

Meeting Notes - Meeting No.17

Clarence Correctional Centre - Community Consultative Committee (CCC)

Monday 1 March 2021: 3:30pm – 5:00pm

Location: via Zoom

Chairperson: Margaret Harvie

Community representatives present: Jason Connell, Robert Thompson, Tania Williams, Sharron Lee Todd, Julie Perkins.

Local Government representative: Dan Griffin (Clarence Valley Council)

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

In Attendance: Tammy Kelly (Northern Pathways), Bree Hiatt (Serco)

Apologies: Geoffrey Jones

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. MH noted apologies were received from Geoffrey Jones. No other formal apologies received.
2.	Declarations of pecuniary and other interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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"> Resignation of Martin Oates Email from Sharron Lee Todd regarding: Pups In Prison initiative and follow up to previously raised inmates Radio Station
4.	Actions Arising from Last Meeting	<p>Action items outstanding from the last meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Legal Service –Serco to report on progress with discussion with representatives from the Aboriginal Legal Services and Legal Aid in Coffs Harbour to update them on the progress of and support the need for legal services for Aboriginal people. <p>Glen Scholes (GS) spoke to this. Lawyers successfully utilising AVL visits. All visits are currently limited to 30 minutes except for exceptional circumstances / complex trails etc. There has been no issues to date with inmates not being able to access legal representation.</p> <p>Action: This item to be added as an Agenda Item for future meetings rather than being a specific action item.</p>

		<p>2. Legacy Plans for the Clarence Correctional Centre - Serco to report to the next meeting information about the legacy plans for the Centre.</p> <p>John Myers spoke about Northern Pathways budgeting to support local charities and service organisations. John Laing Charitable Trust is the proponent for larger charitable donations that may be required. Organisations receiving monies are required to meet criteria.</p> <p>Tania Williams noted her expectations in raising this issue was around understanding the Legacy Plans and wanting to understand if there are contributions that the Correctional Centre is making that the CCC members might be able to talk about in the community. This might be a range of things rather than just donations.</p> <p>GS noted there is a pipeline of interest from the community which Northern Pathways and Serco are currently working through. One role involves a Community Partnership to assist with restorations of historic buildings, as just one example.</p> <p>This Action is closed for now with the CCC indicating that they are interested in hearing further reports from JM and GS about ways that the centre is contributing to the community.</p>
		<p>3. Enterprise agreement/ Rate of pay issue</p> <p>GS spoke to the fact that they were aware of the need and were working toward creation of an Enterprise Agreement (EA). A lot of metrics have changed since the Bid period in 2017. Discussion is leading to an agreement for an EA that is likely to be in place for the coming two years.</p> <p>Serco is looking to then employ more people at the new agreed rate.</p> <p>JM indicated that he welcomed the positive step for the correctional officers in the Centre.</p> <p>GS will provide future updates on the progress of the EA and update the CCC when this is finalised.</p>
		<p>4. Social Impact Study –</p> <p>Northern Pathways & Serco had to engage a further provider for this study – Golder. The draft report is underway. Serco will work with Golder to provide inmate information for the Study.</p> <p>GS talked about the direction of the contents of the draft (not ready to be made public at this stage) and gave an overview of the areas to be captured in the report.</p> <p>JM noted that this document, as part of the contract, is required to be submitted to Clarence Valley Council. The draft presents the situation positively in that the social impacts to date are minimal.</p> <p>GS indicated that the report has to go through the due diligence processes in Government and council prior to being made public.</p>

		<p>Relevant to the social impact study GS presented statistics about inmate releases from October 2020 to date. Significantly GS noted that few inmates remain in the community and expanded on the reasons why some stay in the valley.</p> <p>It was suggested that it may be useful to have the presentation available on the website for the information of the community. Northern Pathways will seek advice on whether this is possible.</p> <p>ACTION: GS / JM to seek permission to make these figure publicly available. GS to report back to the next meeting on progress of the Social Impact Study</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Update on significant events since last meeting</p>	<p>Polynesian Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BH talked about the inaugural Polynesian Day Feb 26. Event was well received with inmates from a wide variety of Polynesian cultures and elders present. Giving them ability to practice their culture. <p>TAFE NSW Connected Learning Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BH spoke about the Correctional Centre Rehabilitation and Reintegration team visiting TAFE NSW Yamba Connected Learning Centre on 9 Feb 2021. The visit gave the team first-hand experience of the state-of-the-art custom built facility. The hospitality mobile learning unit enables simulated virtual educational experiences with digital learning options that come to the centre. GS added to this information with the statistics about inmates in programs and the contribution to reducing reoffending. The Fitness Cert III is particularly successful along with the virtual training that is provided. This is a very important partnership with TAFE NSW. <p>National Corrections Day 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serco celebrated on this day the dedicated staff delivering positive outcomes for those in custody. Highlighting milestones achieved in the first six months of operations and opportunities staff have provided through programs, education and employment to reduce reoffending. <p>20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JM and GS attended and met with Deputy Premier John Barilaro in February as he delivered the 20 Year Economic Vision for regional NSW. Northern Pathways and Serco are the largest employer in the Clarence Valley and proud to contribute to the jobs and population growth in the region. <p>Community Sponsorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Womens Day 2021 – Choose to Challenge Northern Pathways & Serco consortium are major sponsors of the Chamber of Commerce initiative for IWD 2021. GS noted that Serco have contributed with Senior Serco members speaking at the event.

