



**BOARD MEETING
MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2025,
AT 10.30
R1 SPUR, SAUGHTON HOUSE**

Present:	Mr Henry Acres Ms Pauline Aylesbury Mr Graham Bell Ms Linda Bendle Ms Linda de Caestecker Ms Catherine Dyer, Chair Ms Lorraine Gillies Mr Graeme Hill, (co-opted member) Sheriff Kathrine Mackie (Advisor to the Board) Mr Alec Spencer(via MS Teams) Ms Glenys Watt Ms Helen Wollaston
In attendance CJS:	Mr Chris McCully, Project Lead, Voluntary Throughcare and Commissioning(Item 8 only) Mr Bill Fitzpatrick, Director of Operations Ms Karyn McCluskey, Chief Executive Ms Rebecca Proctor, Temporary Business Manager, (Observer) Ms Hilary Ramsay, Head of Corporate Services Mrs Dorothy Smith, Board Secretary (minutes)
Apologies:	Mr Keith Rosser

Agenda

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 Catherine Dyer, Chair, welcomed the Board Members and staff to the meeting. She extended a warm welcome to the new members, Henry Acres, Lorraine Gillies and Helen Wollaston. There were apologies from Keith Rosser.

1.2 The Chair thanked the departing members, Glenys Watt and Linda Bendle for their hard work, commitment and significant contributions to the Board and CJS over the past 8 years.

1.3 She also thanked Graeme Hill for his contributions as a co-opted member during the year.

2. Declarations of interest, gifts, or hospitality

2.1 There were no amendments to previous declarations of interest and no declarations of gifts or hospitality.

3. Minute of Board meeting 8 January 2025

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 outstanding actions and revised target dates agreed. It was proposed that the action tracker would be amended to show the older actions at the top of the tracker.

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

5.1 The Board noted the Safeguarding Policy which is to be reviewed every 2 years. The Board felt that if any concerns are raised by individuals these should be discussed with the individuals line manager and the safeguarding officer too. The Board noted that the named safeguarding officer for the Board will be Linda de Caestecker.

6. Chair update

6.1 The Chair advised that one of the key priorities for the coming year will be the oversight and support for the establishment of the National Voluntary Throughcare service and managing the transition of the current service from some of the incumbent providers. The Board will be kept updated on progress.

6.2 The Chair also reported :

- The 2025/26 Business Plan is currently out for comment with Scottish Government, members and others and is currently on track for finalisation and publication prior to the commencement of FY 2025/26.
- The revision of the 2023-26 Corporate Plan due in 2026 will be delayed allowing for aligning with the review of the SG Vision for Justice which is now not likely to take place before the Scottish Parliamentary elections due to be held by May 2026.

- Despite most budget allocation by the UK Government and SG covering only single years since the inception of CJS in 2017, the ARC and Auditors have discussed the potential benefits of producing a 3- or 5-year budget forecast.
- Outreach - was discussed at the January afternoon session of the Board and the intention is to produce a list of organisations to invite to future Board meetings or approach for invitations to attend their meetings to share information on what the role of CJS is in supporting those charged with frontline delivery of Community Justice in settings and to communities relevant to their areas of interest.

7. Chief Executive update

7.1 Ms McCluskey provided the Board with an update on key matters, these included:

- Feedback has been requested by the partnership that was unsuccessful in its bid to provide the throughcare service due to commence in April 2026.
- There was valuable continuous learning which has been captured in respect of the commissioning project. As previously noted by the Board the very thorough process followed the Green Book requirements.
- She had met with the Chief Executive SACRO who are the lead partner of the partnership awarded the Grant to run the Throughcare Service. A series of future meetings are planned for her to meet the other partners from organisations that are in the SACRO partnership to deliver the throughcare service.
- Internal audit will review the commissioning process as part of its review for 2025/26.
- Due to current high levels of prison population a further 350 prisoners have been released early following the previous early release cohort - but she understands that funds for the additional throughcare, required by current service providers to cope with such large-scale releases are not yet in place.
- The first report of the Independent Sentencing Review in England and Wales, chaired by David Gaulke, in respect of England and Wales, has been published. It will be noted by the Scottish Sentencing and Penal Policy Review, the membership of which is expected to be announced shortly.
- Engagement in respect of public sector reform has been ongoing with Ms Ramsay attending joint meetings with other NDPBs – Ms Aylesbury reported that CJS Comms is not in scope for current SG comms centralisation.

8. Update on Progress to Establish the National Voluntary Throughcare Grant fund (CJS/2024/03)

8.1 Mr McCully provided an update for the Board, key points to note included:

- Start-up funding provided in Q4 – SACRO has indicated that it will endeavor to have it fully utilised by 31 March 2025.
- There is a Programme Board in place to oversee the new national service.

- CJS will have overall responsibility for governance and the Board will have oversight.
- SG will have authority to remove funding from the Partnership led by SACRO if delivery requirements are not achieved.

