BOARD MEETING

MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON

30 July 2025

AT 10.30

R1 SPUR, SAUGHTON HOUSE

Present:

Ms Catherine Dyer, Chair
Mr Henry Acres
Ms Pauline Aylesbury
Mr Graham Bell
Ms Linda de Caestecker
Ms Lorraine Gillies
Mr Keith Rosser
Mr Alec Spencer
Ms Helen Wollaston

In attendance CJS: Ms Karyn McCluskey, Chief Executive
Mr Bill Fitzpatrick, Director of Operations
Ms Hilary Ramsay, Head of Corporate Services
Mr Keith Gardner, Head of
Mr Chris McCully, Head of

Ms Rebecca Proctor, Business Manager **(minutes)**

Apologies: Sheriff Kathrine Mackie (Advisor to the Board) and Graham Bell

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Kathrine Mackie and Graham Bell.

2. Declarations of interest, gifts, or hospitality and any change to Register of Interests

2.1 The Board did not receive any declarations and there were no amendments to the Register.

3. Minute of Board meeting 28 May 2025.

3.1 The Board approved the draft minutes of 28 May 2025.

4. Matters arising – action tracker

4.1 The Board approved the proposed removals from the action tracker. The Board requested the format of the tracker be amended to remove the completed date column.

4.2 Mr McCully provided an update on the Bail options appraisal work. Work is progressing and the team are on target to provide a range of options to Scottish Government (SG) colleagues however it is proving difficult to collect data on further breach of bail. The Chair offered her support to the team.

4.3 Mr Rosser requested the action tracker roll up to the Board from both the ARC and Board meetings as a single record for the next Board meeting.

ACTION: Board Chair to meet with the Bail options appraisal team.

ACTION: Ms Proctor to amend the action tracker columns and information as approved by the Board.

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

5.1 The Board noted the Grant Management paper. The Board asked Mr McCully about the collection of data for the Upside service and the proposed further evaluation to be completed by Scottish Government. Ms Wollaston asked if Upside could present to the Board. Mr McCully agreed he would speak to the grant manager and request an Update presentation at a future Board as directed by the Chair. Ms Gillies queried the risk of throughcare offerings by other providers in the sector, Mr McCully noted this for response to the grant manager but noted it was not an existential risk but one that should be monitored in future reporting.He reported

on the submission of the CJS response to the call for evidence by the Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission.

5.2 The Board noted the Victims' Taskforce paper.

ACTION: Upside to be invited to present at the Board on a future date. Chair to decide which Board meeting would suit for an update.

ACTION: The CJS response to the call for evidence by the Sentencing and Penal policy Commission is to be circulated to the Board by the Head of Policy and Head of Communications.

6. Chair update

6.1 The Chair advised that she met with the Cabinet Secretary and was able to discuss CJS' current work and undertakings. The Chair shared with the Cabinet Secretary the difficulty in engaging some partners on various issues against the background of the statutory responsibilities of CJS and the impact of the various levers available given considerations around the constitutional independences and operational responsibilities of each of some parties. The Chair reminded the Board that CJS are responsible for supporting the narrative about what CJS have done for Scotland to our Sponsorship teams and partners and the wider public. The Chair reflected on her engagement as a Commissioner with the Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission which has allowed the Chair to share the timeline of CJS from inception and our continued work with and for SG and all across the Community Justice sector.

7. Chief Executive update

7.1 The Chief Executive advised that the new Bail and release training is now completed, tested and is available through our learning management system to all partners. The Chief Executive advised that the 'Community Justice to Rehab Pathway' is now operating and effective but there have been some challenges along the way including the potential for over subscription. The Chief Executive advised that some gaps in service provision have been identified but will update the Board in October about progress. The Chief Executive advised the Board on the Criminal Justice Board business and forthcoming work.

