

Minute of Meeting North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 13 March 2015	10:45	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

PRESENT

Councillors Robertson (Argyll & Bute Council); O'Donnell (East Dunbartonshire Council); Lafferty (East Renfrewshire Council); McIlwee (Inverclyde Council) and Williams (Renfrewshire Council).

Councillor Williams, Convener, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

J Hunter, Chief Officer (North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority); C Sneddon (Argyll & Bute Council); J Hinds (East Renfrewshire Council); A Howard (Inverclyde Council); D Hawthorn, E Coventry, D Forbes and E Currie (all Renfrewshire Council); N Firth (West Dunbartonshire Council) and K McFall, Audit Scotland.

PARTNER

Superintendent Burns (Police Scotland).

APOLOGIES

Councillors Casey and McColl (substitute for Councillor Casey) (both West Dunbartonshire Council); and J Ryan (Action for Children).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 MINUTE OF MEETING

There was submitted the note of the inquorate meeting held on 12th December, 2014.

DECIDED: That the note of the inquorate meeting be noted.

2 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Treasurer and Chief Officer in respect of the Authority. The report intimated that expenditure on core services was anticipated to be £242,966 over budget and expenditure on non-core services was anticipated to be £92,231 under budget, which resulted in an anticipated £150,735 net overspend for the Authority.

East Renfrewshire Council was projecting an overspend of £58,759; Inverclyde Council was projecting an overspend of £2,392; Renfrewshire Council was projecting a break-even position and Argyll, Bute and Dunbartonshire Criminal Justice Social Work Partnership was projecting an overspend of £94,746. Any over-spend at the year-end was required to be met by the relevant local authority.

DECIDED: That the virements during the quarter by Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire Councils from non-core services to core services of £28,000 and £28,003 respectively be noted.

3 ADMINISTRATION GRANT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a joint administration grant revenue budget monitoring report by the Treasurer and the Chief Officer in respect of the Authority. The report intimated that expenditure against the administration grant was currently projected to result in an underspend of £2,252. Details of the projected expenditure were attached to the report.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

4 SECTION 27 GRANT ALLOCATION 2015/16

There was submitted a report by the Chief Officer relative to the allocation of the section 27 grant funding received from the Scottish Government for 2015/16, which was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. The allocation of grant to the Authority in 2015/16 was £10,000,494, which was almost £900,000 less than the allocation received in 2010/11.

The report intimated that for the sixth year in succession there had been no inflationary uplift in the level of grant. In previous years a local dampening mechanism had been applied to ensure that no constituent authority received more than a 5% reduction on any of its core service budget lines but this dampening mechanism had been withdrawn in 2014/15.

Due to the overall reduction in grant to the Authority and the withdrawal of the dampening mechanism there would be reductions in onward grant to some local authorities. Chief social work officers from East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils had agreed to review the Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO) and Throughcare schemes with a view to reducing costs thereby mitigating the overall impact of the reduction. A separate report on this matter was considered at item 10 of this Minute.

The allocations to constituent authorities were detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the grant allocation as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be approved; and
- (c) That a revenue budget monitoring report be submitted to the September, December and March meetings of the Authority during 2015/16.

5 ADMINISTRATION GRANT ALLOCATION 2015/16

There was submitted a report by the Chief Officer relative to the North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority administration grant for 2015/16 of £224,909. The report intimated that overall the administration grant had been increased by 1% from the previous year and was conditional on the Authority adhering to the financial guidelines detailed in the Management Statement/Financial Memorandum issued by the Scottish Government in April 2008 and recently updated.

In addition, and for this year only, the Authority had been given an extra £30,000 in relation to maternity cover, which brought the total grant for 2015/16 to £254,909.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the Chief Officer be authorised to construct an appropriate budget for the administration of the Authority; and
- (c) That an administration grant revenue budget monitoring report be submitted to the September, December and March meetings of the Authority during 2015/16.

6 NORTH STRATHCLYDE COMMUNITY JUSTICE AUTHORITY ACTION PLAN 2014/15

There was submitted a report by the Planning Officer relative to the North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority Action Plan 2014/15. The report intimated that the Authority was required to produce annual action plans to progress the overarching strategy of the 2014/17 area plan. There were 12 actions and 37 associated activities in the action plan. Of the 37 actions, 30 (81%) had been achieved within timescale and 7 (19%) had not been achieved within timescale. With the exception of action 5, the majority of actions would continue into the 2015/16 action plan.

DECIDED: That the report and action plan be noted.

7 NORTH STRATHCLYDE COMMUNITY JUSTICE AUTHORITY ACTION PLAN 2015/16

There was submitted a report by the Planning Officer relative to the North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority Action Plan 2015/16. The report intimated that the Authority was required to produce annual action plans to progress the overarching strategy of the 2014/17 area plan. The report intimated that the action plan followed the same format as last year to align to the reformatting of the area plan. The action plan currently contained 19 actions and had been circulated to all partners for comment and feedback. The report detailed the proposed timetable for approval of the action plan.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the action plan 2015/16 be approved; and
- (c) That authority be delegated to the Chief Officer, in consultation with the Convener, to amend the action plan in line with any feedback received from the Scottish Government.

8 COMMUNITY JUSTICE REDESIGN - PROGRESS REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Chief Officer relative to community justice redesign. The report intimated that the Community Justice (Scotland) Bill 2015 was at the final draft stage and would be ready for introduction to Parliament in early spring. Community Justice Authorities were assisting with gathering information for the Financial Memorandum which required to accompany the Bill. Provided the Bill progressed on time, it was anticipated that the recruitment process for the Chair and Chief Executive of Community Justice Scotland would begin in February 2016 with the rest of the Board and staff group being in place by autumn 2016.

