

A photograph of a man with a beard and short hair, smiling as he works on a machine. He is wearing a grey t-shirt and a bright yellow high-visibility safety vest. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an industrial or workshop setting with a blue vertical structure on the right.

CLINKS

supporting voluntary organisations that
work with offenders and their families



Police and Crime Commissioners Generation 2.0

How you can
work with the
voluntary sector
to **cut crime**

About Clinks

Clinks is the national umbrella body for voluntary sector organisations that work with offenders and their families. We have over 600 member organisations, of all sizes, delivering services in local communities to transform offenders' lives and promote desistance from crime. Our vision is of a vibrant and independent sector working with informed and engaged communities to enable the rehabilitation of offenders.

Our sector has an important contribution to make to community safety. Voluntary sector organisations have been working in their local communities for many years, providing expert interventions that work to cut crime. They are a key partner for PCCs in the development and delivery of local services, as well as a critical friend when decisions that affect their service users are made.

Clinks has worked with the Home Office since the PCC role was first created, to help facilitate this important relationship. This included through the Safer Future Communities project, which supported local networks of voluntary organisations to engage with the new structures as they first took shape. In some areas these local networks continue to operate and work alongside PCCs.

About Revolving Doors Agency

Revolving Doors Agency is a charity working to change systems and improve services for people who face multiple and complex needs and come into repeated contact with the police and Criminal Justice System.

Through their First Generation Project with the Transition to Adulthood Alliance, Revolving Doors Agency have worked with PCCs across the country – raising awareness of the particular problems faced by young adults (18-25) and 'revolving door' offenders; sharing evidence of effective policy solutions; and highlighting examples of promising practice among PCCs through a series of briefings and publications. For further information, see www.revolving-doors.org.uk/policy--research/policy-projects/first-generation-project

We believe people who have personal experience of multiple and complex problems are experts through experience. Our national and regional Service User Forums bring together people who have personal experience of multiple and complex problems, including poor mental health, drug and alcohol problems and contact with the Criminal Justice System. They work to influence policy and improve services locally and nationally.

The T2A Alliance

The T2A Alliance is a broad coalition of organisations, which evidences and promotes the need for a distinct and radically different approach to young adults (18-24 year olds) in the transition to adulthood throughout the criminal justice process.

Convened by the Barrow Cadbury Trust, its membership of 13 organisations includes leading criminal justice, health and youth organisations: Addaction, BTEG, Catch 22, Centre for Crime and Justice Studies (CCJS), Clinks, Criminal Justice Alliance (CJA), Howard League for Penal Reform, Nacro, the Prince's Trust, Prison Reform Trust, Revolving Doors Agency, the Young Foundation and Young Minds.

2016-2020 Your priorities for **cutting crime** and **improving community safety**

In the run up to the 2016 Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections, in the context of further potential local devolution of the justice system in England and national devolution in Wales, Clinks and Revolving Doors Agency believe that **working with the voluntary sector is key to cutting crime**.

There are several ways in which PCCs and local structures that govern policing and community safety can **work better with the voluntary sector**, to the benefit of communities.

This briefing outlines the key areas and activities which we believe PCC candidates should prioritise in their election manifesto and police and crime plan once elected. Throughout the document we provide examples of how some current PCCs have responded to these issues.

Take the lead in engaging the voluntary sector

There have been many changes in community safety and criminal justice over the last few years, beginning with the creation of PCCs themselves.

The Transforming Rehabilitation changes to probation have introduced new providers, as well as new funding arrangements which include an element of payment by results (PbR). Meanwhile, local authorities retain responsibility for related activity such as Troubled Families, and they and local health bodies – such as clinical commissioning groups and local authority public health teams – also have obligations to meet offenders' health and social care needs.

Voluntary sector organisations can help all these bodies achieve their aims but face major challenges in engaging at all these different levels. PCCs have the power and influence to bring partners together, but also to build the capacity of the local voluntary sector to engage with them all.

