

## **MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6th DECEMBER 2006**

Present:

Sir Peter Lloyd (Chair)	- President, National Council
Mr John Weightman	- North East, Yorkshire & Humberside
Mrs Sheila Royle	- North West
Mr Simon Nieboer	- South West
Mr David Graham	- Eastern
Mrs Sue Nicholas	- East Midlands
Mrs Jane King	- Kent, Sussex and Surrey
Mr Richard Gully	- Thames Valley, Hampshire & Isle of Wight, London
Mr Peter Booth	- Immigration Removal Centres
Steve Reeves	- Training Representative

In attendance:

Mr Richard Brown	- South West Representative (elect)
Mrs Sue Simkin	- Eastern Representative (elect)
Mrs Jane Wright	- East Midlands Representative (elect)
Mr Norman McLean	- Head of the IMB Secretariat
Mr Steve Kilbey	- Deputy Head of the IMB Secretariat
Miss Anne-Marie Stephens (Secretary)	- IMB Secretariat

### **Item 1 – Apologies for Absence**

1.1. Apologies for absence were received from Jo Jenkins (Wales and West Midlands) and Dencer Brown (Diversity Representative).

### **Item 2 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> November 2006)**

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and approved via e-mail and issued to Boards under cover of DC 25/06 and IMM 23/06.

### **Item 3 – New Members Resources**

3.1 Jane King and Anne-Marie Stephens were asked to provide advice and guidance to the new members of the National Council.

**ACTION: Jane King and Anne-Marie Stephens to identify and provide appropriate advice and guidance to new NC members.**

### **Item 4 – IRC Forum**

4.1 Peter Booth reported that 58 detainees remain at the centre following the riot in Harmondsworth IRC at the end of November. Although conditions are somewhat spartan they are acceptable providing standards do not fall any further. Management at

the centre had been appreciative of the support received from other IRCs, local prisons and the IRC Forum. The National Council recorded its gratitude to Peter Booth for keeping members informed about the situation at Harmondsworth and the fire at Lindholme while both incidents were unfolding. The next meeting of the Forum is in January 2007.

### **Item 5 – Annual Reviews and Quinquennial Reappointments**

5.1 Having previously agreed the Lloyd Review recommendation to introduce annual reviews and a quinquennial reappointment in place of the current triennial review, the National Council was asked to consider proposals for implementation. These will be subject to discussions with the Secretariat.

**ACTION: NC members to examine the proposals and provide feedback to Sue Nicholas and Sheila Royle by 15 December.**

**ACTION: Sheila Royle to prepare a revised paper for the NC.**

**ACTION: Secretariat to seek ministerial approval for amendment and revision of Prison Rules/YOI/Detention Rules once implementation plan is agreed.**

### **Item 6 – National Council Achievements**

6.1 Paper 22/2 listing National Council achievements since 2003, was noted.

**ACTION: NC members to draw IMBs' attention to the contents of 22/2 at Area meetings.**

**ACTION: Secretariat to place copy of the paper on the IMB website.**

### **Item 7 – Updates and Objectives for 2007**

7.1 In addition to update reports provided for the benefit of new NC members, the following comments were made:-

#### **7.1.1 Training Strategy Group (Report 7a)**

Priority to be given to experienced members training, the development of key skills, and closing the gap between national training and local needs and practices. Monitoring standards, gaps in current provision and national support for IMB members taking on a specialist monitoring role will also be addressed.

#### **7.1.2 Health Support Group (Report 7b)**

The Support Group held its second meeting in November, having previously agreed terms of reference for the group and members' areas of special interest.

The need for a contingency plan for IMBs in the event of the flu pandemic is a priority.

**ACTION: NC members to send proposals to Sheila Royle.**

Concern was expressed over the dilution of the terms of PCTs' contracts and the implications for a healthcare presence at segregation reviews and serious incidents.

**ACTION: NC members to raise the issue at Area Meetings.**

It has also been noted that some PCT staff do not appear to understand the IMB role. Richard Bradshaw, Prison Health, and Sheila Royle will be writing to healthcare managers to explain Boards' role and responsibilities.

Prison healthcare has asked IMBs to assist in carrying out a segregation survey on 20<sup>th</sup> December. The NC approved the proposal and the draft of a letter to be issued to Chairs seeking Boards' assistance.

**7.1.3 Learning & Skills Support Group (Report 7c)**

There was a strong field of applicants for the Support Group and the final selection was made in mid-November. The first meeting of the Group is planned for January and it is hoped that representatives of the Learning & Skills Council will attend a subsequent meeting. Areas that the group will focus on include the implications for education of transfer, use of IT, and numeracy and literacy.