Once the Bill had passed through Parliament there would be a shadow year for Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) during 2016/17 prior to them taking on their new duties and responsibilities on 1st April, 2017. To prepare for this, CPPs would be required to submit a shadow plan to the Scottish Government by the end of 2015 for Ministerial approval and would then be expected to implement the plans with partners during the shadow year and report back to the Scottish Government on the progress made. In relation to the National Community Justice Strategy, CPPs would be expected to develop their local strategic plans in large part to deliver the National Strategy in their areas. Community Justice Authorities (CJAs) were providing assistance by committing one chief officer and a planning officer to work for one day in Edinburgh.

The Scottish Government had provided an extra £1.6million to be shared across all 32 CPPs to assist CPPs in the shadow year and following two years thereafter. The allocation of the extra funds would be agreed at the first CoSLA Distribution and Settlement Group, the options being an equal share of £50,000 per annum to each CPP or a minimum of £35,000 to each CPP with the balance allocated on a workload formula. In addition the Scottish Government had provided £50,000 to the Justice Third Sector Forum to assist them in preparation for engagement with the new structure.

A CPP Transition Group had been formed and would be holding national and regional events to assist CPPs to prepare for their new duties. This would include transferring knowledge currently held by CJAs to CPPs to assist in their strategic planning and understanding of the community justice landscape. The first national event would be held on 2nd April, 2015 in Edinburgh and was being targeted at CPP managers.

The Scottish Government had stated that there would be no TUPE arrangements for CJA staff to take up posts in the new national organisation, Community Justice Scotland. An HR Group with representation from CoSLA would look at options for CJA staff to consider. With staff consent, this group had begun to approach lead local authorities to collect information and clarify conditions of service. It was expected that staff would receive individual letters setting out their options by spring 2015.

A CJA Disestablishment Group had been established, consisting of representatives from CoSLA, CJAs and the Scottish Government, to estimate costs, excluding HR, of disestablishing CJAs and to consider the practical implications of this. This group would also consider the resilience issues for CJAs particularly in late 2016 to March 2017; provide some advice on dealing with key vacancies and identify all CJA assets and liabilities.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

9 WOMENS SERVICES ACROSS THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

There was submitted a report by the Chief Officer relative to womens services across the justice system.

The report referred to the announcement from the new Justice Secretary, Michael Matheson, on 26th January, 2015 that plans for the new female prison in Inverclyde would not go ahead. Instead, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Prison Service would now undertake a period of extensive engagement with key partners with a view to developing smaller regional and community based custodial facilities across the country. The Authority had been requested to support the consultation process by organising a local event for partners, co-facilitated by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Prison Service. This event had been held on 3rd March, 2015 in Greenock.

The Authority, Inverclyde Council and the Scottish Prison Service, along with a range of other partners, had already begun a process to design Throughcare services for HMP Inverclyde. Having considered the implications of the Justice Secretary's announcement and the uncertainty around the exact shape of the future female prison estate, the Authority had decided to continue with the process of service design as it was likely that the Authority area would have one national facility and a number of regional units, all of which would hold women who required Throughcare support. A large logic modelling workshop would be held on 29th April, 2015; a first service design workshop would be held in June 2015 with the final service design workshop being held in September 2015.

It was proposed that the Chief Officer write to the Scottish Government and CoSLA advising that the Authority's view was that the Government look at an alternative to custody. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That the Chief Officer write to the Scottish Government and CoSLA advising that the Authority's view was that the Government look at an alternative to custody.

10 **REDESIGN OF SHARED CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES: EAST RENFREWSHIRE, INVERCLYDE AND RENFREWSHIRE**

There was submitted a report by the Service Manager, Criminal Justice Social Work Services, East Renfrewshire Community Health and Care Partnership setting out the decision to disaggregate some criminal justice shared services provided across East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire, alongside the rationale for this decision, the work to date, formal consultation with the trade union and staffing arrangements for future local service provision.

The report intimated that since 2002, the Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO) service had been provided by East Renfrewshire Council across East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire. A formal service review in 2010/11 anticipated changes in national grant allocations whereby future funding would be based on three-year workload averages at a time of reducing workload. A range of savings measures were implemented, however ongoing reductions in grant allocation and falling workload continued to place the DTTO service under considerable pressure.

Throughcare services provided by Inverclyde Council supported offenders preparing for release from custody. Local authorities then managed offenders in the community. Shortfalls in Throughcare funding over recent years had been met by additional contributions from each council to enable the service to continue, alongside reviewing service priorities, staffing and some work being undertaken instead by local criminal justice teams.

Partners recognised that additional funding contributions to sustain both services were not possible and that redesign was necessary to ensure continued statutory service delivery.

An option appraisal for DTTO and Throughcare service delivery considered the impact of reducing financial allocations upon continued shared service arrangements. This process identified disaggregation as the preferred option, where each local authority would be responsible for DTTO and Throughcare provisions in their own authority area. The report intimated that disaggregation offered opportunities for sustainability, resilience and the ability to meet local and national standards.

Discussion with key partners had taken place and as some employees had office locations across the inter-authority area, it was apparent that some individuals would want to transfer to other local authorities. A process of informal and formal consultation with staff and trade unions had supported progress to identify employment opportunities for all affected staff. Services across the three councils anticipated that staff preferences could largely be accommodated within service redesign in each local authority.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Authority would be held on Friday, 12th June, 2015 at 10.30 am.