



Clinks Annual General Meeting

Thursday 23 November 2021 2.25pm online via Zoom

Attendees

2 Makeit, Age UK North Tyneside, Agenda, Alana House, Parents and Children Together, Ark Resettlement Services, Back on Track, BearFace Theatre CIC, Brighton Women's Centre, Bthechange, C2C Social Action, Change, grow, live (CGL), Changing Lives, Children Heard and Seen, Choices Consultancy Service, Clean Break, Clean Sheet, Community Chaplaincy Association, Community Chaplaincy Norfolk, Council of Somali Organisations, Cruse Bereavement Support, CVS (Hackney), Derventio Housing Trust CIC, Doorway Women's Service (Part of The Magdalene Group), Friends of Peterborough Prison, Futures Unlocked, GamCare, Geese Theatre Company, Green Pastures CBS, Horton Housing Association, Housing for Women, In2Out, Include, Inspire North, Kairos Women Working Together, Koestler Arts, Langley House Trust, Lincolnshire Action Trust, London School of Mosaic, Margaret Carey Foundation, NEPACS, North Wales Women's Centre Ltd, Not Beyond Redemption, Novus, One Small Thing, Ormiston Families, PLIAS Resettlement, POPS (Partners Of Prisoners and Family Support Group), Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact), Prison Radio Association, Prison Reform Trust, Prisoners Abroad, Prisoners' Advice Service, Prisoners' Education Trust, RECOOP, Red Rose Recovery, Respond, RIFT Social Enterprise CIC, Rise Up CIC, Run For Your Life CIC, Samaritans, Shannon Trust, Shelter (England), Shewise, StandOut, Support When It Matters Enterprise CIC, Sussex Pathways, Sussex Prisoners' Families CIC, Switchback, The Bell Foundation, The Bromley Trust, The Disabilities Trust, The Enneagram Inside, The Forward Trust, The JABBS Foundation, The National Autistic Society, The RCJ And Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux, The Reader, The Traveller Movement, The Upper Room, The Wise Group, The Workforce Development Trust Ltd (Skills for Justice), Think Through Nutrition - Institute for Food Brain and Behaviour, Together for Mental Wellbeing, Together Women Projects (Yorkshire & Humberside), Tomorrow's Women Wirral, Touchstone-Leeds, Unlock - for people with criminal records, Wales Restorative Approaches Partnership CIC, Wallich-Clifford Community, We Are With You, Women in Prison, Working Chance, YouTurn Futures (93 organisations).

Apologies

No apologies were received.

Minutes

1. Welcome and Chair's address – Roma Hooper

- 1.1 Roma opened the meeting by welcoming the highest ever number of organisations to attend Clinks' AGM. Roma thanked Matt Grey for his speech, and called on action to be taken. Roma reflected on the past year, and the challenging circumstances of COVID alongside changes in the criminal justice system. Organisations have demonstrated strength, adaptability and resilience. Roma called on everyone to be optimistic, and to build on new ways of working. This year has shone light on the long standing systemic problems within the criminal justice system. Furthermore, the probation reform poses new challenges and opportunities within the sector. Roma hopes a post-pandemic future will enable a

fairer criminal justice system whereby voluntary organisations are treated as equal partners.

1.2 Roma encouraged members to get involved over the next couple of days of Clinks' annual conference and to utilise it as an opportunity to form connections. Roma reminded all members of their right to vote, and the importance of hearing from them about Clinks' work. Roma thanked the Clinks team, trustees and CEO for their work not only in orchestrating this conference but for all the work over the last eighteen months. Roma thanked the outgoing trustees, Alison Frater, Raheel Mohammed and Patrick Williams. Clinks have recruited new trustees, details of which are on our website. Roma was delighted that membership of Clinks continues to grow, and reminded members that they remain our priority and therefore we need to hear from them. Roma moved on to the formal business.

2. Apologies from members

2.1 No apologies were received from members. The only apology is from Rachael Byrne, Clinks' Co-Chair.

3. Approval of minutes of the AGM held on 22 October 2020

Ordinary Resolution 1

That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 22 October 2020 be adopted as a true record of the meeting.

The previous minutes are accepted as a true record. Proposed by Jon Collins, Prisoners Education Trust. Seconded by Emily Giles, The Bell Foundation and passed with 33 votes.

4. Presentation of the [Annual Report](#) & plans for the future - Anne Fox, Chief Executive Officer

4.1 Anne presented the highlights of the annual report against each of Clinks strategic objectives.

Strategic objective 1: *Clinks promote the value and the work of the voluntary sector in the criminal justice system with a particular focus on smaller specialist organisations*

In 2020/21 we

- Delivered a comprehensive communications programme, responding strategically to people's needs during the pandemic. Including 40 publications, 91 ebulletins to over 20,000 subscribers, social media delivered to over 25,000 followers, dedicated Covid-19 web page giving up to date information, and a huge range of content on our blog, which also supported the #NeverMoreNeeded campaign calling for financial support for charities in the pandemic
- Developed strong partnerships with communication colleagues in HMPPS to ensure we had the most up to date information to disseminate to our audiences regarding Covid-19 and its impact.