ACTIONS: Chief Executive to update on the Pathway at the November Board

8. Preparation for Pre-election Period

8.1 Mr McCully presented a proposal for approaches to the pre-election period that the Board discussed.

Key considerations were:

- Chief Executive attending fringe events and agreeing to more speaking engagements
- Using existing connections with partners

- Using an approach similar to the BBC 'Verify' pieces to verifying commentators' assertions
- A 'did you know' narrative when conducting outreach to all parties
- Lead with our truth first, proactively approaching media opportunities
- Creating a short 'pitch' with punchy information the Board and CJS team can share with their contacts
- A focus on the 'smart justice' narrative to explain the aims and achievements of community justice interventions by partners

ACTIONS: Board members to contact the Chief Executive with any offers of support or contacts to support the work of CJS during this period.

ACTIONS: Board to be copied into the work on the messaging and strategy for all engagement meetings .

9. HRRC Meeting

9.1 Ms De Caestecker shared the proposals from HRRC for ratification by the Board. Ms De Caestecker noted while the staff survey report showed a balanced approach to reporting the data there were some areas of priority as a result of response to two questions that were obviously at odds with the overall responses to the HRRC and the Board. These were around culture and confidence. It was noted that the Chief Executive will speak at the next staff meeting to share with the wider team that SMT are working on the key priority areas identified and are creating an action plan around the staff survey.

9.2 Mr Spencer asked for further details around the responses to the question 'senior management lead a positive work culture' and asked for an expansion as to how this was perceived by the wider CJS' team. The Chief Executive advised that the staff survey landed at a difficult time as CJS moved to mandating teams back into the office, were in the middle of implementing changes to teams and concepts, and a time when there were high pressures and critical timelines which impacted on team resilience. A Board member advised that there are similar trends in their business. The Chief Executive advised there had been a number of genuine long-term sickness absences last year which she felt had also contributed to these results.

9.3 Mr Spencer asked if the reduction in hours has impacted colleague's ability to deliver in the hours provided. Ms Ramsay advised that line managers will be working on the balance of the reduced hours to workloads.

9.4 Ms Dyer noted that pages 7, 8 and 9 had strong statements of concern and asked what SMT are doing to address this. The Chief Executive advised that SMT are discussing increasing the depth of exploration of these specific issues in the survey next year to get more information. Ms de Caestecker advised that although SMT may look at more depth to the questions, it is generally advised that best practice is to retain the same wording year on year to retain the trend data and HRRC would wish to see that .

9.5 Ms Wollaston noted that positive work culture can be different things to different people and some of the statements could be read out of context. Ms Wollaston noted that the HRRC wished SMT to share the message to go back to CJS colleagues that HRRC spent a lot of time discussing this section, were expecting SMT action and didn't dismiss it.

9.6 Mr Rosser noted that HRRC had focused on 2 sets of priorities, the first , 'less than acceptable behaviour remains unchallenged and instances of bullying/respect' are the number 1 priority for action and addressing. Priority 2 items are more general trends to work on over time.

ACTIONS: Chief Executive and Head of Corporate Services to update on SMT responses to staff at next Board meeting

10. ARC Meeting

10.1 Mr. Spencer noted that ARC has welcomed three new members and thanked Mr Bell for his contributions to the ARC as he moves to the HRRC. Mr Spencer shared the recommendations for approval including the Scheme of Delegation (with the exception of one sentence to be provided by Mr. Hill), the Q1 finance update, the risk register and the Q1 performance report. The Board agreed to ratify the above proposals. Mr Spencer presented two recommendations on the risk appetite session being widened to the entire Board instead of solely to ARC, and the Board agreed.
Mr Spencer presented the recommendation of an AI session to the Board, the Board agreed.

ACTIONS: Mr Spencer to arrange risk appetite and AI session for the Board

11. AOB

11.1 The Chair asked if the Board would be amenable to amending future Board/ARC/HRRC dates to ensure adequate preparation time for Minutes ahead of these committees ahead of Board meetings as some had been inadvertently set with quite tight turnarounds once External Auditor work dates were set and the Board agreed.

