



**BOARD MEETING
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2024,
AT 10.30
R1 SPUR, SAUGHTON HOUSE**

Present:	Ms Pauline Aylesbury Mr Graham Bell Ms Linda de Caestecker Ms Catherine Dyer, Chair Mr Graeme Hill, (co-opted member) Mr Steve Kirkwood Sheriff Kathrine Mackie (Advisor to the Board) Mr Alec Spencer Ms Glenys Watt
In attendance CJS:	Ms Hannah Dickson, Commissioning Project Lead (Item 8 only) Mr Bill Fitzpatrick, Director of Operations Ms Laura Hoskins, Head of Policy and Improvement (Item 10 only) Ms Karyn McCluskey, Chief Executive Mr Chris McCully, Policy Improvement Lead(Item 8 only) Ms Hilary Ramsay, Head of Corporate Services (Items 11 and 13 only) Mrs Dorothy Smith, Board Secretary (minutes) Ms Dawn Wheildon, Improvement Lead (Item 10 only)
Apologies:	Ms Linda Bendle

Agenda

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 Catherine Dyer, Chair, welcomed the Board Members and staff to the meeting. There were apologies from Linda Bendle. The Chair extended a

warm welcome to Graeme Hill, co-opted member of the Board. As this was Steve Kirkwood's last day as a Board member, the Board thanked him for his contribution to CJS and the Audit and Risk Committee and wished him well in the future.

- 1.2 Members agreed with a suggestion by the Chair that it would be helpful to hold exit interviews with Board members stepping down, similar to those that are held with members of staff when moving on from CJS.

2. Declarations of interest, gifts, or hospitality

2.1 Kathrine Mackie had previously declared her interest as Trustee of a third sector charity that might have an interest in the processes to award the voluntary throughcare and mentoring grant in the Commissioning Project. As the organisation that she is a Trustee of has not now participated in the bid for the grant, there was no longer a conflict of interest. The Board noted that Kathrine had not received the Commissioning update paper in advance of today's meeting but would now be invited to hear the discussion at item 8 on the agenda.

2.2 Alec Spencer informed the Board that he was no longer a Public Appointment Adviser for the Ethical Standards Commissioner and this should be removed from his register of interests.

Action: Alec Spencer's register of interests to be updated to reflect that he is no longer a Public Appointment Adviser for the Ethical Standards Commissioner.

3. Minute of Board meeting 31 July 2024

3.1 The Board minute was agreed and was adopted as the version for the Publication Scheme.

4. Matters arising – action tracker

4.1 The Board noted the status of the actions from the action tracker and updates were provided for some outstanding actions.

5. Papers circulated for information, comment, and approval.

5.1 The Board approved the Audit and Risk Committee revised terms of reference; it was noted that the ARC would continue to meet quarterly.

5.2 The Board noted the tabled updated Grievance Policy. The Chair reported that in future the HRRC would be informed of any grievances including if there was a nil return. She and Glenys would meet with Hilary to discuss how the revised policy will be disseminated to staff. A review schedule should be added to the document.

Action: The Board Chair and Chair of the HRRC to meet with Hilary to discuss how the revised grievance policy will be disseminated to staff and a review schedule to be added to the document.

6. Chair update

6.1 The Chair reported that 54 applications had been received for the Board Member recruitment, the sift had taken place and 3 days of interviewing were planned.

6.2 The Chair reported that two bids had been received for the Commissioning of Throughcare and Mentoring service, these have been considered by the professional stakeholder assessment panel and the next stage will be a presentation and interview session with both organisations.

6.3 The Chair noted significant concern at the high prison population and the many adverse consequences of that, including safety in prisons, for prisoners and staff, and reduction in meaningful opportunities for rehabilitation interventions, all of which could lead to further offending. In discussion members emphasised that proper provision of community justice options as alternatives to custody, on remand or sentence, in cases where it was safe for the public to impose these, would help to appropriately reduce the numbers in prison. Better focused joint working by the justice partners - particularly Police Scotland, COPFS, SCTS and local authorities along with their representatives on local Community Justice Partnerships whose decisions contribute to cases going through courts and bail refusal - and increased provision of community-based sentence options was the way forward to resolve this. Evidence gathered by CJS would help to inform possible solutions to current barriers preventing this occurring.

6.4 The Board expressed concern at the shortfall in the budget allocation by Scottish Government of the ring-fenced provision of resource for the Caledonian system training and expansion of provision of that system to Local Authority areas which at present had no interventions designed for offenders convicted of Domestic Abuse.

Action: CJS to assist partners who are Justice system frontline delivery organisations to better work together to deliver increased numbers of community justice interventions to help alleviate the prison crisis.

