

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**CRIMINAL JUSTICE SUB COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Meeting of the Criminal  
Justice Sub-Committee held in Council  
Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road,  
Inverness on Wednesday 3  
September, 2014 at 2.05pm.

**PRESENT**

Mrs M Davidson  
Ms J Douglas  
Mr M Green  
Ms L Munro

Mrs M Paterson  
Mrs G Ross  
Mr G Ross  
Ms M Smith

Officials in attendance:-

Ms F Palin, Head of Social Care, Care and Learning Service  
Mr J Maybee, Principal Officer, Criminal Justice, Care and Learning Service  
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

Also in attendance:

Mr P Rawlinson, Head of Offender Outcomes, HMP Inverness (Item 3 only)  
Mr M Bibbey, Chief Executive, Venture Trust  
Mr J Connelly, Head of Programmes, Venture Trust

**Mrs G Ross in the Chair**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr A Christie.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

**Ms J Douglas declared a non-financial interest in items 4 and 5 below as a Director of Inverness, Badenoch & Strathspey Women's Aid but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion.**

**3. Presentation**

*Members agreed to take this additional item of business in light of the request for further information at the last meeting of the Sub-Committee.*

Mr P Rawlinson, Head of Offender Outcomes, HMP Inverness was in attendance and addressed issues raised by Members at their last meeting regarding the Inspection Report action plan.

Members were provided with background to HMP Inverness and a general overview of things that were currently happening there at the moment. Some of the information provided is detailed as follows:

- HMP Inverness was the smallest prison in Scotland and was also one of the oldest. There was speculation as to whether a new prison would be built in Inverness and it was felt that the HM Inspectorate Report on the prison would help aid that process and provide impetus to a new prison being built.
- the prison was supposed to have provision for 98 prisoners but usually operated with about 120 prisoners. To keep the numbers at this level, prisoners had to be transferred to different prisons.
- one of the comments in the HM Inspectorate Report was on the lack of work spaces in the prison. Arising from this there had been a successful bid for a new member of staff who would develop a life skills course. Progress on this initiative would be submitted to a future meeting. The building was also inadequate for the provision of work spaces and there had been discussion about whether a permanent building or portacabin could be built in the prison for this purpose. It was hoped that in future some provision for increasing the amount of work space would be built. It was hoped that a bigger Gym could also be provided in future.
- a bid for capital funding to improve the Reception area of the prison had been submitted;
- the separate cells in the prison were verging on not being fit for purpose and consideration was being given on how to make improvements. These cells were not used on a regular basis;
- in order to improve recreation facilities a large dormitory had been turned into a recreation area;
- a representative of the Scottish Qualifications Authority was to visit the prison to discuss introducing SVQs for inmates;
- inmates undertook work for Blythswood Care;
- two females were currently in the prison's community integration unit where they spent time with social work officers and in community placements;
- a new timetable had been introduced so as to avoid clashes between education and recreational activities;
- there were regular projects in the prison such as a creativity and care group; an Eden Court music project; partnerships such as with Highland Life Highland to do literacy workshops and the Library Service to provide new and different reading material;
- there was a national review of all purposeful activity which was prompted by the Criminal Justice Group in the Scottish Parliament. Ideas were to be developed as well as indicators for measuring success. For example, a Fathers' evening event had been held whereby children were allowed to visit their father in prison to watch a film together;
- discussions were ongoing regarding a Community HUB in Inverness, in conjunction with Highland Homeless Trust and Positive Prison Positive Future;
- in conjunction with Moray Firth Radio it was hoped to deliver radio skills training for inmates;
- the prison was involved in violence against women partnerships;
- there was an integrated case management process for prisoners to assess their needs. As part of this process there was a case conference with prisoners and a template of a record of outcomes of a case conference would be circulated to the Sub-Committee for information;
- in terms of home detention curfew, many people were on licensed conditions, and so far there were not many breaches of the curfew;
- in relation to mental health, a Doctor visited the prison once a week and there was a full time Mental Health Nurse.

In discussion the following points were raised by Members:-

- the balance between rehabilitation and retribution of prisoners seemed about right at HMP Inverness;
- members welcomed what was an excellent HM Inspectorate Report on the Prison;
- while there were advantages in delaying the core screening of prisoners needs when they first arrived in prison, there should be some form of screening at the outset to identify any urgent needs that they may have. It was advised that on the first night in prison, prisoners would be interviewed by an officer to assess their needs, such as ensuring everything was sorted at home while they spent time in prison;
- in terms of the father's evening, it was queried whether some pre-work was required to encourage families to come in to see their father in prison. It was advised that this was largely voluntary as families had to want to come in, but the prison did what it could to assist this happening;
- in terms of the bikes project in the prison, this was a good initiative and there was a need to ensure that the skills prisoners obtained could be engaged in the community once they left prison. In this respect, there was evidence that there was a willingness in the Highlands to employ former prisoners;
- reference was made to the reoffending rate being too high, and it was queried what would make the biggest difference to lower the rate of reoffending. It was advised that reducing poverty, good housing, employment, family contact and access and skill to use computers, were the biggest factors that would help reduce reoffending.

The Chair on behalf of the Sub-Committee thanked Mr Rawlinson for attending the meeting.

#### **4. Performance Report – Quarter 4 Northern Community Justice Authority & Quarter 1 2014/15 The Highland Council**

There was circulated Report No CJS/07/14 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided the most recently available performance and monitoring information for Criminal Justice Services. This covered Quarter 4 2013/14 as reported to the Northern Community Justice Authority and Quarter 1 2014/15 as reported to the Chief Executive, The Highland Council respectively. In addition to the performance information some specific case studies were provided in the report, which illustrated the complexity of the work undertaken by criminal justice social workers with offenders in helping them to address their needs and offending behaviour.