PCCs should take the lead on developing structures to facilitate strategic engagement between statutory agencies and the local voluntary sector. Doing this can help PCCs fulfil their community safety and criminal justice duties to work with other statutory bodies, as well as their duty to engage with victims and members of the public. This could be through supporting a local organisation to coordinate a voluntary sector network, by chairing a forum of statutory, private and voluntary organisations providing criminal justice and community safety services or even by seconding a member of staff from the voluntary sector into the PCC's office to act as a single point of contact with the voluntary sector.

West Yorkshire PCC

Voluntary sector advisor model

In West Yorkshire, PCC Mark Burns-Williamson initially invested £5,000 in the Safer Future Communities Network led by Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL). With this funding, VAL led the development of a Third Sector Advisory Group that reflected a wide range of sector interests – including from different specialisms and a geographical spread across the area. The Advisory Group reports to the PCC's Annual Third Sector Conference. The sector was also allocated a place on the PCCs Partnership Executive Group. Following this, at the end of January 2014, a VAL staff member went on secondment for one year to the Office of the PCC as its Third Sector Adviser. This has since become a mainstream post.

From this a model of partnership working between the PCC and the voluntary sector has emerged which has been beneficial to both. The sector has taken a leading role in the development of services for victims and offenders. It has also contributed to the approach taken to commissioning, and especially to equality impact assessments. An annual grants programme was launched (now worth more than £1m in total) from which hundreds of community groups have benefited. The role of the sector is prominent in the police and crime plan. The work of the PCC and VAL was recognised in the Compact Awards in November 2014.

Exemplify best practice in commissioning

In a time of austerity PCCs joining up with local partners and harnessing the value of the voluntary sector can improve commissioning practice and outcomes.

The knowledge and expertise the voluntary sector holds is invaluable to commissioners and should be utilised in not just the delivery of services but the whole commissioning cycle; it can help PCCs and other commissioners to assess needs, identify priorities, design and deliver services, measure outcomes and review impact.

However voluntary sector organisations, particularly small and local ones, can often be disadvantaged in tendering and procurement processes.

PCCs should take the lead locally in joining up with other commissioners and setting an example by involving the voluntary sector in all aspects of commissioning. This might include, for example, ensuring fair and transparent processes for procurement – including consideration of contract size, whether a contract or a grant would be the most appropriate commissioning model, and consideration of social value in funding decisions.

Avon and Somerset PCC

Commissioning and grants strategy

Avon & Somerset's PCC has committed to working with a wide range of partners and other agencies to support her in delivering her priorities. The Avon and Somerset Office of the PCC's (OPCC) approach to commissioning services and community outcomes is set out in its 2015 Commissioning and Grants Strategy. It emphasises commissioning should be needs and evidence led and that partnership working and co-commissioning are fundamental. The OPCC values the expertise of the market and will develop services through co-production. The Strategy includes a strong emphasis on outcomes and impact and states the OPCC's commitment to the standards in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

The OPCC has a dedicated voluntary sector officer who acts as a point of contact for organisations to get in touch with. The OPCC has actively engaged the local VCSE with regard to commissioning, putting on numerous workshops and presentations to outline their commissioning aims and intentions. The OPCC team wanted to support the sector as much as possible within the perimeters of commissioning, stimulating the market so that even small organisations were included and informed. This work was made possible through strong links with the local Council for Voluntary Service and their existing relationship with the voluntary sector.

Cutting crime means **reducing reoffending**

Supporting offenders to desist from crime is not just a job for prisons and probation. PCCs also have a clear interest in reducing reoffending as part of their overall mission to cut crime.

Desistance is not a one-off event. It often involves moving in and out of offending before stopping altogether, and is different for each individual. There are many factors that positively support desistance from crime, including employment, housing, improved health and well-being, better family relations, a positive self-identity and forming constructive relationships.

