



Thames Valley Probation Board

ANNUAL REPORT

2007-08

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Introduction

Aims of the National Probation Service & NOMS

The National Probation Service aims are:

- **to protect the public;**
- **to reduce re-offending**
- **to provide for the proper punishment of offenders;**
- **to ensure that offenders are aware of the effects of their crimes on their victims and on the public; and**
- **to rehabilitate offenders.**

INTRODUCTION

The key strategic priorities for 2007-08 in Thames Valley Probation (TVP) were to concentrate on improvement projects to make sure we achieved the balance between driving forward performance and improving the quality of the service we provide.

Our main priorities for the year were: public protection and increased public confidence, service delivery, working with partners, managing people, diversity and efficiency.

We started the year by planning for the Offender Management Inspection, which took place in July 2007. This project incorporated planning, co-ordination and logistical preparation. To this end, we achieved some of our key milestones. We improved the Serious Further Offences (SFO) review process and ensured that 'lessons learnt' were cascaded to all staff. We implemented the new National Guidance, including a revised reporting system, with follow-up actions for staff and we improved our OASys (Offender Assessment System) quality, sentence planning and risk assessment, with staff training, new procedures and follow-up actions with staff teams.

We signed off the internal Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Offender Management and Interventions in June 2007, ahead of the OM Inspection, which set out clearly defined roles and improved delivery of services between the two.

Overall, we have strengthened our workforce and improved the quality of the work we deliver. The main focus of our service is to safely see offenders through their community orders or licences with no further re-offending, with jobs, accommodation and coping strategies to help them to live crime-free lives. The reason we do this is to prevent future crime and future victims.

We also chose this time to re-brand as Thames Valley Probation, incorporating the name into the main NPS logo by design rather than default. The Board felt that increased partnership work and Trust status, with the possibility of other organisations delivering parts of our work on our behalf, may lead to a decline in the visibility of probation as a brand.

By putting the words 'Thames Valley Probation' inside the instantly-recognisable purple box, the name and logo became intrinsic. No partner agency can inadvertently remove 'Thames Valley' (as has happened many times in the past) and required use of the logo (and hence our name) will be incorporated into future partnership agreements. This preserves our name and identity. In the future, we can put our new logo alongside any new, national branding for the NPS, as the National Health Service has done with its local Primary Care Trusts.

Alongside the new logo, we devised a new strapline, which now runs through all areas of our work, defining and supporting it. It reads: '**Less re-offending, fewer victims**'. The annual business plan and individual team plans are explicitly linked to our strategic goals and a pro-active approach to identifying and mitigating risk, so the strapline clearly reinforces this message to all staff.

This report shows the steps we have taken during 2007/08 to promote less re-offending and fewer victims.

Part 1: Annual Report

This Annual Report is structured according to the European Excellence Model (EEM) and will cover (a) the enablers that we put in place to ensure that Thames Valley Probation is an organisation which is fit for purpose with a strong performance culture and (b) the results that we obtained in the reporting year.

A. Operational Review

The last year has been one of very considerable achievement for Thames Valley Probation. In the early summer we had the results of the Offender Management Inspection, which provided us with hard evidence of the steady improvement that we have been making in risk assessment and sentence planning.

The inspectors commended the progress made since the disappointing Effective Supervision Inspection in 2006, which criticised our work in both these two areas.

While we recognise the further progress that needs to be made (and which the inspection highlighted) the overall quality of the assessment and management of offenders in Thames Valley has progressed significantly. This should provide judges and magistrates and the community at large with confidence that community sentences imposed on offenders in the Thames Valley are not only applied rigorously but are also successful in reducing re-offending and, therefore, result in there being fewer victims.

Section B (Results) provides a detailed breakdown of this year's performance. We are particularly proud of the improvements in community penalty enforcement throughout the year and the timeliness of the production of reports for courts.

Once again we have exceeded the national targets for the provision of offending behaviour programmes across the board. We have built on past success to exceed targets for Drug Rehabilitation Requirements and we have successfully implemented new processes to ensure that offenders get access to education and training and subsequent employment.

Given the scale of the improvements that have been made and the expectations on staff, we are also particularly pleased to note a reduction in staff sickness absence of 4 days per employee. It is our staff who deliver our improvements and credit must go to them for the substantial progress made.

Management Commentary Part 1: Operational and Performance Review

A. Enablers

The EEM enablers that will be referred to in the section below are Leadership, Policy and Strategy, People Management, Partnerships and Resources and Processes.

Leadership

Thames Valley's Senior Management Team had already been strengthened and consolidated by a restructure in 2006, which included experienced leaders from probation and the private and public sectors. This year saw a complete restructure of the Board, with a new Chair and 6 new members.

Together, the senior management team and the Board focused quickly and professionally on Trust status, establishing a clear corporate identity, supported by well defined organisational functions and responsibilities. Corporate mission, vision and values were agreed through discussion between the two groups that identified common themes.

These themes were then incorporated into a three year strategy and a corporate business planning process which coherently links the strategy to divisional, team and individual objectives.

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) process with the Regional Offender Manager (ROM) as commissioner, was firmly bedded in and regular meetings took place throughout the year. Our pro-active relationship development with the ROM is based on openness, information exchange and trust.

