



Clinks- Home Office Evaluation Report

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1 Introduction

The West Yorkshire Chaplaincy Project was nominated by IOM partners to lead a proposal to Clinks on behalf of a range of Voluntary Community Faith Sector partners. The overall intention of the proposal was to enhance VCFS involvement in the delivery of integrated offender management. The proposal was agreed in part in October 2010, with a further agreement for the DVD element in November 10.

1.2 Project Aims

1. To facilitate VCFS involvement in 'the 6th Hub' an IOM initiative to be based in the training block; Gloucester Terrace, at HMP Leeds in partnership with West Yorkshire Probation, West Yorkshire Police and the Prison Service.
2. To pump prime the development of a Crime Reduction Forum for communication, representation and networking
3. To develop a sustainable 'portal' website; of use to all partners with details of all VCFS organisations involved in Criminal Justice and links to relevant and useful websites.
4. To produce a DVD telling the offenders story – to use as a training resource
5. Partnership Conference – to facilitate communication and joined up working between and within the sectors.

1.3 Set-up of the project

A Project Manager, KM, and a Housing Support Worker, PM, were both seconded to WYCCP. They had been identified by their employer, Foundation, as being dynamic people with the ability to deliver the ambitious outcomes of the project. They were able to start work almost immediately, a huge advantage. KM was tasked with managing development of the 6th Hub and VCFS involvement in it; development of the website and mapping and had involvement in delivery of the conference. PM supported her work and they both supported delivery of the conference. PM's main role, however, was to make contact with men from the hub's target group inside HMP Leeds, identify support needs and both provide support, sign post to appropriate services and where possible fast track into Foundation accommodation. WYCCP staff worked on the DVD and conference.

2 Overall local outputs and outcomes

The overarching outcomes at the culmination of a very short project period are listed. More specific outcomes attached to each strand are noted at point 4.

2.1 Hub

- Improved co-ordination of 'through the gate' support
- Improved partnership working between VCFS and statutory partners leading to a
- Better service provided to men leaving HMP Leeds.
- Improved partnership working between statutory partners (e.g. HMP Leeds and WY Police)
- Enhanced understanding of the roles of the different partners within the IOM agenda
- Enhanced view of the effectiveness of the VCFS; in both delivering this project and in the wider sense.

2.2 Crime Reduction Forum

- Potential for joined up strategic thinking between partners
- Potential for the development of collaborative work

2.3 Portal website

- One stop shop for all organisations working in crime reduction and prevention.
- Increased opportunity for information sharing and gathering
- Increase in awareness of statutory partners about the range of VCFS organisations in the field

2.4 DVD – Returning

- The men that participated in this project gained a huge amount from being able to tell their stories and have full control over the process
- WY Probation received feedback which they acted upon promptly
- A powerful and hard hitting training resource has been produced.

2.5 Conference

- The event attracted a number of high profile senior participants; thus reinforcing points made in 4.1
- Participants had the opportunity to raise issues and discuss them in a partnership arena

3 Overall sustainability of new partnership approach

We are waiting to hear whether the Safer Leeds Partnership are going to choose to fund the continued presence of a VCFS Co-ordinator in the Hub. There is funding available however the allocation has, to date, not been made.

4 The challenges and successes of the different elements of the project

4.1 6th Hub

Outputs and Outcomes

- A number of VCFS organisations are now working in partnership with the hub and as a result some excellent outcomes are being achieved.
- Details of outputs can be found at appendix 1 and for outcomes see 'case study L. B.' at appendix 2
- The hub demonstrates excellent multi-agency working and this project has resulted in all partners gaining an insight into the work carried out each of the other partners, resulting in a better understanding of the values and core roles of each other's work. Probation has worked in Partnership with VCFS organisations for some time but it is still a relatively new principle for the prison service and the police and this project has given them both a positive insight into the benefits of working with the VCFS.
- In addition to arranging for external VCFS organisations to work in partnership with the hub, work has been carried out to ensure internal VCFS organisations at the prison are also

- working in partnership with the hub. This has ensured that there has been no duplication of work and that the internal VCFS organisations have felt involved with the hub from the start.
- Prisoners who are sentenced to 3 months and under and returning to Leeds on release are now all offered a support package to meet their needs.

Challenges

The notion of the 6th Hub had been aired for sometime prior to the Clinks proposal being made. This led a number of us involved in the proposal to assume that a suitable location within the prison estate had been identified and was ready to be populated. This was, in fact, not the case, thus the focus of the project was, in the first instant, focussed on very practical tasks, such as clearing rubbish from an unused set of rooms, organising decorating, purchasing furniture and involvement in the IT issues of partners.

