

Meeting Notes - Meeting No.15

Clarence Correctional Centre - Community Consultative Committee (CCC)

Tuesday 14 September 2020: 3:00pm – 5:00pm

Location: via Zoom

Chairperson: Margaret Harvie

Community representatives present: Julie Perkins, Tania Williams, Bob Thompson, Geoffrey Jones, Jason Connell, Martin Oates

Local Government representative: Dan Griffin (Clarence Valley Council - CVC)

Northern Pathways representatives: John Myers (John Laing), Glen Scholes (Serco)

In attendance: Bree Hiatt (Serco), Emma Scutella (PlanCom- note taker)

Apologies: Sharron Lee Todd

Item	Description	Details
1.	Welcome, apologies and introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Margaret Harvie (MH) acknowledged that we are meeting on Aboriginal land and welcomed everyone Around the table introductions for the benefit of Emma Scutella MH noted Sharron Todd was an apology
2.	Declarations of pecuniary and other interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geoffrey Jones (GJ) is a business owner who has a contract to provide meat to Clarence Correctional Centre. Tania Williams (TW) is a TAFE NSW employee. TAFE NSW has entered into a contract for the provision of vocational education and training to the Centre. Tania is not directly part of the group that is contracted to the Centre. Julie Perkins (JP) is the Chairperson of the Gurehlgam Corporation, an organisation that provides services for Aboriginal people.
3.	Correspondence to the CCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MH advised that no correspondence had been received between meetings
4.	Actions Arising from Last Meeting	<p>Action items outstanding from the last meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Legal Service – Ongoing item - PM to report to the CCC on meeting/discussion with representatives from the Aboriginal Legal Services and Legal Aid in Coffs Harbour to update them on the Centre’s progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glen Scholes (GS) advised there was no specific update on these discussions at this time GS spoke of the round table meeting held on 29 July with members of Clarence Valley Aboriginal Community and representatives from

		<p>Aboriginal Legal Services Coffs Harbour, Grafton and Lismore – advised it was well received and appreciated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julie Perkins (JP) agreed that it was a positive meeting. • MH asked If this was more to do with general liaison more than the future provision of Aboriginal legal services. • GS advised that there is likely need for more support, but it is not usual times during COVID-19 as no solicitors are visiting so there is no face to face services. Need to wait until it is over to pursue this issue. <p>ACTION: Serco to update on this ongoing item at the next meeting</p> <p>2. Transport Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS advised that while the old Grafton correctional centre is now closed, he understands that there had been no complaints recorded in relation to visitors/accessibility to that facility. • Dan Griffin (DG) advised he had a phone call from ABC radio regarding the transport issue. He contributed his understanding that due to COVID-19 there is no visiting at the moment and that there has been great success in the use of technology. • DG noted that there are still questions in the community about the 1.00 am train arrival – but it is not an issue at the moment while there are no people and CVC is confident that Transport NSW have it on their agenda to amend the timing. • GS responded that only two inmates who intended to use the train service utilised the overnight accommodation that was available to them until the morning train. GS noted that inmates are given funds to purchase food/transport. <p>3. Future Transport Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG noted that this has been covered with the contact provided and reported on. <p>4. Questions from the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Myers (JM) advised that they have updated websites (Serco & Northern Pathways) and have put up as much information as possible for people to access including Questions and answers on the Northern Pathways website. People are also welcome to send emails with any questions they have. CCC Meeting minutes are available on Northern Pathways website. <p>5. John Holland Infrastructure Legacy Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MH asked if people had the chance to look at the document and any thoughts/ responses? • Martin Oates (MO) was pleased that is indicated that all but one of the targets had been met.
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<p>5.</p>	<p>Update on significant events since last meeting</p>	<p>Serco reported on the commencement of the ‘Official Visitor Program’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bob Thompson (BT) asked about any incidents with tablets leading to their removal. GS responded that there had only been 2 incidents to date. • Tania Williams (TW) asked about the reference to ‘young people’ as opposed to inmates and GS explained that this is the terminology, they like to use to categorise them separately. • MO asked if the Official Visitor positions were paid or voluntary and GS responded that they were positions paid for by the state. • MH asked how the positions are appointed and GS indicated that those appointed go through an application process further to advertising via newspaper and other means. • MO asked if the Official Visitors were mentors as well. GS responded that they were not. They are independent conduits between prisoners and the system, and they report to Fiona Rafter Inspector of Custodial Services who liaises with the Commissioner. • Julie Perkins (JP) asked if any of the Official Visitors were Aboriginal people. GS responded that there was definitely one who was, possibly two. • Geoff Jones (GJ) indicated that there as an inmate currently at Glen Innes correctional centre who wished to be transferred to Clarence Correctional Centre due to better training opportunities that are available. GS advised this was possible if they speak to their manager and ask for reclassification. GS requested that GJ send through the inmates details. GS also noted that no inmate has requested to leave Clarence Correctional Centre to date.
<p>6.</p>	<p>What we are hearing from the community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TW was pleased the Clarence round table meetings had resumed with a new larger group and asked if Serco was coming to the next one. • GS confirmed they would be – the next one is 24 September 2020. • MO mentioned the trainees who had started and left and asked if there were intakes of trainees continuing to fill those gaps. MH advised that the issue of employment and retention was intended to be covered in some detail in the Serco presentation as part of this meeting.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP outlined the positive feedback that she had been receiving from inmates including that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it was the first centre where they had been given full medical records to take to the health care providers when they left and that they were well looked after. - They were provided with transport back to Grafton and to the medical centres where they requested to go. GS said that while Serco had at the start been taking them back to town this is now done by Rabbit Rideshare. GS also noted that people waiting to be picked up could stay at reception until their transport arrived which prevented them wandering out and hitchhiking. • JP also noted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the negative article in Northern Rivers Times from 13 August. - she had heard a negative response to an advertisement for cleaner team leader. People saying that it wasn't paid well. GS agreed with this and confirmed that salary levels were something that was being looked at. - negative personal experience of calling 1800 recruitment number on behalf of a family member. She was spoken to rudely and abruptly by the staff member on the phone. GS advised that the number goes to Adelaide Serco and that he would raise the issue with the manager. • GJ asked about the number of inmates. GS indicated that there are currently 750 in total, 520 in maximum security and 75 women. A further 106 inmates are arriving by end of week bringing totals to 600 maximum security, 115 minimum security and 90 females. • Jason Connell (JC) advised he had heard that over 32 staff had started and finished. Why the high staff turnover? MH advised the issue of employment and turnover would be covered in Serco presentation. • BT asked if the riot squad that we had seen doing the drill during our site visit had to be called yet. GS answered that there had been a handful of potential incidents triggering the emergency response team, but staff were able to deescalate incidents before the team were required to be put into action.
6	<p>Centre Operations Update</p>	<p>GS gave a verbal update on community engagement/events/activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS spoke about a visit and meeting with Sydney Morning Herald Indigenous Affairs reporting team - Ella Archibald-Binge and Rhett Wyman. The article would be part of a 3 part series with this centre being the final instalment – no publication date known. • They asked questions including “will you have a black death in custody?”. GS advised that of course they were doing their best to ensure this doesn't happen. GS noted that all in all it went as good as it could be. • JP advised that the gap is in support when people are released, follow