**7.1.4 Communications Working Group (Report 7d)**

The date of next year's conference will be 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

**7.1.5 Diversity Support Group (Report 7e)**

Dencer Brown and Norman McLean will be meeting Bilkis Malik, the new Diversity consultant, to discuss how she might provide assistance to Boards.

**7.1.6 Mubarek Recommendations Group**

The group, which includes representatives from the Diversity Working Group and IMB Feltham, met on 5<sup>th</sup> December and considered specific recommendations contained in the Mubarek Inquiry report. Sir Peter Lloyd, who also attended the meeting, asked that the NC representatives with responsibility for Safer Custody, Mental Health and IT consider relevant recommendations and provide appropriate briefing to the Recommendations Group. The implication for training and annual reports will need to be considered in the future.

**ACTION: David Graham, Sheila Royle and Jo Jenkins to provide briefing for Mubarek Recommendations Group on safer custody, mental health and IT respectively.**

**7.1.7 Segregation**

The Prison Service has confirmed that it will consult the NC on amendments to PSO 1700 and that these will include the NC's recommendation that IMBs should not be

asked to agree the segregation decision but the process undertaken. The revised forms should also include a box to record that the IMB has been informed that a prisoner has been placed in segregation and another box for the IMB to sign.

It was agreed that it should be made clear to Boards that even though they may agree that the process has been correctly followed, they should still raise concerns if they have reservations over the length of time a prisoner has been held in segregation.

#### 7.1.8 Foreign National Prisoners (Report 7h)

IMBs' concerns were raised with Gerry Sutcliffe, the Prisons Minister, when he met the NC on 5<sup>th</sup> December. Simon Nieboer and Norman McLean hope to arrange a meeting with the Head of Criminal Casework Directorate (CCD) in IND before Christmas.

Concern was expressed that deportation decisions are being taken on the day of release which has implications for safer custody.

#### 7.1.9 Recruitment (Report 7i)

It was noted that there is a high turnover of members in their first three years and that the NC needed to focus on the reasons for this, which may be different from the reasons given in exit questionnaires. Bilkis Malik, the new Diversity Consultant, will assist Chait improve the diversity of their Boards.

#### 7.1.10 Boards in need of support

Richard Gully was asked to consider various options for providing support to Boards, including use of a taskforce.

**ACTION: Richard Gully to propose options for providing assistance to Boards in need of support.**

#### 7.1.11 Inter Board Exchange (Report 7k)

The NC was asked to consider the proposed Board grouping and advise Sue Nicholas of any gaps.

**ACTION: NC members to advise Sue Nicholas of any gaps in the Board groupings by 15<sup>th</sup> December.**

#### 7.1.12 IT and Website

Norman McLean explained that the objective is to update as much of the website as possible by 31 December even if this requires buying-in specialist support on a temporary basis.

Use of the website for communications and training purposes was discussed.

**ACTION: Jo Jenkins, Jane King and Steve Reeves to consider how website and other IT might be used for communications and training.**

#### 7.1.13 Complaints and Grievances

A number of possible amendments to the conduct and discipline procedures have been identified and will be copied to all members of the NC.

**ACTION: Jo Jenkins to arrange for draft amendments to be copied to NC.**

#### 7.1.14 Annual Report Template & Guidance (Report 7n)

The template and guidance have now been finalised and noted by Ministers who have provided an introductory letter. Procurement action will now be commenced to provide each Board with a printed copy of the template and guidance in its own binder which should be kept in the Board office. In the meantime, Chairs will be invited to supply an e-mail address to which the electronic version of the template and guidance may be sent. The expectation is that in future all annual reports will be produced in electronic format.

**ACTION: Anne-Marie Stephens to send electronic copy of template and guidance to NC members.**

**ACTION: Anne-Marie Stephens to proceed with procurement of binder and hard copy of template and guidance.**

**ACTION: Anne-Marie Stephens to send electronic copies of template and guidance to Chairs on receipt of a nominated e-mail address.**

#### 7.1.15 Safer Custody (Report 7o)

It was agreed that David Graham will continue, pro tem, to have responsibility for safer custody matters and will keep the NC updated on a regular basis.

There are signs that coroner delays are being reduced.

#### 7.1.16 Short Term Holding Centres (Report 7p)

All applicants have been advised that there is likely to be a delay in obtaining security (CTC) clearance. Airside clearance will also be required.

Recruitment for the North West and Midlands Board will start in the new year. Board meetings will be held at Manchester Airport but Board duties will be conducted on a satellite basis.

### **Item 8 – Suggested Priorities for 2007**

8.1 The following were agreed as priorities for the first six months of 2007:- recruitment and retention; training (including training for challenged boards); and the website and information.

