

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

Minutes of Meeting of the Criminal Justice Sub-Committee held in the Convener's Hospitality Room in Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday 2 December, 2015 at 10.30am.

PRESENT

Mrs I Campbell
Mr A Christie
Mr S Fuller

Mr G Ross
Ms J Slater

Officials in attendance:-

Ms F Palin, Head of Adult Services, Care and Learning Service
Mr J Maybee, Principal Officer, Criminal Justice, Care and Learning Service
Ms A Macrae, Committee Administrator, Corporate Development Service

Also in attendance:-

Mr C McGrory, Social Worker, Criminal Justice Services

Appointment of Chair

In the absence of the Chair and on the motion of Mr G Ross seconded by Mr S Fuller, the Sub Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mrs I Campbell as Chair for the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr D Alston, Mr M Greene, Mrs D Millar, Mrs D Mackay, Mrs M Paterson and Ms G Ross.

2. Declarations of Interest

Mr A Christie declared a non-financial interest in Items 3, 4 and 5 below as General Manager of Inverness, Badenoch and Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureau and also in Item 4 as a Director of the Highland Third Sector Interface but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude him from taking part in the discussion.

3. Performance Report – Quarter 1 15/16 Northern Community Justice Authority & Quarter 2 The Highland Council 15/16

There had been circulated Report No CJ/08/15 dated 19 November 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided the most recently available performance and monitoring information for Criminal Justice Services. This covered Quarter 1 15/16

as reported to the Northern Community Justice Authority and Quarter 2 15/16 as reported to the Chief Executive, Highland Council respectively.

The Principal Officer referred to the improvement in performance in terms of the proportion of criminal justice social work reports submitted to the Courts by the due date, noting that this had increased from 91% in Quarter 1 to 96% in Quarter 2 of 2015/16. He explained that it had not been possible to produce figures for Highland for Quarter 1, 2015/16 in regard to the performance indicator for the first review that takes place within three months of the date of the Community Payback Order (CPO). This had been due to a shortfall in team managers within criminal justice social work which had impacted on the ability to gather quality assurance information. However he indicated that the staffing complement was now back up to full strength and that this would allow the data to be produced more consistently.

During discussion, Members raised the following points:-

- it was noted that the information for Highland for Quarter 1 in regard to performance for the first review of CPOs could not be produced retrospectively;
- the potential for the courts through CPOs to increase the number of compulsory requirements for example in relation to alcohol, drugs or mental health treatments; reference was also made to the fact that a combination of treatments may be required;
- in regard to the above it was noted that some offenders may already be receiving other types of interventions in addition to the requirements set in a CPO;
- discussion in regard to the combination of factors outwith the control of criminal justice social work which may cause the fluctuations in the average number of hours per week to complete the unpaid work/other activity as detailed in the report.

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

4. Redesigning the Community Justice System

There had been circulated Report No CJ/09/15 dated 12 November 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which further updated Members on progress in relation to the redesign of Community Justice in Scotland and the transition arrangements.

In regard to the transition arrangements, the Head of Adult Services reported that the Scottish Government continued to anticipate that Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) would be able to assume their responsibilities under the new model in transition from 1 April 2016, with full responsibility being conferred from 1 April 2017. CPPs were required to make their plans for 2016/17 available to the Scottish Government and to COSLA in support of the transition process in January 2016. This included a requirement to share Highland's forward arrangements for the strategic planning and delivery of community justice. In December 2016, CPPs would be required to produce their first plan for community justice.

The Head of Adult Services also reported that an initial meeting of community justice agencies had been convened by the Director of Care & Learning in August 2015 to discuss the new arrangements in Highland. This included an early discussion about how agencies would be involved, and how this would impact on their own governance processes. A further meeting was scheduled for 11 December 2015 and partner agencies had been asked to identify a suitably qualified person to support the

development of local governance for community justice.

During discussion, Members raised the following points:-

- issues around whether the transition funding which had been made available to Community Planning Partnership (CPP) by the Scottish Government was adequate in terms of delivering the transition arrangements;
- in regard to the above it was noted that while the transition funding was sufficient in the current year there was uncertainty in regard to funding levels for the remainder of the transition period up to March 2018; and
- a point in regard to the progress being made with the preparation of the local community justice plans for 2016/17 which the Scottish Government required be produced for comment by January 2016.

Thereafter, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the proposed model for the future model of community justice described in the report and the transition arrangements.

5. Joint Sex Offender Project

There had been circulated Report No CJ/10/15 dated 20 November 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which outlined the work of the Joint Sex Offender Project which delivered the Moving Forward: Making Changes Sex Offender Programme.

The Chair welcomed Mr Craig McGrory to the meeting who proceeded to give a presentation on the Project during which he provided an overview on suitability of offenders for the programme and the process of assessment in this regard. He also provided a summary of the pre-group work and a summary of the essential and optional group work modules for offenders involved in the programme. He advised that the programme has been developed specifically for use in both custody and community settings. It was a cognitive behaviour based programme aimed at medium to high risk adult male sex offenders subject to statutory supervision. The programme aimed to address the factors which caused men to sexually offend, and to reduce the risk of reoffending in the future.

During discussion, Members raised the following points:-

- a point in regard to the average length of time it may take an offender to complete the essential and optional group work modules and the factors that may impact on this such as staff resources to deliver the modules and employers who may not be understanding in regard to the need for the offender to take time off work;
- the interactions that took place with clients if they required further interventions after completing the programme and whether other interventions were available through the statutory agencies or third sector; and
- a point in regard to the numbers enrolled in the programme in Highland and which it was confirmed would initially be delivered through groups in Inverness and Dingwall.

Thereafter, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report and presentation and acknowledged the work of the Joint Sex Offender Project.

6. Dates of Meetings – 2016

Thursday 3 March

Thursday 2 June

Thursday 1 September

Thursday 1 December

All meetings to commence at 10.30am.

In discussion it was suggested that consideration be given to whether the frequency of meetings be reduced if this was appropriate in terms of the anticipated level of business and the Chair confirmed that she would take this matter forward.

The Sub Committee **APPROVED** the dates of meetings subject to further consideration being given to the required frequency of meetings in 2016.

The meeting ended at 11.05am