The voluntary sector has developed flexible and person-centred services, often delivered at a local level by highly trained staff and volunteers. This work makes a vital contribution to community safety, and deserves support.

Norfolk PCC

Co-ordinating a county-wide approach to rehabilitation

Norfolk PCC has brought together a range of local partners through establishing a Strategic Board for the Rehabilitation of Offenders, including key criminal justice, DWP, health, housing, local government, and voluntary sector partners.

Working closely with the third sector Norfolk Alliance for the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Offenders (NARRO), this group has established a number of work streams with partners working together to address underlying problems linked to reoffending, including a targeted focus on women offenders, health, accommodation, education, training and employment, domestic abuse, and sex work.

The PCC has collaborated with the DWP and local MPs on a campaign to create more job and training opportunities for ex-offenders.

Recognise **the importance of race**

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people are over represented at every stage of the Criminal Justice System, from stop and search to the prison population.

In January 2016 the Prime Minister asked David Lammy MP to conduct a review of racial bias and BAME representation in the Criminal Justice System which will report in 2017.

Voluntary sector organisations based within communities are able to develop and provide tailored services to people from BAME backgrounds. Working in partnership with statutory agencies, these groups are able to enhance effective policing by improving community perceptions, leading to increased levels of trust, better engagement and improved community safety outcomes. However, these grassroots initiatives have been particularly affected by cuts in public spending and rapid changes to the local policy and commissioning environment.

Nottinghamshire PCC

BAME Independent Advisory Group

Shortly after taking office in January 2013 Nottinghamshire PCC Paddy Tipping commissioned research, 'Exploring Police Experiences', to help determine how improvements could be made to improve BME recruitment and selection, promotion, stop and search and trust and confidence. The research report made 30 recommendations and since then a BME Steering Group and a BME Working Group jointly chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and PCC have met monthly to oversee the recommendations.

Some achievements include: BME applications increased by 60% in 2014, BME recruitment increased from 4.69% in 2013 to 15.62% in 2014 through positive action and mentoring; BME representation has increased from 3.9% to 7.5% for Special Constables; stop and searches are much more proportionate for BME communities (reduced disproportionality by 22%).

Support people with **multiple** and **complex needs**

People in contact with the Criminal Justice System often face multiple and complex needs that require support from a range of agencies.

People commonly face a combination of homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse, mental ill health and associated problems with benefits and debt.

These issues may be low-level and manageable when looked at separately, but in combination complicate and exacerbate each other to the point where the impact on a person's life is severe.

Services too often fail to make these connections, or struggle to get their clients the right help because of problems with service thresholds, capacity and long waiting lists. This means that people do not get the support they need. This can result in and escalation of problems and, in particular, repeated contact with the police and Criminal Justice System in ways that might have been preventable.

Hertfordshire Complex Needs Project

Pooling resources to respond effectively

Hertfordshire PCC is working closely with public health, clinical commissioning groups, and local authority partners to pool resources and respond more effectively to complex need demands. This includes recent investment in an adults with complex needs project, targeting better coordinated support for individuals living chaotic lives who have placed high demand on a range of local services.

The approach offers an intensive and personalised model of care, and expects to see reduced costs to police, health, and local authority services by helping people to achieve greater stability and coordinating access to the range of services that they need to address their complex needs.

Support gender specific responses to **women** and **girls**

The women and girls who enter the Criminal Justice System are known to have very different needs to men and many are victims too.

The voluntary sector has developed gender specific responses to this challenge, including through dedicated women's centres that deliver a holistic package of support in a safe and women-only environment.

Some PCCs have already spotted the potential to improve outcomes for these women by partnering with women's centres to support early diversion into support and effective alternatives to custody for women in contact with the police. However, this approach needs to be implemented everywhere.

PCCs should support schemes that draw on voluntary sector expertise to support vulnerable women and girls. This will mean bringing police, courts and probation together, championing the necessity and the benefits of a gender-specific approach, and supporting the voluntary sector in adapting to the challenges of scaling up their offer.