Deployment and communication of the strategic priorities was a key theme for the year. In addition to the Chief Officer's regular bulletins to staff, he and the Board Chair visited every office, speaking to all staff about what our priorities are and how we can achieve them together. Feedback showed that staff were appreciative of the time that was given to these visits and hearing the messages clearly from the top. Staff also appreciated the opportunity to ask questions and engage in two-way communication.

While plans for the future were in full swing, Thames Valley Probation was subjected to an Offender Management Inspection in July 2007. The entire leadership team was engaged in driving improvement activities and working groups to improve service delivery, performance, consistency and effectiveness.

The Deputy Chief Officer led the preparation for the OMI, delivered briefings, pre-inspection file readings and organised comprehensive support to all staff involved in the inspection. The senior management team saw this as the ideal opportunity to pick up on any poor practice issues and establish a clear expectation of standards for the future.

We concentrated on risk assessment and public protection, with additional risk management training run throughout the year, with the emphasis on using OASys effectively and advanced training for staff chairing MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) meetings.

Our development of improved practice culture was reflected in a measurable performance improvement. The outcome of the inspection was a more positive commentary than in previous years, particularly in the area of risk assessment. Performance against targets rose in almost every area of the business and has continued to do so. Where TVP's enforcement and compliance was once lingering in the bottom quarter of probation areas' performance in England and Wales, we have now risen above the half-way mark and continue to improve. This is no small achievement for the largest non-metropolitan probation area.

The senior management team, led by the Director of Offender Management, devised an improvement plan following the inspection and that has, again, been incorporated into both the three-year strategy and the local business plans. It challenges, encourages and prioritises target achievement within a context of effective risk management.

We also took the opportunity in 2007-08 to update all strategies, policies and procedures, which have been placed on a comprehensive new intranet. We were the first area to develop an intranet as a microsite of EPIC – the NPS intranet – so our staff can now access local and national documents from the same screen. This has vastly improved consistency, quality and access to practice and performance information, as well as improving two-way communication.

Policy and Strategy

The development of the three-year strategy was key for 2007-08, as was the updating of all existing policy and strategy (as well as practice guidance) for the new Thames Valley Probation intranet.

The strategy clearly lays out where we are and where we want to be in three years' time, with an effective organisational culture which promotes best practice and reduces re-offending in the Thames Valley.

To achieve this, we needed specific leads for each of the areas of work identified as priorities, so the senior management team was restructured during 2007 to give clear roles and responsibilities that tie in with the strategic priorities of the organisation and the deployment of policies to achieve this. In addition, the Board and directors began using two-monthly workshops to intensively review and develop policy on priority issues, so nothing was missed if performance slipped in any particular area.

Board members' experience and capability has been harnessed and they have been given specific 'champion' roles in, for example, HR, diversity and communication groups, to help develop policy and strategy in line with business objectives.

Key achievements for the year include the launch of the TVP Women Offenders' strategy, new policies for sickness absence, stress, mobility, smoking and pensions, a new disciplinary policy and procedure, plus new dismissal and grievance procedures. Others include introduction of the gender equality scheme, new maternity arrangements policy, home visits procedure, interpreters & translation policy, hate-based crime procedure, serious further offences procedure and a policy to deal with any deaths of approved premises residents.

All of these new strategies, policies and procedures (and this is just a snapshot of all we introduced in 2007-08) have been launched to staff via internal communication and team briefings and have been placed on the new intranet, which launched in February 2008. They all reflect the aims of the three-year strategy too.

People Management (to include new Health & Safety Legislation)

It was a busy year for revising, updating and introducing new policies and procedures in relation to staff. As detailed in the strategy & policy section above, staff-centred policies introduced (or updated) in 2007-08 included sickness absence, maternity, stress, grievance, disciplinary procedures, dismissal pensions, smoking and gender.

In addition, we reintroduced our EEM (European Excellence Model) self-assessment, which we had not done since 2004 due to other priorities around performance improvement. With the launch of the three year strategy and development of the associated business plan, an EEM self assessment was recommended to obtain "a broader measure of organisational health".

Our score was 379, which was only 47 points down on 2004's score of 426 and largely reflected the absence of two years' worth of data. A subsequent report on the findings was produced in February 2008 and the results have been fed into the business plan and to managers throughout the organisation, for action.

One of the immediate action points from the EEM exercise, implemented before the results were known, was to carry out a stress survey for all staff to complete. This was done in November 2007 and the responses were put into the Health & Safety Executive's stress indication tool for analysis. These results were given to the cross-grade Stress Steering Group and we now have six focus groups set up to look at different aspects of the data findings. This is all being carried out with the co-operation and knowledge of all staff unions.

Health initiatives for staff were also high on the agenda. The Human Resources Directors (job share) made a sum of money available and asked staff for suggestions for office initiatives. The take-up was encouraging and this has proved to be very popular with staff. One Approved Premises bid for a back massage unit for staff, another for a step machine and one office used their allowance to pay for badminton courts for staff to use in an office competition.

An area highlighted as poor in the EEM survey was communication, particularly two-way communication between senior management and staff engaging in day-to-day contact with offenders. Much work has been done in this area since the report. Communication channels, including feedback, have been revised and new procedures will be introduced during 2008.