7. Chief Executive update

7.1 Karyn McCluskey provided the Board with an update on matters of note which included:

- Early release – this has progressed but not eased the prison population crisis another tranche of early release is being considered by Scottish Government
- Available housing for those leaving custody is not sufficient
- Outstanding Warrants - currently sit at around 10,400. The subsequent arrest and often resulting remand in custody awaiting trial, is part of what is adding

to the already high prison population. CJS has continued to work with SCTS to establish use of texting reminders to accused persons as COPFS does for witnesses, to avoid warrants for failure to appear.

- Imposition of Electronic Monitoring (EM) by court would help ease the current situation but is still not being utilised as fully as it could be, and that position is the same for Unpaid Work Orders.
- CJS is working with Police Scotland to gather further evidence on the reasons for non-appearance. Information sheets are being produced for Sheriffs and defence agents to encourage the use of structured deferred sentencing in appropriate circumstances.

7.2 Karyn McCluskey undertook to provide further updated information to Board members on all the strands of work CJS is involved in at present in respect of reducing the prison numbers.

Action: Karyn McCluskey to circulate information on all aspects of the work CJS is leading on and contributing to in respect of reducing the prison numbers.

8. Commissioning update (CJS/2024/34) papers not sent to Kathrine Mackie and Linda Bendle

8.1 Hannah Dickson provided an update for the Board, this included the latest staffing changes.

8.2 Chris McCully took the Board through the grant assessment process and reported that it had taken longer than planned.

8.3 The project team had anticipated that the professional stakeholder assessment panel would not make a recommendation to fund on the panel day (22 August 2024) and had booked a provisional Presentation/Q&A session for 27 August 2024. On reflection, given the presentation topics and number of questions posed for both applicants this turnaround period (5 days) would not have given applicants sufficient time to prepare.

8.4 In order to give applicants sufficient preparation time for this session, and the assessment panel to then rescore on the basis of the inputs and come to a decision, the Presentation/Q&A session was scheduled for 17 September 2024 and the assessment panel decision session on 26 September 2024. This will allow panel members to view a recording of the assessment session and rescore if they wish.

8.5 Graham Bell reported that he has been very impressed with the CJS project team delivery of the process. It is also obvious that the partnerships bidding have put a lot of work into their bids.

8.6 Hannah Dickson reported that advance drafting of communications has been planned for when the contract award is announced. The award will be by way of a MOU with CJS and the SG, while the grant letter will be issued by SG.

9. Caledonian expansion – verbal update

9.1 Gill McKinna provided the Board with an update on the Caledonian system training provision across Scotland. The system is in operation across 20 local Authorities (LA) in Scotland. It was noted that currently 7 LAs have no service for domestic abuse offenders but that Moray and Shetland have taken up the offer to commence training this year. The Board thanked Gill for the information and requested to be kept updated on uptake from other LAs.

10. Link Improvement lead update CJS/2024/35

10.1 Dawn Wheildon presented the Board with a case study on how CJS is collaborating with local partners to support improvement in delivery of community justice in one of the Community Justice Partnership areas that she covers as LIL.

10.2 The presentation included some contextual information about the area, a summary of the locally identified community justice priorities, and some initial observations about how the partners are working together to deliver community justice.

10.3 The Board noted that this was Dawn's last update to the Board as she is moving on to a new role with the SG, the Board thanked Dawn for her invaluable contribution to CJS over that past 7 years.

11 Implications of potential UKG and SG budget restrictions – discussion

11.1 Karyn McCluskey reported that it appears that in Scotland there was to be no budget cut for Justice. The Board noted that the Caledonian funding to be included in core budget for 2025/26, and that would carry on the existing shortfall to which could impact expansion of the programme.

12. Corporate Risk Register - CJS/2024/36

12.1 Bill Fitzpatrick presented the revised risk register. The Board agreed that the risks in relation to website and financial management to be removed. With regard to risk 5 on staffing this should be reworded to reflect how CJS manages the loss of people with significant expertise and challenges in replacing to them.

12.2 The Board discussed a new risk Bill Fitzpatrick proposed on misinformation/fake news. There is already a requirement to review CJS use of social media. Communications Team will continue to monitor and bring an update paper to the Board in due course. The Board agreed it was not necessary to have the proposed new risk on the risk register but that monitoring and updates should be provided.

Action: Communications Team bring update to the Board on misinformation.

13. Change Management and 360 Assessment CJS/2024/37

13.1 Hilary Ramsay presented the programme for change management and 360 assessments for 2024/25. The Board noted the programme and welcomed the investment in staff development.

**Forthcoming meetings: ARC and HRRC 23 October, Board meeting 6
November 2024**

24 September 2024