		<p>through in support would make all of the difference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS reported that he had met with Garby Elders on 13 August 2020. There is a further meeting proposed for 25 September 2020 with the Garby and Yaegi elders. • GS advised that MP Chris Gulaptis and staff toured the facility on 28 August 2020 and were impressed with what was being achieved. <p>GS spoke to the article in the Northern Rivers Times and gave the following employment update;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roughly 50 staff have departed since commencement. • 10 of these resignations were based on the pay rate – the payrate has since been lifted. • 10 were unsuitable medically. • A number came from across state borders and Covid had made it too difficult for them. • A few left for family/personal reasons. • 2 supervisors from Victoria had trouble adapting to the different model of operation of the centre (not traditional). • Only 3 staff members had to be let go since commencement • Serco are still actively recruiting – recruitment of Grafton residents is a priority • Every correctional centre has initial high levels of staff movement as they settle in. • 6 health staff hadn't previously worked in a correctional centre environment so found the differences in the environment too much. <p>Questions from CCC members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MO asked if rate of pay was being addressed. GS will come back with a response on this. <p>ACTION: Further update on this for the next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TW asked about the choir that was mentioned - was it staff, inmates or blended? GS reported it was inmates led by one staff member and it was having a profound effect. Allows for creativity and is part of the healing process. • TW asked progress of partnerships with industry sectors. GS advised that additional industries were coming on board and they want as many different industries as possible. TW asked if there was still room for additional ones who might see opportunity and GS indicated that there definitely is opportunity to add industries. • BT asked if there was any program to introduce pets. GS confirmed that there is a program called 'Dogs for Diggers' for the males and 'Service Assistance Dogs' for females – this is being introduced for both creativity and therapeutic purposes. • BT asked if there were any music programs. GS advised that they had
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<p>11.</p>	<p>Next Meeting and close</p>	<p>Next meeting will be via Zoom at 3pm on Monday 30 November 2020. It is planned that this be a relatively short check in (perhaps allow 1.5 hours)</p> <p>A meeting early in the new year will be on site and encompass a tour.</p>