Training and professional development of staff was, again, a key focus of the year. The training priorities for the year were:

- Advanced training in Risk of Harm
- Chairing MAPPA meetings
- MasterClass professional development for Middle Managers
- New Managers Toolkit for all managers

All of our senior managers and some Board Members were sent on training on employers' health & safety responsibilities. This included training on the new legislation covering corporate manslaughter.

In addition to performance-related initiatives, many of our staff were recognised for their specific contributions to the criminal justice system.

Our Assistant Director (Interventions, with responsibility for women offenders) received a national award for her research and contribution to the national domestic abuse strategy and another Assistant Director (Offender Management, with responsibility for Oxfordshire) was recognised for his contribution to the Prolific and Other Priority Offenders scheme (PPOs).

Two of our staff in HMP Bullingdon received certificates from the Butler Trust for their contributions to the PPO scheme, enhancing offender access to outside services approaching release and following that up on the crucial day of discharge. They also received recognition for helping the prison make an informative film on the PPO scheme for a prison-wide conference.

Partnerships and Resources

We continued to be visible in working with our key partners. Our staff are represented, at senior level, on sub-groups and the main Board of the Thames Valley Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) and, through our Assistant Directors, we increased our profile at other partnerships, such as the Crime and Disorder Partnerships (CDRPs), the Local Safeguarding Children Boards, plus regional and national forums and working groups.

We have led the way with input into the victim perspective for the LCJB and in the introduction of the Think Victim Workbook for our staff, which has also been adopted by other probation areas.

Staff have been attending the Neighbourhood Actions Groups (NAGs) alongside police colleagues and community representatives and many of our Unpaid Work projects have directly reflected the needs and wishes of the local community as a result. We have also worked hard to sign up to the next round of Local Area Agreements (LAAs), working with county, district and unitary authorities across our area.

In August, 2007, after lengthy consultation and a lot of hard work, we successfully implemented double waking night cover across all Thames Valley Approved Premises. This has been possible through a joint partnership initiative with an outside agency, The Corps, with Thames Valley Probation as commissioner. Credit must be given to our staff who made this possible, as they were also part of the regional team to introduce the same across the South East Approved Premises estate and provided the risk training for The Corps staff across the South East region. .

We spent time in 2007/08 developing action plans with the Prison Service Area Managers to cover IPPs (Imprisonment for Public Protection), seconded staff, end-to-end Offender Management roll out (Phase III) and alcohol treatment provision.

We also signed Service Level Agreements with both Reading Borough Council (Berkshire) and Bicester Town Council (Oxfordshire) to establish joint, long-term arrangements to ensure offenders make reparation to local communities as they undertake their Unpaid Work Requirements. We hope to replicate similar SLAs with other councils across the Thames Valley during 2008/09.

In addition, we continued to broaden our community engagement, attending county shows, gay pride events and other fairs and shows throughout the year. We also concentrated on our local continued success with

the national Local Crime, Community Sentence (LCCS) project. The project was rolled out across all three counties in 2007 (initially we started in 2006 in Oxfordshire) and we now have a strong, well-trained team of probation staff and magistrates, who present in pairs.

We are pleased to announce that from June – December 2007 Thames Valley achieved the highest number of LCCS presentations (in England and Wales) in 2007/08 and the independently verified results show we had the biggest swing of public opinion from prison to community sentences. Our presenters also scored the best marks for clarity of presentation and confidence in delivery.

Processes

We continued to implement the new phases of the Offender Management Model and to prioritise within this the quality improvements highlighted by our Effective Supervision Inspection (ESI). To this end, a Senior Probation Officer was appointed as Quality Improvement Manager, with responsibility for examining processes and quality initiatives. Her main role in 2007/08 was to begin the groundwork for the implementation of ViSOR (Violent and Sexual Offenders Register) to probation and to implement a quality initiative – Thames Valley Quality Improvement Performance System (TV QuIPs).

TV QuIPs was developed from an application used by Wiltshire Probation Area and adapted to meet the specific needs of Thames Valley. The system allows the monitoring of the accuracy and quality of risk assessment to provide managers with more 'current' performance information. It incorporates other measures to support our performance against the OMI (Offender Management Inspection) action plan and IPPF (Integrated Probation Performance Framework) targets.

In this way, we can now address the measures where positive change is most likely to have the greatest impact and check cases at 18 weeks from commencement, in order to capture data relevant to the start of Order/Licence and the 16 week review point. Timely feedback on the quality of the assessments/information available enables prompt revision of errors, which could have later impact upon our data and, subsequently, IPPF outcomes.

In the partnership arena of public protection, we have updated the Thames Valley MAPPA Working Requirements to ensure both our staff and partner agencies worked to a clear and consistent MAPPA framework. We also led the MAPPA Strategic Management Board's establishment of a quality assurance process in December 2007.