8.2 The Board asked about the escalation process in respect of any potential concerns arising regarding delivery; and what will happen with the smaller organisations currently providing throughcare services who are not members of the partnership who have funding currently but may may not be funded in future. It was noted that there is a mixture of legal models involved including charities and not for profit organisations and that their funding sources are different and potentially complex.

8.3 The Board asked for updates to continue in respect of the throughcare work across the third sector. It was noted that CJS will liaise with CORRA/The Robertson Trust on what their intention is to continue to fund known specific organisations currently delivering aspects of throughcare in future. It was also noted that SACRO will require to liaise with Community Justice Partnerships so that all available resources are optimised on an ongoing basis, to ensure delivery of improved minimum throughcare services across Scotland.

8.4 Ms McCluskey undertook to establish what communications have been issued by SACRO to CJPs.

Action: CJS to liaise with CORRA/The Robertson Trust. Ms McCluskey establish what communications have been delivered by SACRO to CJPs.

9. Q3 Performance Report CJS/2025/04

9.1 Mr Fitzpatrick presented the Q3 performance report to the Board. In noting the report the Board acknowledged that several projects have been completed despite resourcing challenges (largely due to unexpected illness) and the need to reallocate staff to priority tasks.

10. Corporate Risk Register CJS/2025/05

10.1 Mr Fitzpatrick presented the revised risk register. The Board agreed that as risk 7 had reached its target risk score it should be removed from the CRR.

10.2 The Board requested that the purchase of a new finance system (which had been supported in principal at ARC and the Board in January because of the relative disadvantages for an NDPB of the size of CJS of the new SG Oracle system and issues with its performance since October 2024. See 12.3 below) be added to the CRR. And to reword risk 8 to include Managing the Performance of Grant Funding for Throughcare. There was also discussion on risk 10- Capacity and demand - particularly around the increased workload created in-year by undertaking work requested by SG and other partners regarding responses to the high prison population given consequent significant impact on CJS resources to meet core statutory reporting requirements and on other essential work.

10.3 Mr Fitzpatrick to send updated to CRR to the ARC and to meet with Mr Acres who expressed an interest in the risk management strategy.

Action: Mr Fitzpatrick to send updated CRR to ARC and to meet with Mr Acres

11. Q3 finance update CJS/2025/06

11.1 Ms Ramsay presented the Q3 finance report to the Board. The Board noted that the Core, Caledonian and RJ year end forecast financial positions have resulted in a total CJS forecast underspend of £73k being made available as requested by SG to support the wider SG budget pressures. This position has been communicated to SG in the latest budget monitoring return.

11.2 Ms Ramsay reported that information has been received from SG indicating that the proposed CJS Core budget for 2025/26 is £3.828 million (as against the £3.626 million in 2024/25 for combined Core and Caledonian budgets). This represents a 5.6% increase from 2024/25. The budget will be formally confirmed by issue of the 2025/26 Budget Allocation and Monitoring (BAM) letter from SG.

11.3 Ms Ramsay said the budget for 2025/26 will be tight despite the 5.6% up lift. There will be a 3% increase in salaries and also the NI increases. A letter of comfort has been received from SG for continued funding for RJ and this has allowed CJS to extend the contracts for RJ team personnel for another year.

12. Draft minute HRRC meeting held on 29 January 2025 CJS/2025/07

12.1 Ms Watt reported on the meeting held on 29 January which covered staff wellbeing, workforce planning and change. Ms Ramsay reported that staff are engaging well with the workforce planning but HR are very aware of the amount of change that staff are experiencing against public sector funding reductions and impacts of changes to UK and SG leadership and approaches. They are ensuring that there are regular check-ins with individuals/teams and line managers. The Board confirmed that awareness of the various impacts on all staff need to be appreciated and responded to and look forward to ongoing updates.

12.2 The HRRC received an update on progress of the Public Sector Equality Duty report. The report is due to be produced for publication by April 2025.

12.3 Ms Ramsay reported the charges for the new SG Oracle HR/ Finance system for 2025/26 will remain at the 2024/25 rate, and there continue to be issues with the accuracy and quality of reports that are being produced by the system which are impacting all organisations who are customers of that SG service

13. Draft minute ARC meeting held on 29 January 2025 CJS/2025/08

13.1 Mr Spencer reported on the meeting held on 29 January. He reflected that in earlier years there had been Board concern in respect of aspects of financial management but due to the hard work of Bill Fitzpatrick, Vicky Woolf and Hilary Ramsay CJS has received a substantial assurance for financial management.

13.2 The ARC had discussed the proposal for a new finance system, it approved and supported the need for a new financial system in principle. The Board had also endorsed in principle the need for a new financial system; Ms Ramsay will submit a business case.

12.4 Ms Ramsay reported that the Audit plan for 2024/25 will be available at the end of March.

14. AOB

14.1 Ms McCluskey informed the Board that new Diversion from Prosecution Guidance will be launched by CJS shortly and she will send to the Board for information.

Action: Ms McCluskey to forward the new Diversion from Prosecution Guidance to the Board.

Forthcoming meetings: Board meeting 8 April 2025

25 February 2025