**Minutes: Probation Sub-Committee Meeting**

**Friday 6th September 2019**

**Attendees:**

Maxine W. (Trustee, Probation)

Neal C. (Probation SC)

**Apologies**:

None

* **The meeting opened at 5:00pm with the Preamble**
* **Approval of minutes** (Probation/Prison meeting 28th June 2019) - these were approved.
* **Matters arising** – none
* **Committee membership**

Maxine confirmed that, sadly, Bob McD. has had to resign from the sub-committee for health reasons. The committee will write to Bob to thank him for his very valuable service.

A new potential candidate is currently being considered and adverts in AASN will continue to be placed in seek to bring numbers up to the standard 4 plus Trustee. Neal and Maxine will also continue to try to identify possible new members. The closing date for nominations is 18th October.

Each incoming member should ensure that they apply for their sub-committee AA email address.

* **Probation Activity Round-up**
  + **Neal (Midlands)**
* On 2nd September, Neal had a second meeting with John McC, Birmingham Intergroup’s new Probation LO to swap ideas and experience. John recently had a meeting at Birmingham Crown Court with 8 probation officers whose main responsibilities are to prepare pre-sentencing reports. None of them have met an alcoholic who had been sober for any length of time, so John was able to share the fact he got sober 26 years ago with the help of AA and regular attendance at meetings ever since. He informed them about the Chit System. John has just retired as a solicitor, has considerable experience of the criminal justice system and has a number of connections. John’s next activities will be with Magistrates and Police. John is also to start work on encouraging Birmingham groups to operate the chit system.
* In Coventry and Warwickshire, cooperation continues with HMP Onley’s resettlement team which involves one to one meetings with prisoners approaching release. Nearby HMP Rye Hill have also asked for similar support.

12 groups in Coventry and Warwickshire have agreed to adopt the chit system. Chits are being printed and we are about to confirm our readiness with the local probation offices.

* Neal will next contact Tony Mercer (Public Health Midlands) to try to set up another meeting with him and Staffordshire and West Midlands CRC senior managers to discuss the (i) the chit system (ii) AA’s cooperation in general and (iii) the latest thinking and plans within the CRC.
* **Maxine** **W.** confirmed that she will be attending a North East Region Probation Workshop to be held in Strensall (near York) on 13th October.

In November, Maxine W. will be visiting a prison in Bulgaria in order to learn about the significant cooperation there between the prison authorities and AA and also to share her AA experience in Great Britain. Maxine will take over back-issues of ‘Beyond the Bars’ and some presentation material from our June Prison and Probation Seminar.

* **The Chit System**

It was agreed that this matter should be a standing agenda item until further notice.

Neal showed an example of the London Region North Chit and also a similar design that Coventry and Warwickshire Intergroup are shortly to use. Maxine posed the question - might it be more effective and helpful for standardised Chits to be supplied by GSO and distributed to Region or Intergroup Probation liaison officers? Different views on this idea will be sought, including those of the literature sub-committee.

* **Reorganisation of the National Probation Service**

Maxine had sourced three sizeable England & Wales Criminal Justice reports regarding the proposals to the terminate CRC contracts by the end of 2020. Thereafter, ten National Probation Service Regions in England and one Region for the whole of Wales will be created. Neal agreed to review each of these documents and present to the next sub-committee meeting a summary of these reports and the likely effect of these changes on Probation Liaison Officers’ future work.

* **Website content**

The sub-committee has not recently had the resources to review, update and maintain the probation content on the AAGB website; however, it is hoped that one of the incoming SC members will be able to take on this task.

* **A.O.B.** None
* **Close and Serenity Prayer** – 6:45pm