B. Results

Customer Results

R&C1: Contact with Victims (within 8 weeks, Target 85%)

Once again, the Victims Liaison Unit for Thames Valley Probation exceeded its target, as it has done since the statutory service began in 2001. This year, we achieved 92% contact with victims of serious sexual or violent offences where the offender was sentenced to 12 months or more custody, against the 85% target set. We actually contacted 358 victims, in total. **Target exceeded.**

R&S12: Number of referrals to LSC in the community (Target 1,316)

We referred 1,556 offenders to the Learning Skills Council against a target of 1,316 (118%). **Target exceeded.**

PT9: Number of unemployed offenders gaining employment against target (Target 411)

We encouraged and supported 736 offenders to gain employment while under our supervision during the year against the target of 411 (179%). This is a great achievement, as our target was missed last year and we only achieved 89%. **Target exceeded.**

R&S2: 368 offenders under supervision sustain employment for 4 weeks

We succeeded in keeping 410 offenders in employment against the target of 368 (111%). **Target exceeded.**

R&S16: 50% of offenders living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence

72% of Thames Valley offenders were living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence against the target of 50% (144%). **Target exceeded.**

In addition to the above targets, we achieved a great deal in terms of customer results in 2007/08. Our five Approved Premises all received the top national score in 2007 during the service quality audit. This was originally on self assessment but a subsequent national verification process confirmed the top scores for all APs.

Magistrates' feedback (via questionnaire) recognised an overall improvement in the level of service we provide to courts and our B2E (Bridge to Employment) service was re-accredited by Matrix as a quality education and training provider.

People Results

Achieve the race equality employment targets or improve current performance where they are already exceeded

Proportion of race and ethnic monitoring data on (a) staff and (b) offenders which is returned on time and using the correct (Census 2001) classifications (Target = 95%). **Result: 99%. Target exceeded**

Reduce sickness absence in the National Probation Service to an average of 9 days per member of staff per year. **Result: 10.5 days. Target missed**

NB: Although this target has not been met, the staff sickness rate has been reduced by 4 days per employee, from 14.5 days in 2006/07.

Minority Ethnic representation in the area workforce. Our contribution to the regional target during 2007/08 was 11.8%.

Retention/Resignation by ethnic group: The turnover for both white and minority ethnic staff was 17%. Retention/Resignation by grade. SPO/PO - 11.4%, PSO 19.5%, Admin 24.8%.

Career progression by grade and ethnic group: 1.6 PO promoted to SPO (both White-British); 1 PSO promoted to Middle Manager (White-British); 6 Admin promoted to PSO (5 White-British, 1 Black or Black-British African).

Our ratio of male/female staff during 2007/08 was 27% male and 73% female.

This year we placed a great emphasis on training in leadership and management for staff. The Senior Management Team attended Leadership Insight training and media crisis management training. Middle Managers attended the MasterClass sessions (five two-day events, covering everything from behavioural management to inter-personal skills) which, upon completion, allows them to attend a subsequent leadership and change management module. All other managers (at whatever grade) were able to attend any of the rolling programme of modules under the New Managers' Toolkit (also open to existing managers, not just new ones).

Key Performance Results

RR1 Reduce the rate of re-offending whilst under the supervision of probation

We reduced the rate of re-offending while under our supervision by **-1.8%**, putting us in the top quartile.

PP1 At least 90% of OASys assessments must be completed or updated within the appropriate timescales (5 days following sentence or release on licence for all Tier 4 cases (excluding PPOs)

We achieved 94%, exceeding the target by 4%. **Target exceeded.**

OM1 At least 90% of OASys assessments must be completed or updated within the appropriate timescales (15 days following sentence or release on licence for all Tier 1 (where appropriate), Tier 2 and Tier 3 cases. We achieved 58% of the 90% target. This is a key focus for improvement during 2008/09 to bring work relating to all offenders up to the standard of high risk cases. **Target missed.**

RR2 At least 90% of OASys assessments must be completed or updated within the appropriate timescales (5 days following sentence or release on licence for all PPO cases.

We exceeded this target by 3%, achieving 93%. **Target exceeded.**

DoJ8 90% of Pre Sentence Reports (PSRs) are completed as below:

- **FDRs within timescales agreed by LCJB**
- **SDRs (not remanded in custody) within timescales agreed by LCJB**
- **SDRs when remanded in custody within timescales agreed by LCJB**

SDRs requested by Commissioning Court within timescales agreed by LCJB

We achieved 88% of this target, narrowly missing by 2%, despite achieving it in Q4. **Target narrowly missed.**

DoJ13 To maintain at below 5% the proportion of unpaid work offender days which are lost because of stand-downs - either on the day or notified in advance

We missed this target by 8%, achieving 13% against the target of 5%. This is a key focus for improvement during 2008/09. **Target missed.**

DoJ15 Number of successful completions of Unpaid Work against target of 1,500

We achieved 1,615 successful UPW completions against a target of 1,500 (108%). **Target exceeded.**

DoJ6 Achieve an average of 35 working days from the relevant unacceptable failure to comply to resolution of cases; and to resolve 60% of breaches of community penalties within 25 working days of the relevant unacceptable failure to comply.(CJS measure)

Our average for the year for resolving breach cases from the second failure to comply through to resolution of the case was 51 days, against the target of 35. The target would have been met if warrant cases were excluded. **Target missed.**

We managed to resolve 51% of breaches of community penalties within 25 working days of the second failure to comply. **Target missed.**

DoJ5 Initiation of breach proceedings in accordance with National Standards within 10 working days in 90% of cases.