Strategic Objective 2: *Clinks support voluntary organisations working in the criminal justice system with individuals and their families*

In 2020/21 we

- Built on our events and training offer. We welcomed over 5,000 attendees across 114 events during the year, a significant increase in the number of events and participation from the voluntary sector. We hosted region-specific criminal justice forums, and extended our reach by running 'All England' and 'Wales' forums
- Provided representation at regional strategic boards and meetings in the North East, North West, London and Wales through our area development team
- Provided one-to-one support and information to members around a range of subjects and issues, including funding challenges, partnership working and, in particular, the complexities faced by the sector during Covid-19 and the probation reform agenda and commissioning process. We set up dedicated Covid-19 and probation email mailboxes for organisations to send queries
- Delivered consultancy support to racially minoritised organisations, with funding from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service. 50 organisations were supported by our consultancy support for racially minoritised people specialists.

Strategic Objective 3: *Clinks represents and advocates for the voluntary sector and its service users*

In 2020/21 we

- Represented organisations during the reforms to probation, highlighting challenges and barriers for them, which successfully led to the voluntary sector emerging as the main partner. We built strong and constructive relationships with the probation reform team and facilitated their engagement with voluntary sector organisations to support their understanding of organisations' experience of the commissioning process and the team's ability to draw upon the voluntary sector's knowledge and expertise.
- Issued 6 surveys to understand the impact of the pandemic - with an average of 118 organisations responding to each - with the research culminating in our report 'The impact of Covid-19 on the voluntary sector in criminal justice'. Our findings were shared with the Justice Select Committee and Ministry of Justice, and we launched at an event attended by officials from HMPPS and MoJ.
- Set up two special interest groups through chairing of the Reducing Reoffending Third Sector Advisory Group - the RR3 - which provides the key interface between the voluntary sector and the Ministry of Justice. The special interest group on Covid-19 met over 30 times. It communicated to senior officials the challenges voluntary organisations and their beneficiaries faced during the pandemic, and built a strong relationship with the operational 'gold command' of prisons. The special interest group on probation reform fed in the experiences of the sector into the design of the new reformed probation model. It met with officials to provide advice on the model, including the design of the Dynamic Framework.
- Continued to be members of the Ministry of Justice's Advisory Board for Female Offenders, advising on the implementation of the Female Offender Strategy, and we raised our concerns about the planned addition of 500 prison places for women.
- Worked closely with leaders across the voluntary sector from organisations led by, and focussed on, racially minoritised people, our trustees and staff team, to review the language we use when talking about race and racism to ensure that it challenges – and doesn't reinforce – racist policies, ideas and structures.
- Highlighted that the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill will further entrench race inequality in the criminal justice system. Alongside our partners, we coordinated



an open letter, parliamentary briefing, petition and social media campaign - calling on the government to withdraw the elements of the Bill it concedes will increase racial inequality.

Strategic objective 4: *Clinks identifies challenges and opportunities facing the voluntary sector and its service users, and works together to find and implement solutions.*

In 2020/21 we

- Set up the Covid-19 small grants programme, and gave £463,500 across 90 grants - on behalf of the Ministry of Justice/Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, with some additional funding from Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Recruited a Race and Justice Coordinator and established a race and justice network. The network is already proving valuable to these organisations
- Developed our women's network, which is now 55 members strong - through a coaching and mentoring scheme and provided expert seminars and training courses on fundraising and impact, involving service users in co-production, lived experience leadership and feminist leadership
- Secured funding to support these organisations and took part in fortnightly calls set up by HMPPS so that they could maintain regular contact with the families organisations who currently hold the prisons family services contracts
- Alongside Homeless Link and Mind, Clinks is a founding member of the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coalition. Our MEAM Partnership Managers in the South West and North East have continued to support and develop local areas, working in Bristol, Plymouth, Cornwall, Exeter, Sunderland, Redcar and Cleveland
- Supported 17 arts practitioners were supported in criminal justice settings through our professional development bursary scheme run by the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance
- Gathered intelligence from our members through our health and justice network. Key concerns were fed back to the NHS England Health and Justice team, and updates on vaccinations and other essential updates given to members
- Published 3 articles for our online evidence base, written by leading academics, which aims to support the sector to base its services on the available evidence, and encourage commissioners to award contracts to organisations delivering an evidence-based approach.

Strategic Objective 5: *Clinks is effective, efficient, and professional in our work and operations. We ensure we have systems, resources and processes to achieve maximum impact*

In 2020/21 we

- Adjusted our working practice to enable us to continue to deliver high quality services alongside supporting staff wellbeing. This included moving all staff to work from home. During this time we recruited and inducted 14 people new to Clinks. We embedded our new organisational structure. Our CEO and new Director roles work alongside our board on specific strategic areas and objectives. Staff teams now form clear directorates supported by the directors
- Offered all voluntary organisations free membership for the year. Smaller organisations won't pay membership fees until April 2023 – thanks partly to funding from the Garfield Weston Foundation
- Announced our aspiration to make Clinks a truly antiracist organisation in all we say and do, and how we operate internally and externally. We have a working group to take this activity forwards and are working on activities across all of our strategic objectives towards this aspiration.