8.2 The Secretariat will be piloting a regional recruitment campaign, possibly in the North West, in 2007.

### **Item 9 – Secretariat Assistance to Support Groups**

9.1 Paper 22/3 set out proposals for Secretariat assistance to the various NC Support Groups. Given the Secretariat's limited resources it was agreed that secretarial support will only be provided when a Secretariat representative is an active member of an NC Support Group e.g the Communications Working Group. Other groups, existing or prospective, should not assume any input from the Secretariat although administrative assistance will be provided as required e.g issuing DC letters, booking meeting rooms etc.

9.2 It was also agreed that in future each member of a support group should be appointed for no more than two years. Their appointments could, if desired, be extended for further periods. NC chairs of existing groups will speak to the members about the length of their appointment.

**ACTION: NC Chairs of existing Support Groups to discuss length of appointment with Support Group members.**

9.3 Paragraph 5 of paper 22/3 was amended to clarify that NC Chairs of Support Groups should keep the NC and Secretariat informed of the group's progress.

### **Item 10 – Policy Development Procedures**

10.1 At its July 2005 meeting the NC agreed procedures for the drafting and approval of policy papers (NC paper 12/1). In recent months there have been occasions when the procedures were not fully followed and in view of this the NC was invited to re-endorse NC 12/1 or make suggestions as to how the process can be improved.

10.2 It was agreed that the policy development procedures should remain as set out in NC 12/1 but that draft papers should be version-numbered and dated.

10.3 Progress on the Pocket Book was discussed. The NC shared the Handbook Working Group's frustration with the delay in getting covers for the printed version of the Pocket Book and noted that the Group was proposing to send out photo-copies of the Pocket Book to new members in the interim. The Council decided that the time-scale for the distribution to all members should be dependent on cover availability and that the photo-copied versions should be sent out only if covers are unreasonably delayed.

**ACTION: Jane Wright to write to Jill Berliand, Chair of the Handbook Working Group.**

### **Item 11 – Secretariat Report**

11. 1 The Secretariat's report (22/5) was noted. Norman McLean added that Nigel Mulcaster, Appointments Officer for the North West, South West, and Wales and West Midlands had attended the latter's area meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and would be attending the South West area meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December. David Hawes, Appointments

Officer for Eastern area, Thames Valley, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, and Kent, Surrey and Sussex would be attending the latter's area meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December.

11.2 Norman McLean informed the Council that following Peter Atherton's retirement, Mike Spurr had been appointed Deputy Director General and Steve Wagstaffe had been appointed Director of High Security.

### **Item 12 – Matters Arising**

12.1 The update report (22/6) on matters arising from the NC's previous meeting was noted and the following items added:-

- **Item 7 – Training Strategy Group** Training Coordinator training has been arranged in the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside area for 17<sup>th</sup> January. Training for the East Midlands area will be arranged for the new year.

Provisional list of Chairs, Vice Chairs and Training Coordinators, with contact details, still to be issued to NC members.

**ACTION: Steve Kilbey to send NC members the provisional list of Chairs, Vice Chairs and Training Coordinators, with contact details.**

- **Item 9 – Handling complaints about racist incidents** This issue was discussed further by the Diversity Working Group where it had first been raised. Contrary to the National Council's view, a couple of members felt it would be helpful to assess the investigation of complaints. The matter is to be reconsidered at the next Diversity Working Group meeting and in the meantime the Secretariat will provide informal feedback to Mike Spurr.

**ACTION: Norman McLean to provide feedback to Mike Spurr.**

- **Item 16 – Secretariat Report** Log-ons for new members requested.

**ACTION: Steve Kilbey to arrange log-ons for new NC members.**

### **Item 13 – Constituency Meeting**

13.1 The following items were brought forward from the NC's constituency meeting:

- Transferring members. The NC requested clarification of the protocol for the transfer of new members.

**ACTION: Sir Peter Lloyd to identify a National Council lead to liaise with the Secretariat on a draft protocol.**

- Progress on specification for laptops. Steve Kilbey has this in hand.

**ACTION: Steve Kilbey to acquire laptops for new NC members in addition to those already requested.**

**Item 14 – Any Other Business**

14.1 Sir Peter will be contacting all current and new National Council members to discuss their portfolios of work.

14.2 Sheila Royle noted that the Tutors Group are still awaiting a DC on Team Performance Reviews

**ACTION: Steve Reeves to place on agenda of next Training Strategy Group meeting.**

**Item 15 – Date of next meeting**

15.1 The next meeting will be held in Ashley House 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> February 2007.

December 2006