The location of the hub is not ideal; this element of the project was out of our control as we had to utilise what office space was available at the prison. The hub is placed behind a security gate that requires a security code to be entered in order for access to be gained; this means that all visitors need to be accompanied by a member of staff to escort them to and from the building. This is not only time consuming for staff but also takes away the availability for agencies to come and go as they like to the Hub as the keypad code cannot be disclosed for security reasons. In addition, service users are not allowed into the hub once they have been released from prison due to the sensitive nature of information available within there, this means that there is no interview room available at the hub that agencies could use to carry out assessments or interviews with service users, instead we have to rely on interview rooms being available in alternative buildings.

The aim of the hub development was to create office space that was user friendly and housed co-located staff from partner agencies as well as providing two hot desks that could be used by VCS agencies. The hub is successful in being a user friendly office space with co-located staff from partner agencies. Despite meeting with a number of VCS organisations who are now working in partnership with the hub the resource of the two hot desks are not yet being utilised. We assume that the main reasons for this are that in the current economic climate organisations do not have the resources available to allow staff to hot desk from the hub added to the above points about easy access and lack of interview rooms.

The role of the Housing Support Worker has developed throughout the project and has turned into that of a case manager for those individuals sentenced to 3 months or less whilst they are in custody. This has been positive; however the issue of capacity needs to be considered if further funding is secured and the expectation of the amount of housing support work needs to be realistic given the other elements of the case manager role.

A 6th Hub logo has been designed by a prisoner and is exceptionally good. It was important to have service user involvement with this part of the project. However, because a competition had to be run in order for this to be facilitated it took longer than envisaged to get all of the

promotional material and stationary completed which resulted in a delay in promoting an identity for the hub.

Due to requirements of the funding the VCS have had to work to a deadline of the 31st March 2011 unlike the other partner agencies, this has, at times, meant that it has been frustrating to ensure things have been completed as a matter of urgency when the other partners have not had the same pressure.

In hindsight

This project would have benefited tremendously from a 3 month lead in time prior to the commencement of the 5 months allocated for the project. This would have allowed us to locate a suitable building for the Hub and arrange its set up (such as clearing the building, decorating and furnishing the same and arranging installation of IT for all partners) before commencement of the project. Because this was not the case the first couple of months of the project were spent arranging the set up of the hub leaving only 3 months carry out the project

The cohort of prisoners was originally going to be IOM nominals in Leeds prison that were planning on returning to Leeds on release. The actual number of IOM nominals in Leeds prison is extremely low and these individuals are already managed externally from the community hub in Leeds. Once all partners were aware of the cohort that the external hub manages the criteria for the VCS cohort was changed to individuals serving 3 months or under. Discussions could have taken place with the external Leeds hub prior to the bid being finalised to prevent this overlap and set out correct cohorts. However, time was of the essence for the bid to be submitted so I don't believe there was time for these discussions to take place.

Each partner agency has had a strategic lead to oversee the work of their own agency carried out for the project; all strategic leads have worked well together and ensured consultation at every stage of the process. However, there has been no one person to oversee all strategic leads and have overall responsibility for the hub. It would have been helpful if this role had been in place.

4.2 Crime Reduction & Prevention Forum

An initial meeting was held for VCFS organisations and statutory agencies to scope interest in establishing a forum and give people the opportunity to discuss the purpose and function of the forum.

A crime prevention and reduction strategy group has been established to support and feed into the forum, this group who will act as a reference group for the wider forum representatives. Initially a variety of people volunteered to become involved in the strategy group thus criteria were agreed to ensure that membership of the group included individuals with strategic interest and influence. It was agreed that the strategy group will have a total of 12 places, 3 places will be ring-fenced, one each for Police, Prisons & Probation (they will nominate their own representatives), of the remaining 9 places 1 will be for a service user (nominated from an

existing group) and 8 will be for VCFS organisations. Wherever possible all pathways will be represented within the group.

Outputs and Outcomes

- The first official meeting for the forum was held in January and there was an excellent turn out. The attendees consisted of mainly VCFS organisations together with a small number of statutory agencies and there was a diverse range of organisations present so all pathways were represented.
- A number of individuals senior within their organisations have agreed to be key note speakers at future forums
- A chair of the forum has been elected, together with a chair of the strategy group and terms of reference have been drafted and agreed.
- Future dates have been set for the forum, meetings will be held on a quarterly basis. The strategy group will meet every 6 - 8 weeks for the first 6 months.

