

**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 Thursday 5 June, 2014 at 10.30am.

**PRESENT**

Mr A Christie  
Mr M Green  
Mr K Gowans  
Mr D Millar

Mrs L Munro  
Mr G Ross  
Ms J Slater  
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  
Ms A Macrae, Committee Administrator, Corporate Development Service

**1. Appointment of Chair**

On the motion of Mr A Christie seconded by Ms M Smith, the Sub Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mrs G Ross as Chair.

In the absence of Mrs Ross, and on the motion of Ms M Smith seconded by Ms J Slater, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr A Christie as Chair for the meeting.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs M Davidson, Ms J Douglas, Mrs D Mackay, Mrs M Paterson and Mrs G Ross.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

**Mr A Christie declared a non-financial interest in items 4 and 6 below as General Manager and Company Secretary of Inverness, Badenoch and Strathspey CAB 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.**

**4. Performance Report – Quarter 3 Northern Community Justice Authority & Quarter 3 The Highland Council 2013/14**

There was circulated Report No CJ/04/14 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided the most recently available performance and monitoring information for Criminal Justice Services. This covered Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 2013/14 as reported to the Northern Community Justice Authority and The Highland Council respectively.

The Chair suggested that in addition to the performance information it would be helpful if some specific case studies could be provided in future reports to allow Members to consider impacts and interventions.

In response to a question in regard to the average number of hours per week taken to complete unpaid work orders, the Principal Officer reported that the courts would stipulate the required number of hours that should be completed within a set time period. If an offender was unable to achieve that timescale then the courts would be asked to extend the period.

The Principal Officer also explained that the numbers of Community Payback Orders in the system was entirely dependent on the courts. The Head of Social Care advised that Criminal Justice Social Work was required to complete reports requested by the court, and therefore had no control over the workload in this regard.

Discussion then followed on staffing levels and whether there were capacity issues around managing the workload around CPOs. It was confirmed that while there were challenges, the current caseload was manageable. However new developments in regard to sex offenders and changes around MAPPA, while welcome, would lead to competing demands for Criminal Justice Services, and that the risks and challenges around the potential resourcing implications were being considered. It was reported that that this was a national issue and that concerns were being raised with the relevant agencies.

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

## **5. Community Payback Orders – Annual Report 2013-13**

There was circulated Report No CJ/05/14 by the Director of Care and Learning which advised that Criminal Justice Services were required by law to consult with local communities and report annually to the Scottish Government on the operation of the Community Payback Orders. The report provided detail of the Annual Report for 2012-13, a copy of which was attached at Appendix 1.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the Community Payback Order Annual Report 2012-13.

## **6. HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland: Report on HMP Inverness**

There was circulated summary and report by HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland on HMP Inverness following the inspections carried out between 10 and 18 February 2014.

In discussion, Members welcomed the HM Inspectorate report and congratulated Ms C Johnson, Governor of HMP Inverness and her staff on the excellent report received.

During discussion Members raised the following issues:-

- that Members be provided, at the appropriate time, with a copy of the Improvement Plan which would follow on from the HM Inspectorate of Prisons report;
- a point in regard to whether capital funding support would be made available in

- response to the recommendations in regard to the fabric of the building;
- further information was sought and provided on the action being taken at the Prison to strengthen the links between family support and violent offenders;
- that an example of a typical community integration plan be brought to a future meeting to demonstrate the processes in place to manage violent offenders;
- discussion around the opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of prisoners through work/recreational activities within the restricted footprint of the building;
- it would be helpful for the Sub Committee at its next meeting to have a discussion with officers from the relevant mental health teams operating at the HMP Prison, Inverness;
- that further information be provided on the action proposed in response to the recommendation contained in the HM Inspectorate report that HMP Inverness should improve access to both the Library and media resources; and
- it would also be useful to have further information on the role of High Life Highland in the Prison. Mr K Gowans confirmed that he would also raise this issue with the High Life Highland Board.

Thereafter, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** that the points raised by Members in discussion and detailed above be progressed.

## 7. Redesigning the Community Justice System

There was circulated Report No CJ/06/14 by the Director of Care and Learning which updated Members about progress in relation to the redesign of Community Justice in Scotland.

The report advised that on 9 April 2014, the Scottish Government had published its latest consultation document on the redesign: "Future Model for Community Justice in Scotland". A diagram of the new model was set out at Appendix 1 to the report, and an indicative timetable for the future model was set out at Appendix 2. It was noted that current model for Criminal Justice Services across Scotland would cease to exist from 2016.

It was noted that period for consultation ended on 2 July 2014 and that the consultation document set out a series of questions/issues for respondents to consider and comment on, a copy of which was attached at Appendix 3.

The main features of the proposed new model were:-

- local strategic planning and service delivery on a partnership basis under Community Planning Partnerships;
- duties on a defined set of partner bodies, including local authorities, NHS boards and Police Scotland, to engage in this local strategic planning and delivery, with accountability for planning and performance residing at this level;
- a national body, with the suggested name of Community Justice Improvement Scotland (CJIS), to be established to provide independent professional assurance to Scottish Ministers on the collective achievement of community justice outcomes across Scotland;
- collective or collaborative arrangements incorporating aspects which may be commissioned, managed or delivered nationally; and
- a mechanism, reflecting the national and local democratic responsibilities, to afford discussion and agreements as necessary, on aspects of mutual concern.

During discussion Members raised the following issues:-

- that officers prepare the draft consultation response and thereafter circulate it by e-mail to the Sub-Committee to allow Members the opportunity to comment;
- that a robust consultation response and further discussion was required in regard to how the proposed future model would work in practice, with particular reference to the local partnership model and issues around governance and accountability;
- there was also a need for further clarity to be provided around the transitional arrangements;
- that the opportunities for shared services/collaborative working with the other local authorities be explored further. In this regard it was suggested that a SWOT type analysis be undertaken on the benefits and drawbacks around collaborative working, so that a clear proposal was developed at a local level, ahead of any final model for Criminal Justice Services being applied nationally.

Thereafter, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** that a copy of the draft consultation response be circulated to the Sub-Committee to allow Members the opportunity to comment, and that proposals for shared services/collaborative working in regard to any future local partnership model be explored further.

The meeting ended at 11.05am.