

NEWS UPDATE

JULY 2009 | A MONTHLY DIGEST FOR PROBATION BOARDS AND TRUSTS

THE SONNEX CASE: THE GOVERNANCE ISSUES FOR BOARDS

The Association has issued advice to boards and trusts in the wake of the report of the investigation into the Serious Further Offence (SFO) Review of the Dano Sonnex case.

Following an assessment of the report and the NOMS response, the PA identified a number of governance implications for boards and trusts. These were to ensure that:

- All Offender Managers have appropriate caseloads and receive timely supervision
- Local offender tiering

guidance and risk of harm assessment procedures are demonstrably understood and applied by Offender Managers and other relevant staff

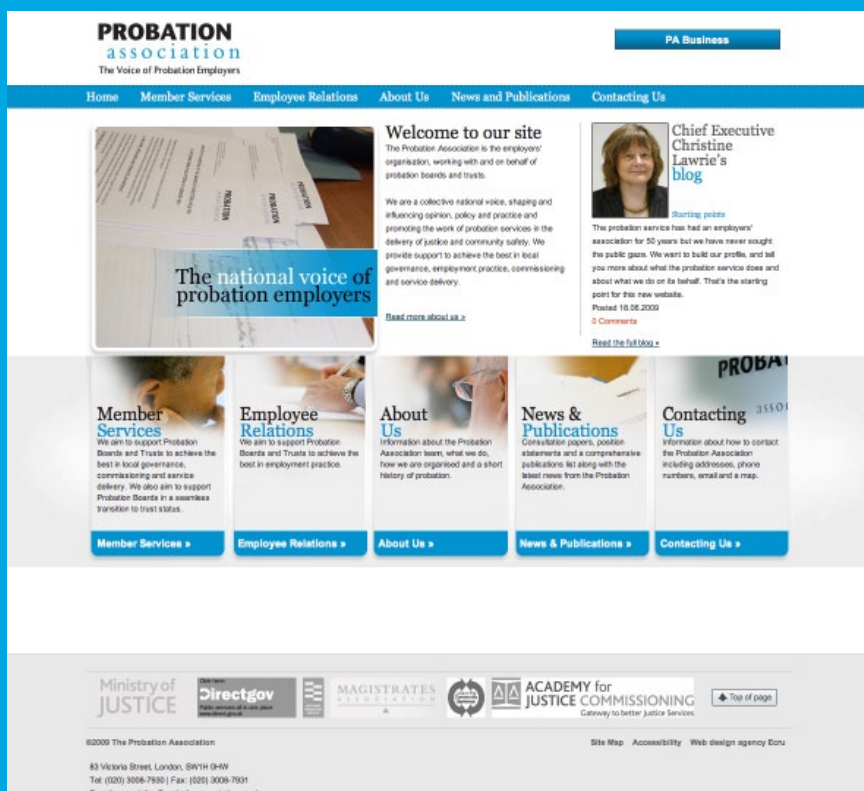
- Local ICT systems enable the effective and efficient management of offenders (or that, if this is question, this is being addressed)
- Informed consideration is given to the capacity implications of any planned structural changes

The investigation report highlighted the question of board re-

sponsibility for failures of practice in the context of increased local accountability as boards move to trust status.

The report also recommended that NOMS should provide a reporting mechanism, based on factors such as caseloads and staffing, by which a Chief and board can assure their Director of Offender Management that risks presented by the most dangerous offenders are being properly prioritised and managed to deliver maximum levels of public protection. NOMS has responded by developing a quarterly reporting template.

NEW WEBSITE FEATURES MEMBERS SECTION AND BLOG



The new PA website at www.probationassociation.co.uk went live on June 30.

The site is modern, user-friendly and features a blog by Christine Lawrie and a public PA Business area to provide members with easy access to minutes, meeting calendar, strategy documents and a link to the NOMS performance hub.

The main sections are:

- Member Services
- Employee Relations
- About Us
- News and Publications

Christine will use her blog to reflect on what's happening in the Association and in the wider world of probation.

CONSULTANCY LATEST

A number of boards and trusts have taken the opportunity to commission specialist work free at the point of delivery via the PA's Access to Consultants project.

