BOARD MEETING

MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON

11 February 2026

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 Sheriff Kathrine Mackie (Advisor to the Board) Sheriff David Mackie – Sentencing Commission
In attendance CJS:	Ms Karyn McCluskey, Chief Executive Mr Bill Fitzpatrick, Director of Operations Ms Hilary Ramsay, Head of Corporate Services Ms Haydn Pasi, Upside Service
Apologies:	Ms. Proctor, Board Secretariat

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. Ahead of the normal business of the Board the Chair welcomed Sheriff David Mackie to outline some of the work that has been carried out by the independent Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission over the past year. Sheriff Mackie outlined some of the work and the associated recommendations which had been published in the Commission's report on 6 February. The Board thanked Sheriff Mackie for his contribution. The Chair advised that the SMT had been studying the report and recommendations, and that there will be a significant amount of work required to ensure CJS is aware of the reasons behind the recommendations and is ready to help deliver those accepted by the Scottish Government (SG) when the new administration is formed after the Scottish Parliament Elections. The period before that will allow all involved in the Criminal Justice System to absorb the findings and recommendations and there are likely to be some around improvements to communications and sharing of information to improve outputs and outcomes for individuals on their journey through the system and produce better experiences and outcomes for victims of crime and also for communities, which may be able to be agreed between partners in the system, which will not require legislation.

The Chair then welcomed the team from Upside, the partnership who had been appointed by Scottish Ministers to provide the National Throughcare Service following the successful design and appointment process which CJS had run on behalf of SG. Ms Pasi provided several reflections on the successes and challenges of delivering the new service to individuals who were not eligible for the statutory services available previously. Ms Pasi also outlined the impact of the early release provisions on the ability of Upside staff to devise and deliver further new services during their first year. The Board expressed their appreciation of the presentation and would welcome future regular update on progress.

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

2.1 The Board did not receive any declarations and the Chair advised she would be making changes to her Register of Interests. There were no other amendments to the Registers intimated.

3. Minute of Board meeting 10 December 2026.

3.1 The Board approved the draft minutes of 10 December 2025 with minor amendments.

4. Matters arising – action tracker

4.1 No changes were made to the action tracker.

5. Risk Appetite Discussion

5.1 Mr Fitzpatrick gave an update on the work to update and develop the Corporate Risk Register. A risk appetite process has been developed and applied to the risk categories within the risk register. The ARC have discussed and are supportive of the categories. The Board were content with the categories and risk appetites. The Corporate Risk Register will be updated and recirculated to ARC members before being brought to the Board in June to sign off. Mr Fitzpatrick confirmed that while this update to the Risk Register is ongoing there is still a process in place to manage risk within the organisation. Mr Fitzpatrick noted his thanks to the Risk Sub-Committee made up of: Hilary Ramsay, Rebecca Proctor, Dave Scott and Keith Gardner. Mr Rosser suggested that the Board may find it useful to have a risk appetite section in future Board papers to help with strategy and decision making.

ACTION – Ms. Proctor to update the Board paper templates to add a risk appetite section.

ACTION – Mr Fitzpatrick to circulate the updated risk register to ARC members before 27 May for approval by Board members in June.

6. HRRC ratifications at 28 January meeting

6.1 Ms. De Caestecker confirmed that the HRRC meeting ratified the Reference Policy, the Upholding Values policy and the Staff Handbook. The HRRC also agreed to recommend for approval the membership of Mindful Employer Plus.

6.2 The HRRC meeting discussed the Staff Survey and are awaiting recommendations from the Culture Group which will come back to the next meeting after SMT have responded. Members of the HRRC felt that the next Staff Survey might be best conducted at the end of the year to allow time for action to be taken on the current staff survey.

6.3 The HRRC discussed a review of equality data. Ms. Ramsay outlined the challenges in extracting equality data from the SG Oracle database. Ms. Ramsay will review this matter for further discussion at the next HRRC. The additional data that has been collected but is not able to be extracted, would be useful to improve the equality metrics of the organisation and support appropriate targeted recruitment.

Action – Following the approval of the Upholding Values Policy it would be timely for the Board to have another session on values. Ms. Proctor to schedule a suitable date.

7. ARC ratifications at meeting of 28 January

7.1 Mr Spencer advised that the ARC meeting reviewed the Performance Report, the Business Plan and approved the Budget for 26/27 and recommended approval to the Board. There were some small changes to the Business Plan recommended at the ARC and Ms. Ramsay confirmed that these changes would be reflected in the final version.