Greater Manchester PCC

Taking a 'whole system' approach

In Greater Manchester, the PCC is supporting efforts to embed a 'whole system' approach to reducing women's offending. This involves working closely with a range of partners who have agreed to fund a network of women's community services with a common framework, including an agreed data sharing protocol.

Key aspects of the model include: women's triage and diversion; delivery of women-specific community orders (including via a problem solving court); and resettlement services.

This new approach has seen partners working together to invest in Greater Manchester's nine women's centres, and is expected to support more than 3,000 women in the area.

Further examples of promising practice in relation to women in contact with the Criminal Justice System are available in the Revolving Doors Agency and T2A briefing, *PCC spotlight 3: Women's Offending*, available at: www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/pcc-spotlight-womens-offending/pcc-spotlight-3-women-s-offending.pdf

Recognise **young adults** as a distinct group

Young adults, aged 18-25, account for less than 10% of the general population but make up a third of those involved in the Criminal Justice System and are the group most likely to reoffend. But they are also the group most likely to desist from crime with the right support.

The majority of youth and adult justice policy and legislation remains arbitrarily split on the basis of chronological age at 18. Despite this, the voluntary sector has driven and developed a range of local interventions for young adults which have led to improved outcomes.

PCCs should support the further development and implementation of local approaches to young adults that work across the arbitrary divide of youth and adult justice services.

South Wales PCC

Extending the principles of youth offending services to young adults

South Wales PCC has targeted an improved response to young adults, with a particular focus on extending youth offending team principles to young adults. This involves a close partnership between local authorities, youth offending services (YOS), probation and the voluntary sector to develop a distinct approach to young adults. Features of the pilot include:

- **'Relapse prevention' and out of court disposals.** A triage scheme in Bridgend where young adults (aged 18- 21) that have previously been involved with YOS are identified if they come into police custody and are linked back into the YOS team for targeted support.
- **Employment, apprenticeships and training.** A scheme supported by the PCC to remove the financial risk for local small businesses when employing young adults with criminal records.
- **An 18-21 Triage pilot scheme.** Operating in Cardiff Bay Bridewell, diverting young adults away from police custody, using a restorative justice approach that builds upon the triage already in place for 10-17s.
- **A voluntary bail support scheme.** A scheme in Merthyr and Bridgend Bridewells, aimed at 18-25s who have been identified as vulnerable during police detention and questioning. It extends the Appropriate Adult scheme to supports them at point of charge, bail to court, preparation for court and working alongside them in the community.

Further examples are available in the Revolving Doors Agency & T2A briefing *PCC Spotlight: Young Adults (18-24) in contact with the police and criminal justice services*: www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/pcc-spotlight-young-adults

Listen and respond to people with **lived experience**

The people and families who have experience of the Criminal Justice System are a vital, and often untapped, source of intelligence about how community safety services can be improved.

This is both in relation to how to reduce reoffending, and to how they could have been supported to change their behaviour before they entered the Criminal Justice System in the first place.

The voluntary sector promotes a number of innovative models for engaging with these 'experts by experience', in order to listen to their views and involve them in service design. These approaches amplify people's voices to make sure the Criminal Justice System benefits from their insights.

PCCs should consult with all those who have direct experience of the services they deliver, including offenders. PCCs should work with the voluntary sector to ensure that in their statutory duty to engage with the public they are hearing the important perspectives of people who have been through the Criminal Justice System.

Youth Commission

Involving young people and ex-offenders in setting priorities

Sussex, Hampshire, and Leicestershire PCCs have all hosted a Youth Commission, run by the SHM Foundation.

This involves a group of young people aged 14-24 (including ex-offenders) engaging with their peers to produce recommendations that will inform the police and crime plan, covering issues such as antisocial behaviour, reoffending, domestic abuse, substance misuse, and relationships with the police.

The Youth Commission approach has recently been extended to Nottinghamshire and North Yorkshire.