The forum will be sustained by a number of individuals who have taken ownership and are committed to make it a success within their existing roles.

4.3 Portal Website/ Mapping Exercise

Outputs and Outcomes

- The website is now complete and is user friendly and will be an excellent resource for all those that use it, especially our statutory partners.
- Members of the site will automatically be sent a reminder each month to update their organisations profile; this tool will ensure that the site remains up to date especially in the current economic climate where services are being de-commissioned. It will also be a useful tool for when organisations extending the number of services they provide.
- The website has a news and a resource section so members can be kept up to date with important news items and can access minutes of the Leeds Crime Prevention and Reduction Forum together with other useful resources.

Learning

- A mapping exercise of VCFS organisations that work with offenders in Leeds was an exercise that was initially going to be carried out in isolation of the website. The mapping exercise was going to be conducted by asking agencies to complete an online 'survey monkey' questionnaire; the findings of the questionnaires were then going to be transferred on to the website. After discussions with the web design company it was agreed that this exercise

would require duplication of work and be extremely time consuming so it was decided that an alternative method would be used so that the mapping exercise would be linked into the website sign up process.

- As a result of the mapping exercise being directly linked into the sign up process for the website there is a small risk that not all VCFS organisations that work with offenders in Leeds will have been mapped as it will be dependent upon them joining the website and registering their organisation. The website is being advertised extremely well so it will be an organisations choice if they decide to not become a member of the site.

In hindsight

More efforts could have been concentrated on the development of the website early on in the project to ensure its completion met the agreed deadline. However, given the number of other strands of the project and their urgency together with instructing the web design company early at the start of the project and their reassurances throughout the project that the site would be completed by the agreed deadline no further action, other than that that was planned and agreed, was taken.

In terms of sustainability the site will only be as good as the number of organisations that join and become members, it is reliant on each organisation keeping their individual profiles up-to-date.

Sustainability

The site does require overall management by an administrator to monitor the members that join and to keep the news and resources articles up to date. The role is currently carried out jointly by the Project Manager and the Housing Support Worker, if no continuation funding is secured for these roles the administrator role will be allocated to WYCCP.

4.4 DVD – Returning

WYCCP worked with a professional social film maker, Lippy People, to produce the DVD. Six WYCCP service users were identified and invited to participate. This selection was based on the view that they would benefit from and enjoy the process and that they were stable enough to commit to the three days necessary for discussing their 'story', filming and editing.

WYCCP key workers accompanied the service users throughout the three day process; filming took place in a number of locations.

Outcomes

As described at 4.4

Challenges

From the six men initially identified only three participated, two of the six had gained employment, and one moved house; thus we had to identify three alternative participants at

very short notice. This caused some stress within the staff team, as the filming was being done to a very tight deadline.

There was potential embarrassment as one DVD participant expressed general criticism of one of the statutory partners whilst telling his story in the DVD. As the DVD was to be shown at a partnership conference there was concern that they would be embarrassed by this. They were forewarned and dealt sensitively with the participant who attended the Conference.

4.5 Conference

The conference demonstrated the excellent multi-agency relationships that had been made throughout the project and this was demonstrated in particular by the fact that there was one key note speaker from each statutory partner agency who holds a very senior role within their organisation.

Outputs and Outcomes

- There was an excellent turn out of guests with 140 confirming attendance, the guests combined individuals from VCFS organisations and statutory agencies so there was a good representation of agencies and pathways.
- The variety of key note speakers from all partner agencies reinforces the excellent multi-agency work that has taken place over the past 5 months.
- Evaluation forms completed at the event provided very positive feedback and the event provided an excellent networking opportunity in addition to being a very informative event.

5 Finally

The evaluators from Sheffield Hallam University were clear that they have been evaluating the process of the project and have not been evaluating outcomes. VCFS organisations are, in the main, measured on outcomes, and our work, albeit service user focused, is largely outcome based. Although the evaluation of the process will be an extremely useful tool for those looking to set up a similar project, we feel that the commissioners together with our statutory partners will be interested in the outcomes that individual projects have achieved when making decisions on whether to support applications for continuation funding. A decision was made to collate all outcomes at the outset of the Leeds project; we offer these to you as a strong indication of the success of this project and will use them when seeking to show the value of the activity that has taken place.

One of the traditional barriers to partnership working for VCFS organisations is the fact that representatives are often required to sit 'at the table' with the bodies that commission and fund activity that VCFS organisations will deliver. The VCFS can feel like the poor relation; this can result in unequal relationships and compromise the VCFS ability to participate fully and to 'challenge'.

