms Johnston reported that work at the Prison was aligned to the Scottish Prison Service's nine outcomes for offenders which were linked to the Justice Strategy for Scotland and National Performance Framework. These outcomes were designed to rehabilitate offenders while at the same time protecting the public.

Ms Johnston further reported on the multi-agency approach provided at the Links Centre at HMP, Inverness and the range of agencies represented. She outlined the range of work undertaken with prisoners in preparation for their release, and the opportunities for them to look at their offending behaviours and any addiction issues,

develop coping strategies through participation in programme related work, and to make links with the community support available. There were also opportunities to develop improved skills through employability and educational work, and through work opportunities at the Prison. Reference was made to other pre-release issues such as the allocation of personal officers to prisoners, community integration plans, and pre-release assessments and meetings. A summary was also provided on the parole process, integrated case management, and home detention curfews as part of the pre-release process.

Continuing, Ms Johnston referred to the forthcoming introduction of a Scottish Government funded mentoring service at the Prison for specific groups of offenders aged between 16 and 25, and explained that mentoring would be provided by both volunteers and ex-offenders with the aim of changing the behaviour patterns of offenders.

In conclusion, Ms Johnston reported that the key priority areas to be delivered over the next 18 months included a full space review of the Prison to maximise the use of the limited space available, securing additional temporary accommodation on site to improve facilities, and development of a pilot scheme whereby prisoners would have the option to have dedicated short term staff support in the period before their release.

During the presentation Ms Johnston responded to the points raised by Members in relation to the impact of the integration of health and social care services in Highland on the delivery of services at the Prison, and in regard to the opportunities to identify and thereafter target repeat offenders through the mentoring services referred to in her presentation.

Ms Johnston confirmed that post integration a good level of service was being provided in regard to primary health care and through the multi-disciplinary mental health provision. She reported on the mechanisms for identifying repeat offenders, and confirmed that one of the target groups of the Scottish Government funded mentoring scheme would be prolific offenders. She also confirmed that an internal care mentoring service was provided within the Prison through a listening scheme linked into the Samaritans, and also through peer mentoring.

Thereafter, the Chair thanked Ms Johnston for hosting the meeting and for her presentation.

4. Prison-Based Criminal Justice Social Work Services

There was circulated Report No CJS/06/13 dated 13 August 2013 by the Director of Health and Social Care, which explained the range of 'throughcare' services provided by Criminal Justice Services to convicted prisoners and their families. In addition the report outlined the services provided in HMP, Inverness by the prison-based social work team.

The report explained that 'throughcare' denoted the range of social work and associated services to prisoners and their families from the point of sentence, during their period of imprisonment, and following release into the community. It was confirmed that this was one of the key interventions of Criminal Justice Services in terms of achieving the national outcomes set by the Scottish Government. In this regard it was explained that the statutory prison-based social work service in Inverness, was funded by the Scottish Prison Service, and subject to a Service Level Agreement (SLA), which set out the key elements for service delivery nationally, including working in

partnership, consistency of service delivery and achieving best value.

Thereafter, the Team Manager provided Members with an overview of the structure and composition of the Social Work team based at HMP, Inverness, and the statutory and non-statutory services provided.

Discussion focused on the non-statutory services delivered through the multi-disciplinary Substance Misuse Team and the Alcohol project delivered at the Prison. Members were advised that these programmes sought to assist prisoners to break the link between addiction and re-offending and supported prisoners prior to and following release. Reference was also made to the Team's contribution to the assessment process for low risk prisoners in regard to home detention curfews, in conjunction with the Scottish Prison Service.

In response to questions, the Team Manager confirmed that research undertaken in conjunction with the NHS Research Centre had demonstrated that a significant proportion of prisoners involved in the Alcohol programme showed significantly reduced levels of alcohol consumption and numbers of convictions.

Following further discussion, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the report.

5. Performance Report – Quarter 4, 2012/13 and Quarter 1 2013/14

There was circulated Report No CJS/07/13 dated 14 August 2013 by the Director of Health and Social Care which provided the most recently available performance and monitoring information for Criminal Justice Services. This covered Quarter 4 2012/13 and Quarter 1 2013/14, as reported to the Northern Community Justice Authority (NCJA) and Highland Council respectively.

In regard to current developments it was reported that the existing Service Level Agreement with Sacro (Safeguarding Communities, Reducing Offending) to provide a supported accommodation service to offenders subject to statutory supervision, was to be terminated for the reasons set out in the report. In this regard a report would be submitted to the next Finance, Housing and Resources Committee to establish a number of posts as an alternative to the Sacro service. It was explained that for those very high risk offenders requiring additional support on release, as agreed through the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements, funding would be available from the Supported Accommodation budget.

It was further reported that the Chief Officer and Principal Officer, Criminal Justice Service in Highland were to meet with academics from Robert Gordon's University to discuss a proposal to undertake a longitudinal study of offenders, which would involve tracking offenders after their statutory supervision to research the longer-term impacts of CJS supervision.

During discussion on this item the Head of Health and Social Care responded to questions from Members during which she confirmed that performance in the Highlands was generally in line with other areas within the NCJA. It was reported that a continuing challenge was meeting the performance indicator in regard to the percentage of offenders starting work on Community Payback Orders.

In this regard, the Team Manager reported that there were issues in terms of the late notification of CPOs from courts outwith the area, and issues where an offender was

already subject to a CPO, that were not reflected in the performance statistics.

Thereafter, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the report.

The meeting ended at 3.20pm.