Be a champion for **volunteering** in the CJS

The voluntary sector recruits, trains and manages committed and passionate local people as volunteers.

Volunteers provide a bridge between communities and the Criminal Justice System, engaging and motivating people to desist from crime. This includes peer volunteering where people with lived experience of the CJS provide practical advice and support to others.

Volunteering is freely given, but not cost-free. It requires ongoing investment to ensure quality recruitment, training and supervision can be maintained.

PCCs are in an excellent position to champion positive, sustainable, responsible voluntary action across all parts of their local Criminal Justice System. This means ensuring resources for the organisations that support volunteers, simpler and more consistent procedures, and better engagement from all partners.

Working with ex-offender organisations and volunteer centres could open up volunteering and eventual employment to those on the path to desistance from crime.

Hertfordshire PCC

Volunteering strategy

In June 2014, the PCC for Hertfordshire launched his *Volunteering Strategy for 2014-2016*. It provides a framework for volunteering across policing, the Criminal Justice System and community protection in Hertfordshire.

The document recommends the formal adoption of Hertfordshire Volunteer Centre's Six Point Promise. This promise makes sure that organisations are prepared for the challenges volunteering presents, ensures consistent best practice and allows organisations to test their policies and procedures.

Further **information** and **resources**

Revolving Doors Agency

Revolving Doors Agency's First Generation project works with PCCs and their staff to help cut crime, end 'revolving door' offending, and improve responses to young adults and people with multiple needs who come into repeated contact with the police. This webpage includes checklists for PCCs on improving services for people with multiple and complex needs and young adults in the Criminal Justice System as well as examples of PCC best practice.

 www.revolving-doors.org.uk/policy--research/policy-projects/first-generation-project

Safer Future Communities

Clinks' Safer Future Communities was funded by the Home Office between 2011 and 2013 to support the development of local networks of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations to engage with and influence PCCs and the new commissioning landscape in which they operate. These webpages include a variety of resources to support PCCs and the voluntary sector to work with each other.

 www.clinks.org/sfc

The Young Review

The Young Review, initiated by Clinks and the Black Training Enterprise Group and chaired by Baroness Young of Hornsey, published its report and recommendations on improving outcomes for young black and Muslim men in the Criminal Justice System in December 2014. Since then its independent advisory group has been working with the Ministry of Justice and National Offender Management Service to take its recommendations forward.

 www.youngreview.org

More than a Provider

Clinks interviewed voluntary sector organisations and held discussions with commissioners to produce this report which provides examples of good practice, including using the expertise of voluntary organisations to assess service user need; giving clear information about tendering processes and key contacts; and using grants to support partnership development.

 www.clinks.org/resources-reports/more-provider-role-voluntary-sector-commissioning-offender-services

Who Cares?

Who Cares? Where next for women offender services? is a Clinks report providing a snapshot into the experience of community based women offender services and provides recommendations for sustaining these vital services to meet the needs of women offenders in the future.

 www.clinks.org/resources-reports/who-cares-where-next-women-offender-services

The Do It Justice guide to desistance

Clinks' *Introducing desistance: a guide for voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations* aims to provide an accessible summary of some of the key themes in the desistance literature and explore the factors that can support desistance. It focuses on how the voluntary sector can use the theory to demonstrate the success of their work supporting desistance to policy-makers, funders, commissioners, other partners and perhaps also prime providers.

 www.clinks.org/resources-dij-desistance

Get in touch

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Please contact Clinks if you would like to talk about how local community safety bodies can make the CJS work better for offenders, those who support them, and the communities they live in.

✉ info@clinks.org

☎ 0207 383 0966

🌐 www.clinks.org



Please contact Revolving Doors Agency if you have any examples of promising practice in your area, or if you would like to discuss how experts by experience can shape local commissioning and decision-making.

✉ info@revolving-doors.org.uk

☎ 020 7407 0747

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