<p>6.</p>	<p>What we are hearing from the community?</p>	<p>Julie Perkins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback received from ex-inmates in the centre has been positive around the training options being provided. • an issue raised was about the speed of inmate’s medication charts following them. • Concerned about any gaps in service provision. GS noted the centre is currently working on a draft report to ensure the scope of work captures these activities. Working out why inmates return within a two-year period, and asking the question ‘what would change it for inmates?’ <p>Tania Williams - talked about a trainer she spoke to (with other experienced of corrections) who reported that the student (inmates) at the Centre said that they felt respected.</p> <p>Jason Connell spoke about the fact that there was positive responses in the community. He noted that there was community interest in the future use of the old Grafton Goal. GS and JM have no insight into what is happening with the goal.</p> <p>Sharron Lee Todd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted Covid has kept her away from community and so she has not received any feedback. • She spoke to the email that she had forwarded (attached) and an interview she had heard with Southern Queensland Correctional Centre Director Nick Rowe about the Pups in Prison program where inmates are trained, to train the dogs in becoming assistance dogs. GS indicated his support for this outstanding program around animals and indicated he had been speaking with Nick Roe around the program. He is aiming to introduce this to the Female section of the centre. There are health and operational issues that are required to be addressed prior to initiating such a program. He also had been looking at a ‘Dogs with Diggers for Returned Services’ program for the male minimum security section. • Sharron also indicated that the dogs that fail the Guide Dogs Association programs are still capable of being utilized as assistance dogs of people with special needs e.g. Autism. Perhaps the Guide Dogs Association may be able to come on Board with other existing initiatives as mention by GS. GS noted that he will communicate back to Sharron when they get to the point of progressing the program. • Sharon also wanted to know about the progress of the Radio in Prison program. GS noted he did get to visit and see a similar program in the UK. It works on a closed frequency. GS is currently looking into whether this can be utilised and placed on the inmates tablets to have it share prison news and some community information as in interactive tool. <p>Robert Thompson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wanted to know if the employment drop-out rate had changed. GS happily advised the retention level has increased and spoke around the main issues that caused the initial attrition rate – including salary and the desire to return home as result of covid. • He asked about current number of prisoners. There are 1039 inmates with the aim of there being 1250 inmates by April. <p>Dan Griffins - reiterated the sentiments raised by others in the CCC and had no further comments.</p>
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7.	Centre Operations Update	<p>GS gave a verbal update on Centre Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Employees– January 2021 is 515 persons. GS spoke about the close to 50-50 Correctional Officer gender split and 65% Local employees, 6% ATSI. • Serco has partnered with the company ‘Share Create Innovate’ to deliver a range of textile-based products and specifically Boomerang Bags. The program is an industry as part of the Female centre with all textile stock donated from Spotlight. These bags make a contribution to the local community being plastic bag free and is part of diverting textile waste from landfill. • Toys Change Lives works to break the cycle of indigenous youth recidivism. Inmates have been helping with the production of the toys and the money from the toy sales go toward increasing places in the Toys Change Lives program. • Queensland Housing and Public Works toured the centre to gain an understanding of design and operations. • Clontarf Foundation help connect young Aboriginal men with employment pathways. They toured the centre and met some of the Aboriginal staff. Some of the centre staff work as volunteer mentors for the Clontarf Foundation both locally and across regional NSW.
8.	Centre Operations Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Ombudsman visited the centre meeting with the operations team and inmates. • Northern Pathways consortium attended CVC Roundtable meeting discussing the Valley’s latest data and demographic information. Northern Pathways have committed to presenting a ‘Year in Review’ for the August Roundtable. • MH enquired about whether there had been any complaints and how people could make complaints. • GS noted there had not been any relevant to community issues and that community members and stakeholders can log into the website to log a complaint. Complaints are registered and addressed promptly.
9	CCC Member-ship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to replace Martin Oates. The preference is to make a call out for members as there are a number of people who have shown interest. MH will work with BH to do a call out for applications to fill Martin’s position. <p>ACTION: MH and BH to action advertising and getting a new member of the CCC prior to the next meeting.</p>
10.	Next Meeting and close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future meeting to remain scheduled for Mondays. MH advised that it is difficult to do later than a 3.30pm start given the volunteer nature of the CCC and the fact that some have work commitment. The aim is to have the next meeting in person at the centre and involving a tour if possible to be followed by a meeting at 4.30pm. • Next meeting 3.30pm on Monday 7 June 2021.