ACTIONS: Ms Proctor to circulate amended Board meeting dates

11.2 The Board Chair advised that the current corporate plan runs to 2026 and finalisation will require to await refresh of the SG Vision for Justice and National Strategy for Community Justice which will not be until after the election in May 2026 and embedding of the new government. The 2026/27 Business Plan will necessarily have to be based on the current Vision and Strategy. However, to ensure the Board have adequate time to consider any proposals they wish included, meetings to consider potential content and approach will be set soon. .

11.3 The Board Chair thanked the Caledonian and Training Team for their input to the joint session for Board members and staff on the Caledonian system and encouraged all members to attend a future session.

ACTIONS: Chair to arrange Corporate Planning sessions.

ACTIONS: Follow up Caledonian session for Board members still to attend to be arranged.

11.4 The Chair advised the meeting that there was a further matter she wished to raise under AOB but that she was asking Mr Acres and Ms Aylesbury to leave the meeting prior to her raising this to avoid any question of a potential conflict of interest arising. Mr Acres and Ms Aylesbury left the meeting and the matter raised by the Chair was discussed. The Chair confirmed that a Minute regarding this final matter would be shared with Members present but not with Mr Acres or Ms Aylesbury until the outcome of the matter under discussion had been finalised and Board action agreed and implemented.

Note of AOB item 11.4 private meeting included below.

The Chair then closed the meeting.

Board 5 November 2025

Forthcoming meetings: ARC/HRRC 22 October 2025

Minute of discussion and Action agreed at 11.4 AOB on the Minute of the Meeting of the Board on 30 July 2025

The Chair advised the meeting that there was a further matter she wished to raise under AOB but that she was asking Mr Acres and Ms Aylesbury to leave the meeting prior to her raising it, to avoid any perception of a potential conflict of interest arising. She did not advise them of the nature of the AOB. **Mr Acres and Ms Aylesbury left the meeting**.

The Chair confirmed that a Minute regarding this final matter of AOB would be shared with Members present but **not with Mr Acres or Ms Aylesbury** until the outcome of the matter under discussion had been finalised and any Board action agreed and implemented.

The Chair then invited the Chief Executive to present information on current Radio Frequency Electronic (RFEM) systems and processes, operating in respect of some accused people who are admitted to Bail along with an order for RFEM. The Scottish Government (SG) and a number of front-line Justice organisations are responsible for the design of the processes and operation of the system of RFEM.

Board members agreed that the information provided by the Chief Executive suggested improvements in system processes, operation and outcomes were needed to avoid potential impacts, some of which were currently being experienced. Potential impacts could affect victims where orders included an order to stay away from premises occupied by them; and affect accused persons wishing to comply with curfew and stay away requirements imposed by orders, but who later faced urgent circumstances arising, such as unavoidable immediate homelessness or hospital admission, which could lead to breach proceedings and increases in court hearings and prison populations.

Members considered that the information about current work by SG and front-line Justice organisations did not necessarily demonstrate sufficient urgency, or clarity of purpose to successfully identify and mitigate issues leading to such potential impacts.

The Board discussed whether a Section 30 National Improvement Notice should be issued by CJS in relation to these matters to encourage sufficiently focussed and timely action by SG and relevant front- line Justice organisations to attempt to resolve issues jointly; and also the further need to make EM more effective by SG and Justice delivery organisations moving to use of Global Positioning System (GPS) technologies rather than RF, as GPS can be commenced immediately upon Bail being granted at court and has the additional potential to support exclusion orders and drug/alcohol monitoring.

The Board agreed that a draft section 30 Notice be prepared by the Chief Executive for consideration by the Chief Executive and Chair, after the Chief Executive returned from leave, and a final version agreed. That would then be shared with the

Board members who had discussed these matters on 30 July, and appropriate further steps would be decided upon by the Board.

Action: Draft section 30 National Improvement Notice to be prepared by the Chief Executive and shared with the Board for further consideration.