Looking to the future, in the 2021-22 year we will:

- Inform and influence the sector and stakeholders through a continued comprehensive communications programme, developing our strategic communications offer
- Strengthen our area-based support. Maintain our footprint in the regions we currently have dedicated resource, and cover new geographical areas subject to need and funding
- Review membership, events and training, ensuring that our offer best meets the needs of our members. We'll aim to grow our membership
- Focus on Covid-19 recovery and probation reform, supporting and engaging with voluntary organisations to identify and understand their needs and support them to overcome the ongoing challenges they face
- Research the voluntary sector's experience of the probation reform programme and influence it's continued development
- Continue to focus our advocacy work on the needs and experiences of organisations providing specialist services, including those working with racially minoritised people and women
- We will collaboratively develop our policy messages, and also deliver a new policy influencing training programme
- We will develop and prioritise resource for our networks of organisations, support the commissioning of good quality family services, and support the South West and North East to adopt the MEAM Approach
- We will ensure funders and commissioners are informed of sector developments and seek to widen the range of funders interested in the criminal justice system
- We will support our antiracist Clinks working party to identify needs for activity in key areas
- We will seek out multi-year core funding and diversify our income streams
- We will retain a valued core team with the skills and expertise to meet the needs of our sector
- We will set up a membership advisory group, for which applications are now open.

4.2 Anne thanked everyone who has been a part of this last year, especially to everyone that has been in touch including staff, trustees, member supporters and funders.

5. Presentation of the Annual Accounts

5.1 Treasurer Simon Alsop presented the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. Simon reported that Clinks had an income of just under £2,200,000, and an expenditure of £2,275,000 equalling a deficit of £77,000. This was a planned deficit, trustees agreed to invest £100,000 into the Women's network with the spending split between £50,000 in 2019/20 and £50,000 in 2020/21. The remainder of the deficit is due to a designated investment of £20,000 into the Clinks website.

5.2 Clinks was not only able to deliver on planned budgeted activity but in addition ran a summer and winter small grants program working with, and predominately funded by the Ministry of Justice. Also, ran a race and justice probation grants programme.



- 5.3 Thanks to the support of the Garfield Weston Foundation Clinks was able to waive all membership fees for 2020/21. Clinks appreciates the benefit of this for members and has extended it into the 2021/22 year.
- 5.4 Further commitments from our funders enabled Clinks to deliver much needed additional support to the sector by recruiting extra resource both internally and through the engagement of sector experts for specialist advice.
- 5.5 Looking forward Clinks planned for the 2021/22 year with a financial deficit of £75,000. However, the most forward looking projections are that Clinks will now break even due to meticulous financial planning, and capitalising on organic savings. We will continue to remain vigilant of the current environment, constantly monitoring the situation and ensuring we secure the financial support for Clinks, its members and the sector.
- 5.6 We acknowledge and are very grateful that some of our resilience is due to the statutory funding we receive. We are thankful for the continued support from all of our key funders.
- 5.7 Our reserves policy sets out a level of operation for Clinks to survive in case of a loss of critical funding. The policy has been reviewed by the board, and the current approach has not changed. The board will continue to assess the risks. The current calculation of the appropriate level of reserves is £470,000. As of 31 March 2021, Clinks held £454,000 in reserves, although this is below we are confidently anticipating a break even budget for this current year, so therefore, the reserves are unlikely to change for year ending 31 March 2022. Trustees are happy with this level and are conscious that this should be increased.
- 5.8 The Treasurer invited questions and there were none.

6. The audited Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Ordinary Resolution 2:

That the audited Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 for Clinks be received and adopted.

The audited Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 for Clinks be received and adopted. Proposed by Jackie Carpenter, Derventio Housing Trust. Seconded by Pauline Crowe, Prisoners Abroad and passed with 32 votes.

7. Resignation, re-election and election of trustees

Ordinary Resolution 3:

That the following trustee/s be re-elected as trustees of Clinks in accordance with Article 37 of the Articles of Association: Roma Hooper

Roma Hooper was nominated to be re-elected as a trustee of Clinks in accordance with article 37 of the Articles of Association. Proposed by Pauline Crowe, Prisoners Abroad. Seconded by Jon Collins, Prisoners Education Trust and passed with 35 votes.

Ordinary Resolution 4:



That the following trustee/s be elected as trustees of Clinks in accordance with Article 37 of the Articles of Association: Richard Booty and Simon Ruding.

Richard Booty was nominated to be elected as a trustee of Clinks in accordance with article 37 of the Articles of Association. Proposed by Moira Donohoe, Choices Help Families. Seconded by Pauline Crowe, Prisoners Abroad and passed with 32 votes.

Simon Ruding was nominated to be elected as a trustee of Clinks in accordance with article 37 of the Articles of Association. Proposed by Anna Hermann, Clean Break. Seconded by Vicki Markiewicz, CGL and passed with 33 votes.

With formal business concluded, Roma Hooper closed the meeting at 15.01 pm.