A range of strategic activity has raised the profile and status of the VCFS in the partnership arena over the last few years, notably the development of Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements; however these have not survived the economic climate and change of government.

Money=Power; enabling the VCFS to be the fund holder for this project, both at a national and local level has, albeit, temporarily, given us a degree of power within the local IOM partnership and has raised the status of the VCFS.

We are proud that we have completely achieved the very ambitious targets that we set ourselves. The VCFS staff team working on the project have worked tenaciously and with great dedication. We have also received very positive practical support from colleagues at HMP Leeds. There is an appetite for partnership work and partners do acknowledge the fact that they need the VCFS to be part of the delivery landscape, however if there is no VCFS presence within the hub itself we do feel that the VCFS may be overlooked again strategically, although WYCCP and other pre-existing organisations will continue to deliver their services. We are hopeful that the statutory partners involved in IOM will retain and develop a positive view of the professionalism and dedication of the VCFS that has been evident in the delivery of this project.

Jane Daguerre - Director WYCCP

Kate Murray - Project Manager - Foundation

31/3/2011

Appendix 1 - Statistics from the period of 01.01.2011 – 31.03.2011:

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| Total Number of men assessed/offered support | 87 |
| Total number of men that accepted support | 63 |
| Total number of men that declined support | 24 |
| Total number of men on current caseload | 30 |
| Total number of men awaiting assessment | 6 |
| Total number of men released throughout this period | 31 |
| Total number of men who were released that returned to custody | 1 |

Appendix 2 – Case Study: L.B.

L.B. was assessed whilst in custody in December 2010. His immediate support need where accommodation, substance misuse and offending behaviour. A referral, initial needs and risk assessment were all carried out for Foundation who agreed to house L.B. on a 6 months assured short hold tenancy on release from HMP Leeds on the 17th of January 2011. Positive Futures picked L.B. up to help with his offending behaviour and a referral was made to WYCCP for ongoing support.

Accommodation

L.B. moved into supported accommodation on the 17th of January with Foundation. He is being supported By Natasha Bibby, Housing Support Worker who has helped him to resettle back into the community and establish independent living, with him acquiring new skills to live on his own and be able to manage a tenancy.

L.B. has settled in marvellously, taking pride in having his own home. He keeps his property and belongings in good order and is always well maintained in appearance. We have been working together to manage and organise his finances, including getting a claim for ESA set up and he has also made an application for DLA and attended assessments. L.B. is now managing his own utilities and ensuring he budgets them into his finances.

A housing application to Leeds Homes was made and L.B. was awarded 'Band A' and a bidding number on the 2nd of February, since then he has made a conscious effort to place frequent interests in properties available each week.

Training/Education

L.B. is waiting to start a computer course at Renew in Leeds to help give positive structure to his days and ability to improve on his employability in the future.

He has also expressed an interest in joining a local gym to keep fit and improve on his general well being, with this in mind, he has applied for a Leeds Extra Card to enable him to attend leisure facilities at a reduced rate in the Leeds area.

Health

He has also registered at a local medical practice near his new home and actively makes his own appointments, ensuring that he gets sick notes and repeat prescriptions to keep his benefits in payment.

Substance misuse

L.B. was on 46ml of methadone whilst in HMP Leeds and was working with the CARAT team. He was referred through to RAPS on release and has been providing negative urine samples and is engaging well with his worker when he attends his appointments. He is only on a small amount of subutex and he will shortly be transferred to the local drugs team and they will continue with reducing his script.

Reoffending

L.B. has engaged well with Michelle Costello of Positive futures who has co-ordinated his appointments and shared information with the relevant parties. Michelle states that although L.B. appears confident it is clear that he has barriers when dealing with people in authority. She has accompanied him on several appointments, however due to the support package he has in place he is growing in confidence and as such feels ready to start a small training course in IT (see above).

L.B. has previously breached probation orders but since his release from custody on 17.01.11 he has stayed away from his offending peers and has reintegrated himself with his family. Police records indicate that he has remained offence free.

Further Support

L.B. is receiving ongoing support from Ron Williams and two volunteer link workers from WYCCP. He has weekly phone calls from his key worker to 'check in' for a general chat and see if there are any issues or concerns that he needs assistance with.

He has actively been involved in the production of the 6th Hub 'Returning' DVD. L.B. said he found this a positive experience and expressed an interest in working voluntarily with 'Lippy People' the production company. They have said there is a strong possibility of this happening.

Paul Morton 6th Hub