Our initiation of breach proceedings within this target was 93%. **Target exceeded.**

DoJ1 The percentage of arranged appointments which the offender attends in the first 26 weeks to be no fewer than 85%.

We narrowly missed this target, achieving 83%. **Target narrowly missed.**

DoJ4 The percentage of cases that reach the six months stage without requiring breach action (no second unacceptable failure to comply with an order, no third unacceptable failure to comply with a licence) to be no fewer than 70%.

We exceeded this target, achieving 76%. **Target exceeded.**

DoJ9 70% of orders and licences successfully completed

We missed this target by 1%, achieving 69%. **Target narrowly missed.**

R&S6 75% of offenders are retained on DTTO/DRR for 12 weeks

We exceeded this target by 9%, with 86%. **Target exceeded.**

R&S7 440 offenders start a DTTO/DRR

This target was exceeded by 161, with 601 offenders starting DRRs. This equates to 137% against target. In 2006/07 we also exceeded the target by 20%. Both of these are excellent achievements, since we narrowly missed this target in 2005/06. **Target exceeded.**

R&S18 Number of accredited programme completions against target (excluding sex offender treatment programmes and domestic violence programmes). Target 307.

We achieved 347 programme completions, an increase of 40 above target (113%). **Target exceeded.**

R&S13 Number of accredited programmes for sex offenders completed. Target 50.

This target was exceeded by 15, (65 in total) equating to 130%. **Target exceeded.**

R&S20 Number of accredited programmes for domestic violence completed by offenders. Target 95.

This target was achieved exactly, with 95 completions. **Target met.**

C. Workload and Activity Statistics
Commencements by Order Type 2007/08

Order Type	No.
Adult Statutory Through Care	598
Community Punishment & Rehab (Punish)	39
Community Punishment & Rehab (Rehab)	13
Community order	4021
Community Punishment Order	125
Community Rehabilitation Order	28
CPO for breach	19
Custody plus	1
Deferred sentence	2
Discretionary Conditional Release (post Oct 92)	12
Drug Treatment & Testing Order (HI)	1
Drug Treatment & Testing Order (LI)	2
Extended Public Protection	12
Extended Supervision for Sex Offender	1
Indeterminate Public Protection	46
Life imprisonment	21
S105. Post Release Licence	15
Standard Determinate Custody (CJA)	132
Suspended sentence order	1386
Suspended Sentence Supervision Order	2
Voluntary Through Care	5
Young Lifer	1
Young Offender Institution	293
Young Offender Statutory Through Care	116
Grand Total	6891

Commencements	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Orders	6891	6900	6577
Licences	1161	923	994
Total	8052	7823	7571

Reports written by Court Type 2007/08

REPORT TYPE	Addendum/ Deferred Report	Deferr ed Senten ce Report	Fast Delivery
CC	90	3	96
MC	166	16	865
YC		1	
N/K	1		3
Total	257	20	964

Caseload	2007/08	2006/07
ORDER TYPE	Total	Total
Adult Statutory Through Care	1414	1427
Community Punishment & Rehab (Punish)	51	82
Community Punishment & Rehab (Rehab)	24	78
Community order	3239	3192
Community Punishment Order	177	353
Community Rehabilitation Order	85	261
CPO for breach	36	70
Deferred sentence	0	1
Detention & Training Order	0	1
Discretionary Conditional Release (post Oct 92)	262	367
Drug Treatment & Testing Order (HI)	1	12
Drug Treatment & Testing Order (LI)	1	4
Extended Public Protection	35	24
Extended Supervision for Sex Offender	31	52
Extended Supervision for Violent Offender	2	2
Indeterminate Public Protection	94	50
Life imprisonment	273	255
Psychiatric order	1	2
S105. Post Release Licence	7	8
Standard Determinate Custody (CJA)	179	104
Suspended sentence order	1219	975
Suspended Sentence Supervision Order	0	4
Voluntary Through Care	3	0
Young Lifer	1	0
Young Offender Institution	116	98
Young Offender Statutory Through Care	305	344
Total	7556	7766

Reports written by Report Type 2007/08

REPORT TYPE	CC	MC	YC
Addendum/Deferred Report	90	166	
Deferred Sentence Report	3	16	1
Fast Delivery	96	865	
Further Assessment	9	38	
No Contact Report	19	251	
Oral	20	1794	
Report on Appeal	1	2	
Standard Delivery	1449	3318	8
Total	1687	6450	9

UPW Hours

UPW Hours Ordered and worked	2007/08	2006/07
Ordered	359,441	359,613
Worked	239,416	226,627

D. Names of Board Members & Official Contact Address

Thames Valley Probation Head Office,
Kingsclere Road, Bicester, Oxon
OX26 2QD
01869 255300

Board Secretary: Richard Lawrence-Wilson

Board Members:

Malcolm Fearn (Chair)

Gerry Marshall (Chief Officer)

Yashpaul Anderson

Hirak Chakravarty

Michael Day

Robert Evans

Annette Griffiths

Honor Juniper

Ian Menzies-Conacher

Michael Nolan

Phillip Perlin

Sue Seager

Her Honour Judge Zoe Smith

Richard Stokes

Management Commentary Part 2: Financial Review & Remuneration Report

Statutory Background

The National Probation Service for England and Wales was established by the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. Local probation Boards were established in accordance with the police areas to implement the functions conferred on them through the Act. Thames Valley Board is a corporate body, which came into existence on April 1, 2001.