In particular, the performance indicator relating to promoting and raising the profile of Community Payback was referred to. In this respect, an article from the Inverness Courier (1/4/14) was tabled at the meeting regarding work being undertaken in Trinity Church by offenders, which reflected the excellent work that was done in regard to unpaid work. Also of note was the upward trend in the percentage of offenders starting unpaid work within 7 working days which was welcomed.

In discussion, the following comments were made by Members:-

- The case studies were welcomed which showed the complexity in dealing with offenders and it was good to see positive outcomes with their rehabilitation;
- for comparative purposes it was requested that Scottish national average performance information for Community Justice Authorities be provided in the

next report;

- it was confirmed that it was standard procedure to report to the Police any information passed on to staff about abuse of children. There was also a system of child plans and named persons for sharing information. Childrens Service Workers, School Nurses, and Primary Mental Health Workers provided support to children and young people in schools. The system was therefore alert to child abuse. There was also a programme for perpetrators of domestic abuse delivered by Criminal Justice Social Work in Highland and the establishment of MATAC – Multi Agency Tasking and Coordinating Meeting for Domestic Abuse – led by Police Scotland.
- It was queried whether there were adequate staffing levels in Criminal Justice Services to deal with the high case load. It was advised that the Criminal Justice Service was 100% funded from the Scottish Government; and that this was based on a formula linked to court reports and people placed on orders;
- There was no more important role for Highland Councillors than looking after disadvantaged children.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the report.

## **5. Level of Service & Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) – Self-Supported Evaluation**

There was circulated Report No CJS/08/14 by the Director of Care and Learning which advised Members on the progress of the Criminal Justice Service's Supported Self Evaluation Exercise on its use of the new national Level of Service/Case Management Inventory offender risk and need framework.

The LS/CMI provided a structure for Social Workers to consider the likelihood of further offending using a score based level of risk/need; identified an individual's needs which could then be targeted/addressed via treatment or intervention; identified responsivity issues and identified whether any positive aspects or strengths exist. This structure would provide comprehensive information to help make decisions about such matters as the required level of supervision or intervention and which programmes/interventions to engage an individual offender on.

An initiative to co-ordinate a national supported self-evaluation exercise was established in March, 2013, and involved the Criminal Justice Social Work Services of all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. The subject for self assessment was the implementation of the new electronic LS/CMI offender risk and need assessment framework, which went live across Scotland on a phased basis in 2011/12. The report detailed local authorities experiences to date with the new system and areas for further improvement. Information would be submitted to the Sub-Committee at a future meeting about the performance of the new system.

During discussion, the following comments were raised:-

- It was advised that the system was a significant step forward but it did take more time to use and apply and there were no additional resources from the Scottish Government to do this. Therefore Social Workers were spending more time on using this system than they might be on face to face contact with offenders. However, it did give much more information about the needs of individuals;
- There was a structured training programme for Social Workers prior to them being able to use the system.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the findings of the LS/CMI Self-Supported Evaluation exercise and the improvement plan.

## **6. The Venture Trust Living Wild – Chance for Change Programme**

There was circulated Report No CJ/09/14 by the Director of Care and Learning which advised that The Highland Council administers a Service Level Agreement with Venture Trust on behalf of all 32 local authority criminal justice social work services in Scotland for the provision of the Living Wild – Chance for Change programme. The report outlined the aims and objectives of the programme which was available to young people aged 16 –30 years, and related developments, including the Next Steps programme for women offenders.

Mr M Bibbey, Chief Executive and Mr J Connelly, Head of Programmes, Venture Trust were in attendance and gave a presentation on the Venture Trust background and development. Venture Trust was contracted by the Scottish Government to provide a programme of intensive personal development support to young people in Scotland who were subject to Community Payback Orders, Probation Orders, Drug Treatment and Testing Orders, Restriction of Liberty Orders, Home Detention Curfews, parole or taking part in the Turnaround programme.

Information on the The Living Wild – Chance for Change programme was provided, in terms of it's participants, methodology, financial context and performance. A DVD on the Living Wild programme was also shown. The Trust's aim was to help participants achieve the following outcomes:- to reduce their risk of re-offending; to increase their self confidence; to increase their employability; to improve their relationships with others in their community; to make increased use of services and opportunities within their communities and to take advantage of employment, education, training and volunteering opportunities. Performance results showed that the programme was successful in making positive changes in participants lives.

In discussion, Members raised the following points:-

- The programme demonstrated that showing trust in young people and giving them responsibility which they had never had before, did make a difference to their lives;
- The programme was a big success and the benefits of taking young people away for a weekend course achieved so much more than other types of rehabilitation methods. It was important however that the support mechanisms were in place for the participants when the course ended so that changes in their lives could be sustained. It was confirmed that the Trust had looked at purposeful activity in phase three of the programme that would continue the participant's journey of positive outcomes in their lives, and some core themes had been developed that would be delivered as a result. The Trust would continue to work with Partnership organisations to continue the support offered to participants, so that the changes in the lives and skills developed through the programme would last into the long term.
- It was queried whether the Trust had considered franchising the model of the business. In this respect it was advised that this had been considered, but in order for this to happen, the business required to be completely financially sustainable in the first instance.

The Chair on behalf of the Group thanked Mr M Bibbey and Mr J Connelly, Venture

Trust for their interesting and inspirational presentation.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the Venture Trust Living Wild – Chance for Change programme.

The meeting ended at 4.05pm.