The Association has contracted with the following consultancies: Auriola, led by Ben Emm (a former Chief Probation Officer and former head of the MoJ Probation Performance Improvement Unit); Excalibur, headed by Ian Clarke (an expert in public sector contracts and commissioning); and John Hutchings (a former HM Assistant Chief Inspector of Probation).

In two cases, both entailing preparation for trust applications with rehearsal for the

panel interview and, in one case, scrutiny of documents, work has been completed.

Consultants are currently working with three boards – in two cases the focus is on commissioning and the Local Delivery Unit structure, while the other entails a critical review of a recent trust application.

One board is agreeing the detail of proposed work which will provide an appraisal of a recent application. One application is currently with the PA, pending allocation – this will provide assistance with the training of board members in a trust setting. Four further enquiries have been received.

- For further information contact Projects Manager Nigel Spencer on nspencer@probationassociation.co.uk.

OFFICE DIARY

1 July	<i>Chief Executive:</i> National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Trusts Vision Project meeting
2 July	<i>Chief Executive and Employment Relations, Pay and Policies Manager:</i> Management of change area meeting
3 July	<i>Governance Services Manager:</i> Property managers' meeting
6 July	<i>Chief Executive and Merseyside Chair Linda Bloomfield:</i> NHS Foundation Trusts workshop
7 July	PA/PCA/NOMS Integrated Probation Performance Framework Seminar
8 July	<i>Chief Executive:</i> Probation Trust Programme Relaunch
9 July	<i>Governance Services Manager:</i> Facilities management meeting
10 July	<i>Employment Relations, Pay and Policies Manager:</i> National Negotiating Committee (NNC) Joint Working Party
13/14 July	<i>Employment Relations, Pay and Policies Manager:</i> National Learning and Development Conference
13 July	<i>Business Capability and Policy Development Manager:</i> Presentation to the Local Government Association Community Safety Group
14 July	<i>Chief Executive:</i> Academy Executive Group meeting <i>Chief Executive:</i> Audit Committee meeting <i>Chief Executive:</i> HM Inspectorate of Probation Annual Report launch
16 July	<i>Chief Executive:</i> Meeting with Michael Spurr, Chief Operating Officer, NOMS <i>Governance Services Manager:</i> Practical Governance Project Board <i>PR and Communications Manager:</i> Local Crime Community Sentence (LCCS) National Steering Group meeting <i>Chief Executive:</i> Prison and Probation Ombudsman Annual Report launch
17 July	<i>Human Resources Manager:</i> Metropolitan Human Resources Group meeting <i>Employment Relations, Pay and Policies Manager:</i> Employment Relations Working Group meeting
23 July	<i>Governance Services Manager:</i> Local board development event <i>Chief Executive:</i> Trusts Governance Project Board meeting
22 July	<i>Chair, Chief Executive and Employment Relations, Pay and Policies Manager:</i> NNC meeting
28 July	<i>Employment Relations, Pay and Policies Manager:</i> Standing Committee for Chief Officer Grades (SCCOG) Joint Working Group meeting <i>Employment Relations, Pay and Policies Manager:</i> Chief Officer Forum
29 July	<i>Employment Relations, Pay and Policies Manager:</i> NNC Joint Working Party meeting <i>Governance Services Manager:</i> National Probation Service ICT Board meeting <i>Chief Executive:</i> Probation Trusts Programme Board
30 July	PA Board of Directors
31 July	<i>PR and Communications Administrator:</i> London LCCS Steering Group meeting

ICT SOLUTIONS: YOUR CONTACT

The NOMS Information & Communications Technology Group develops, operates and maintains IT solutions and infrastructure services for Probation and Prisons.

The NOMS ICT Customer Relations Unit provides a strategic link between local business and national offerings via regional business relations managers.

The first point of contact for any board considering a new ICT solution is their business relations manager, who will not only help ensure that their solution meets business needs, but also that it leverages national technical and procurement expertise.

- For further information, please contact your regional business relations manager or Jan Olson-Williams, Head of NOMS ICT Customer Relations, at jan.olson-williams@justice.gov.uk or on 020 7217 8302.