Accounts

Thames Valley Probation Board is required under Schedule 1, paragraph 16(1) of the Act to make a report to the Secretary of State on the performance of its functions during each financial year, and prepare in respect of each financial year a statement of accounts.

Under Schedule 1, paragraph 16(2) of the Act, the Secretary of State has given direction as to:

- The information to be given in the report and the form, in which it is to be given;
- The time by which the report is to be made, and
- The form and manner in which the report is to be published.

Principal Activities

Thames Valley Probation Board covers the Thames Valley police area, as defined in Schedule 1 of the Police Act 1996, serving a population of about 2,100,000. During the year, the Board employed some 600 full time equivalent staff that worked from 14 office sites 5 hostels and 7 Prisons across the area.

Each Board is to initially provide assistance to the courts in determining the appropriate sentences to pass, and making other decisions in respect of persons charged with or convicted of offences, and to assist in the supervision and rehabilitation of such persons.

The discharge of policies as established by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), are designed to ensure:

- The protection of the public;
- The reduction of re-offending;
- The proper punishment of offenders;
- Ensuring offenders' awareness of the effects of crime on the victims of crime and the public;
- The rehabilitation of offenders.

The Chief Officer (CO) is a statutory office holder appointed by the Secretary of State. The CO is the Accountable Officer for the Board and is accountable to the Director General in his position as the Principal Accountable Officer (PAO) for the NOMS. The PAO, in turn, is accountable to the Accounting Officer of the Ministry of Justice, who is directly accountable to Parliament for safeguarding public funds.

Pension Liabilities

Employees of the Board are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Details of pension arrangements are set out in Note 3 to the Accounts.

Appointments

The Chair, the Chief Officer, and other members of the Board were all appointed by the Secretary of State in line with the Commissioner for Public Appointments "Guidance on Appointments to Public Bodies". The emoluments of these persons are paid for through Ministry of Justice funds.

The Lord Chancellor appointed Judge Zoe Smith to the Board from among judges of the Crown Court. The emoluments of this appointee are paid from the Lord Chancellor's Department.

Public Interest

The Board operates a policy of equal opportunities, regardless of gender, race, disability, sexuality or age.

The Board observes the principles of the CBI "Prompt Payment" Code and aims to pay all approved invoices within 30 days. In 2005/06, 92% of undisputed invoices were paid within 30 days (*comparative: 96%*).

Management

The operational management throughout the year was carried out by the Management Board, which consisted of the following members:

Gerald Marshall (Chief Officer), Malcolm Fearn (Chair), and

Judge Zoe Smith, Michael Day, Robert Evans, Honor Juniper, Richard Stokes, Annette Griffiths, Yashpaul Anderson, Hiral Chakravarty, Ian Menzies-Conacher, Michael Nolan, Phillip Perlin and Sue Seager (as members).

The Remuneration Report contains information about the Management Boards' remuneration.

External Accountability

Under paragraphs 16-17 of Schedule 1 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, the Board is required to send to the Secretary of State a report on the discharge of its functions during the year and its audited accounts. The Annual Report and Accounts will comply with the specific accounts directions issued by the Secretary of State with the consent of HM Treasury.

The Audit Commission has appointed the District Auditor as the external auditor for the Thames Valley Probation Board. Their Certificate and Report is included at pages 25-27.

Post Balance Sheet Events

The tenure of the following members ceased on the 31st March 2008 : Robert Evans, Richard Stokes. There has consequentially been the following appointment made with effect from the 24th April 2008 : Arif Hussain (as member).

Remuneration Report

Name	Role	2007-08		2006-07	
		Salary £000	Benefits in Kind (to nearest £100)	Salary £000	Benefits in Kind (to nearest £100)
Gerald Marshall	Chief Officer	80-85	None	75-80	None
Malcolm Fearn	Chair	15-20	None	N/A	N/A
Yashpaul Anderson	Board Member	0-5	None	N/A	N/A
Hirak Chakravarty	Board Member	0-5	None	N/A	N/A
Michael Day	Board Member	0-5	None	0-5	None
Ian Menzies-Conacher	Board Member	0-5	None	N/A	N/A
Robert Evans	Board Member	0-5	None	0-5	None
Michael Nolan	Board Member	0-5	None	N/A	N/A
Phillip Perlin	Board Member	0-5	None	N/A	N/A
Honor Juniper	Board Member	0-5	None	0-5	None
Sue Seager	Board Member	0-5	None	N/A	N/A
Richard Stokes	Board Member	0-5	None	0-5	None
Judge Zoe Smith	Board Member	0-5	None	0-5	None
Annette Griffiths	Board Member	0-5	None	0-5	None