7.2 Members of the meeting discussed the potential changes throughout the year that may affect the Business Plan such as the new Justice Vision which is due to be reviewed in Quarter 4 and the potential changes which may arise from change of Scottish Government following the May Elections of the Scottish Parliament, and any changes arising from the new Government's responses to the recommendations of the report of the Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission. . It was agreed that the Business Plan is a live document and will be updated throughout the year as appropriate.

7.3 Members of the meeting discussed the Performance Report and the potential for confusion over the RAG status and how it could be made clearer.

7.4 Ms. Ramsay confirmed that the performance project that Figure 8 are undertaking will give the organisation more evidence and measures to put into the Business Plan which will show the impact and value of CJS contributions to the Criminal Justice System.

ACTION: Mr Fitzpatrick to look at ways to improve the RAG status in the Performance Report to ensure consistency in risk assessment.

8. Budget allocation and consideration of draft Budget 2026/27

8.1 CJS have received the 2026/27 budget allocation from Scottish Government. The Budget has been approved by ARC and was circulated to the Board to consider how the budget has been allocated across the organisation. CJS will have a small operational budget after the staffing costs have been met. There has been a decision made by the Chief Executive to not continue with some fixed-term posts and some temporary promotions to ensure a balanced budget.

8.2 The Chair noted that there could potentially be demands affecting CJS resources arising from the Sentencing and Penal Commission's recommendations and has met with the Chief Executive and Head of Corporate Services who have assured her that the organisation will be able to deliver on these.

8.3 Mr Acres noted that the ARC has discussed the budget and has assurances that the Business Plan can be delivered.

8.4 Ms. Aylesbury raised the issue of the Communication budget and whether the organisation would be able to deliver on their obligation to increase awareness and understanding of Community Justice with what has been allocated to Communication. A relatively small increase can be effective and can evidence increased reach. If the budget is not available, then there may be the need to revisit what CJS has previously considered achievable. The Chief Executive noted the concerns and advised that in-year it may be possible to make best use of the budget by realigning money to meet further objectives depending on timing of pieces of work and potential savings elsewhere. CJS will work closely with other organisations, as well as make connections and take opportunities to speak at events as much as possible to raise awareness of CJS.

8.5 Ms. Ramsay confirmed that the travel and subsistence budget is in place to help staff to engage around Scotland and raise awareness at local levels across all local authority areas, which offsets some of the lack of budget for other forms of Communication.

8.6 The meeting discussed some of the changes affecting staffing due to the new budget with recognition of the significant contributions made by CJS staff.

8.7 The budget does highlight the increases in fixed costs. SMT are continuing to reduce costs further where possible. There has been an indication that Internal Audit fees will increase in 27/28, and it may be necessary to retender. There are significant fixed costs, including those associated with SG charges for services.

8.8 The main underspend in 2025/26 has arisen from the ring-fenced budget for work around Restorative Justice which cannot be used for core work. The other underspend is from salaries due to timing of staff movement.

8.9 The Board confirmed they approved the Budget for 26/27 as recommended by the ARC.

9. Chief Executive Update

9.1 The Chief Executive provided an update on the success of the Community Justice to Rehab project. The Scottish Government have suggested that CJS might be best placed to run the project and may have some funding available for CJS in 2026/27 for the administration of the project.

10. Chair verbal update and horizon scanning

10.1 The Chair advised that there will soon be an advertisement for the Public Appointments' recruitment for new Board members as both Mr Spencer and Mr Bell have reached their eight-year maximum term in October. The Chair has updated the skills matrix for the Board. The first meeting with the Public Appointments Team and an Advisor to the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life will take place next week. In contrast to the recruitment round which took place in 2024, it has been confirmed that there will not be an Advisor of the Commissioner sitting on the Interview Panel. An Advisor will be supporting the Panel throughout the preparation for advertisement and will be available at any point throughout the whole process if the Panel wishes further advice. The Board will need to be clear about what skill sets are to be recruited for. The Chair suggested a background in IT/digital skills would be useful and referred to previous discussions about the benefits of having a lived experience Board member. The Board agreed that these skills and experiences would be beneficial.

The Chair also asked the Board Secretary to advise of the remaining budget available for the Board.

ACTION – Ms. Proctor to check the Board budget and advise the Chair of the position.

11. AOB

11.1 None received.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: 8 April 2026