Pension Benefits

Name	Real increase in pension at age 65	Total accrued pension at aged 65 at 31 March 2008	CETV at 31 March 2008	CETV at 31 March 2007	Real increase in CETV	Employer Contribution to partnership pension account
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	(to nearest £100)
Gerald Marshall	0-2.5	30-35	555	513	18	0
Malcolm Fearn	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Yashpaul Anderson	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Hirak Chakravarty	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Michael Day	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ian Menzies-Conacher	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Robert Evans	0	0	0	0	0	0
Michael Nolan	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Phillip Perlin	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Honor Juniper	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sue Seager	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Richard Stokes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Judge Zoe Smith	0	0	0	0	0	0
Annette Griffiths	0	0	0	0	0	0

All Ministry of Justice appointed Board members receive non pensionable remuneration of £15.40 per hour from 1 April 2004, with the exception of the Chair and the Chief Officer. Boards at their discretion may pay a travelling allowance and any other relevant expenses incurred.

Gerald Marshall
Chief Officer and
Accountable Officer for the Board

26th June 2008

Malcolm Vine
Treasurer

26th June 2008

Statement of Accountable Officer's Responsibilities

Under the Schedule 1, paragraph 17(1) (b) of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, the Secretary of State has directed the Board to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accrual basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Board and of its income and expenditure, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accountable Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the *Government Financial Reporting Manual* and in particular to:

- Observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Secretary of State, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- Make judgments and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the *Government Financial Reporting Manual* have been followed, and disclose and explain material departures in the financial statements, and
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

The Secretary of State has appointed the Chief Officer as the Accountable Officer of the Board. The responsibilities of the Accountable Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accountable Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Board's assets, are set out in the Accountable Officer's Memorandum issued by the Secretary of State and published in Government Accounting produced by HM Treasury.

Statement on the System of Internal Control

Scope and Responsibility

As Accountable Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of Thames Valley policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and departmental assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Government Accounting. This structure is also supported by a Board and Audit committee created through the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, which reports to the Director of Probation who is the Accountable Officer of the National Probation Service.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of departmental policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Thames Valley for the year ended March 31, 2008 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts, and accords with Treasury guidance.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Board takes responsibility for risk and determines the risk appetite of the organisation. The Board members and senior managers have undergone risk training which contained best practice to ensure that members fully understand the processes and responsibilities in relation to risk and to ensure that a relevant risk control framework was incorporated into Thames Valley Probation Area. Middle managers within Thames Valley Probation Area have also undergone in house training in order that they understand and can participate within the risk identification, evaluation and review process which is contained within the quarterly Business Planning process. Guidance notes have also been produced to assist all staff in participating within this risk review process relevant to the part of the organisation they are in. A continual review of practice has been undertaken and review by Internal Audit.

The Risk and Control Framework

Risk has been integrated into the quarterly Business Planning and Review process so that those risks assessed as most significant to the organisation are regularly reviewed. Each risk is allocated to a senior manager and progress is monitored against agreed actions. The risk register is reviewed by the Audit Committee and agreed by the Board at which point the appetite for the risks identified is assessed and agreed.

Risk management is supported by a Risk Policy and is designed to ensure that risk management is embedded in the whole organisation.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accountable Officer, I also have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors, the executive manager with responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other

reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Board and Audit Committee and where weaknesses have been identified actions have been planned to ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

An Assurance Stocktake plan is produced at the start of the year which is reviewed throughout the year. This process identifies fundamental objectives of the organisation and against each one of these objectives the controls currently in place are defined so that assurance can be provided.

Some of the key processes in place are as follows :

- Board and Audit Committee regular review of risks and progress against identified weaknesses.
- Management control through reporting, review, processes, procedures, training, supervision and appraisal.
- Quarterly Business Planning and Review process which is embedded throughout the organisation which includes organisational risk.
- Internal Audit independent assessment based on a plan agreed nationally and locally and report to the Audit Committee.
- External Audit independent assessment and report to the Audit Committee and Board.
- National monitoring of performance and expenditure by NPD and reported to the Chief Officer and Board Chair.
- HMIP reviews reported to the Chief Officer and Board Chair.

Although this does not eliminate all risk the major areas of residual risk lie with the NOMS naturally and are not in the control of the local Board.

In addition to the actions listed above, the following is planned for completion during 2008/09:

- Value For Money Project, which will be a series of projects undertaken across the organisation to identify efficiency savings with a link to business process re-engineering.
- Embedding the use of organisational risk software into the organisation to ensure that current timely reports on risk are available to assist the management of the organisation and can be reported to the Audit Committee and Board.

Gerald Marshall
Chief Officer and Accountable Officer for the Board
26th June 2008

Independent auditor's report to the Members of the Board of Thames Valley Probation Board

Opinion on the financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of Thames Valley Probation Board for the year ended 31 March 2008 under the Audit Commission Act 1998. The financial statements comprise the Operating Cost Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cashflow Statement, the Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described as having been audited. This report is made solely to the Members of the Board of Thames Valley Probation Board in accordance with Part II of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 36 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and of Audited Bodies prepared by the Audit Commission.

Respective responsibilities of the Accountable Officer and auditors

The Accountable Officer's responsibilities for preparing the financial statements in accordance with the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and directions made there under by the Secretary of State and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions are set out in the Statement of Accountable Officer's Responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report to you my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with the accounting policies directed by the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000 and directions made there under by the Secretary of State. I report whether the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and directions made there under by the Secretary of State. I report to you whether, in my opinion, the information which comprises the financial review included in the Annual Report, is consistent with the financial statements. I also report whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

I review whether the Accountable Officer's statement on internal control reflects the Probation Board's compliance with HM Treasury's guidance on the Statement on Internal Control dated 22 December 2000. I report if it does not meet the requirements specified by HM Treasury or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information I am aware of from my audit of the financial statements. I am not required to consider, nor have I considered, whether the Accountable Officer's statement on internal control covers all risks and controls. Neither am I required to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Probation Board's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures I read the other information contained in the Annual Report, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises only the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report, the Chairman's Statement and the Operating and Financial Review. I consider the implications for my report if become aware of any

apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of audit opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Audit Commission Act 1998, the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Audit Commission and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Accountable Officer in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Probation Board's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that:

- the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error;
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared; and
- in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.

Opinion

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the accounting policies directed by the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and directions made there under by the Secretary of State, of the state of the Probation Board's affairs as at 31 March 2008 and of its net operating costs, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the year then ended;
- the financial statements and part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the accounting policies directed by the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and directions made there under by the Secretary of State;
- in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them;
- information which comprises the financial review, included in the Annual Report, is consistent with the financial statements.

Conclusion on arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

Accountable Officer's Responsibilities

The Accountable Officer is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the Probation Board's use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

Auditor's Responsibilities

I am required by the Audit Commission Act 1998 to be satisfied that proper arrangements have been made by the Probation Board for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code of Audit Practice issued by the Audit Commission requires me to report to you my conclusion in relation to proper arrangements, having regard to the criteria for probation boards specified by the Audit Commission. I report if significant matters have come to my attention which prevent me from concluding that the Probation Board has made such proper arrangements. I am not required to consider, nor have I considered, whether all aspects of the Probation Board's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

Conclusion

I have undertaken my audit in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice and having regard to the criteria for probation boards specified by the Audit Commission and published in December 2006. I am satisfied that, in all significant respects, Thames Valley Probation Board made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2008.

Certificate

I certify that I have completed the audit of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Audit Commission.

Mick West
District Auditor
Unit 5, Isis Business Centre, Horspath Road, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2RD

26 June 2008

ACCOUNTS OF LOCAL PROBATION BOARDS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

ACCOUNTS DIRECTION GIVEN BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPHS 16(2) AND 17(1) OF SCHEDULE 1 TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND COURT SERVICES ACT 2000

1. This direction applies to the Local Probation Boards listed in the attached Appendix 1.
2. The accounts shall be prepared so as:
 - To give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Board as at the financial year-end and of the net resource outturn, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000;
 - To provide disclosure of any material expenditure or income that has not been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament or material transactions that have not conformed to the authorities which govern them.
3. Each Board shall prepare a statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2008 and subsequent financial years, in compliance with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the Government Financial reporting Manual ("the FReM") issued by HM treasury and which is in force for the relevant financial year. In addition Boards are required to comply with the National Probation Service Finance Manual which is in force for the relevant financial year. The statement of accounts shall be published within the report, which the Board is required to make to the Secretary of State on the performance of its functions for the relevant financial year.
4. Compliance with the requirements of the FReM will in all but exceptional circumstances be necessary for the accounts to give a true and fair view. Any material departure from either the FReM or the NPS Finance manual should be discussed in the first instance with NOMS Finance.
5. A note setting out the relationship between the National Probation Service Finance Manual and the FReM is attached at Appendix 2.



John McGovern

On behalf of the Secretary of State for the Home Department

19 May 2008

Appendix 1

42 Probation Boards:

Avon & Somerset
Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Cheshire
Cumbria
Derbyshire
Devon & Cornwall
Dorset
Durham
Dyfed-Powys
Essex
Gloucestershire
Greater Manchester
Gwent
Hampshire
Hertfordshire
Humberside
Kent
Lancashire
Leicestershire & Rutland
Lincolnshire
London
Merseyside
Norfolk
Northamptonshire
Northumbria
North Wales
North Yorkshire
Nottinghamshire
South Wales
South Yorkshire
Staffordshire
Suffolk
Surrey
Sussex
Teesside
Thames Valley
Warwickshire
West Mercia
West Midlands
West Yorkshire
Wiltshire

Appendix 2

APPLICATION OF THE GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL REPORTING MANUAL (FReM) ISSUED BY HM TREASURY TO THE ACCOUNTS OF LOCAL PROBATION BOARDS

The Ministry of Justice has issued advice on the preparation of local probation Board accounts in a National Probation Service Finance Manual. This provides specific guidance on the application of the principles and disclosure requirements of the FReM to the circumstances of local Probation Boards, including the following agreed interpretations:

1. There is no requirement to prepare a Statement of Parliamentary Supply or a Statement of Net Operating Costs by Departmental Aims and Objectives.
2. Monies received as grant-in-aid should be treated as financing and not as income.
3. The salary and pension entitlements of key managers should be appropriately disclosed.
4. Items may be added to or deleted from the above list only with the agreement of HM Treasury.

