



Reducing Reoffending Third Sector Advisory Group (RR3)

Tuesday 14th March 2023 in-person

Attendees:

Anne Fox, Clinks (Chair)
Bronte Jack, Clinks (Secretariat)
Adam Moll, The Social Interest Group
Carolyn Houghton, Rethink Mental Illness
Dez Brown, Spark2Life
Ellie McNeil, Liverpool and Sefton YMCA
Maria McNicoll, St. Giles Trust
Peter Dawson, Prison Reform Trust
Steve Matthews, Shelter
Vicki Markiewicz, Change Grow Live

Officials:

Bettina Crossick, Head of 3rd Sector Engagement and Grants Programme, HMPPS
Stephen O'Connor, Deputy Director for Probation Policy, Ministry of Justice
Lauren Withall, Policy Lead for Substance Misuse in Custody in the Youth Justice and Offender Policy Directorate, Ministry of Justice

Apologies:

Alasdair Jackson, Recycling Lives
Bernie Bowen-Thomson, Safer Wales
Helen Dyson, Nacro
Khatuna Tsintsadze, Zahid Mubarek Trust
Lisa Dando, Brighton Women's Centre
Paul Grainge, Recoop
Peter Atherton, Community Led Initiatives CIC
Pippa Goodfellow, Alliance for Youth Justice
Ruth Boyd, Head of Stakeholder Engagement, HMPPS
Tina Parker, PACT

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1. Anne Fox announced that this would be Peter Dawson's last meeting. Peter is leaving Prison Reform Trust and thus his time holding the prison seat has come to an end. She thanked Peter for his contribution to the role. Recruitment for the Prisons seat will commence in March 2023.
- 1.2. Anne welcomed Maria McNicholl who has replaced Francesca Cooney as the new holder of the Education seat, and Steve Matthews who has replaced Tracy Wild as the holder of the Housing seat. She thanked Francesca and Tracy for their contribution to the group during their terms.
- 1.3. The group was joined by Lauren Withall, Policy Lead for Substance Misuse in Custody in the Youth Justice and Offender Policy Directorate, Ministry of Justice who gave a presentation outlining key information relating to Incentivised Substance-Free Living (ISFL) units and Drug Recovery Wings.

1.4. Following this, there was also an agenda item for planning the RR3's work for the upcoming year.

2. Lauren Withall, Policy Lead for Substance Misuse, Ministry of Justice (MoJ)

- 2.1. In the presentation, Lauren Withall set the context for ISFLs in relation to the cross-government's Drug Strategy, *From Harm to Hope*, published in December 2021. The 10-year plan aims to restrict supply, reduce demand, and build a world-class treatment and recovery system. As part of the Strategy, they are also working with cross-government partners to develop local outcome frameworks and local partnerships. The strategy was underpinned by £900m of investment across government to tackle drug misuse. This includes £780m of additional investment in treatment and recovery.
- 2.2. The Substance Misuse team's aim is to achieve a more coordinated approach, ensuring whole agency commitment, implementing services with excellency, and having the internal structure to deliver them. They want to ensure needs assessment are robust, as well as crafting new solutions to substance misuse.
- 2.3. The ISFLs include the existing model of the prison wing, whilst adopting a supportive environment for people in prison to address a range of substance misuse needs and engagement with treatment. This includes additional incentives compared to the standard regime, regular testing, and an expectation that people engage in treatment. There are currently 50 ISFLs, with the aim to have 100 across the prison estate by March 2025.
- 2.4. Drug Recovery Wings will incorporate a new, abstinence-based model of the prison wing, specific to recovery of opioid addiction, for individuals who are clinically ready and want to transition off opioid substitution treatment. Uptake on this wing will be entirely voluntary, and not the only space within prison that someone can transition. They can however stay on this wing for six months. These wings will include additional incentives to the standard regime, including regular testing, engagement in intensive psychosocial treatment, abstinence-based interventions and peer support.
- 2.5. The first Drug Recovery Wings will be opening Spring 2023, and the aim is that there will be up to 18 across the prison estate by March 2025.
- 2.6. The team are unsure how high demand is going to be, and whether these wings will be sustainable for every prison.
- 2.7. Whilst ISFLs will support people with a wide range of substance misuse needs, they will also form part of the journey for those wanting to become abstinent from illicit drugs and those on Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST).
- 2.8. An individual will not be released directly from a Drug Recovery Wing, rather there would be a gradual move to an ISFL unit.
- 2.9. These options would be open to a specific cohort, who have enough time in custody to engage in treatment.
- 2.10. Adam Moll wanted to know what the up take has been like in prisons for ISFLs, and asked what has been working well.
- 2.11. Lauren Withall stated that there are waiting lists for current ISFLs, and across the estate uptake has been good. There needs to be more work done to understand the trends of the needs of people on ISFLs, and the team will be undertaking an evaluation over the next year. There is likely to be variation of the model across prisons.

- 2.12. Anne Fox asked if there was clear indication of why people are taking places up, is it the incentives or the safety?
- 2.13. Lauren Withall added that she will take this question up for evaluation, to establish people's motivations and demotivators for uptake.
- 2.14. Dez Brown asked to what extent is dual diagnosis addressed within ISFLs and if cannabis would be addressed.
- 2.15. Lauren Withall added that Drug Recovery Wings is specific to opioids, however ISFLs are open to any substance misuse needs, and there will be variation from prison to prison. In relation to dual diagnosis, the ISFLs are about creating a supportive and recovery-focused environment. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)'s priority is to create that environment, as NHS England are providing the substance misuse work.
- 2.16. Peter Dawson wanted to establish how analysts are getting the views of the people living on the ISFLs, and those not living in the units, and asked what this feels like for the rest of the prison.
- 2.17. Lauren Withall explained that the Drug Recovery Wing Blueprint developed by NHS England and HMPPS sets out the expectations and key elements of Drug Recovery Wings across prisons. The team are engaging with drug recovery providers and engaging with EPIC (a consultancy organisation working in prison and community settings) for lived experience consultations. The focus is on getting the training offer right for staff working on the Drug Recovery Wings, working closely with prisons, NHS England and local treatment providers to implement the model and learn from the early implementation stages for the development of the next sites. Analysts are currently developing a multi-stage evaluation to help them understand user experience, outcomes and impact, which can hopefully be shared later on this year.
- 2.18. Anne Fox asked for a timescale on what would be helpful right now and how the group can provide feedback on the staff training offer. She wanted to know if the training offer is for HMPPS to self-deliver or if it would be part of a package. Lauren stated that she was unsure and unaware of a dedicated budget for training.
- 2.19. Lauren Withall left the meeting and Anne Fox chaired questions from the group to feed back to her.
- 2.20. Vicki Markiewicz said she has been involved in the blueprint for ISFLs. She was pleased to hear about training, and to what extent trained prison officers are in the recovery space. It is important to think about what we would expect prison officers to know about and Vicki suggested using her expertise to come with some points for planning training. She highlighted Lauren's mention of the £900 million investment, however added there is no investment for therapeutic intervention, and rather this is for security. She said there is a challenge because of the focus on opioids and feels that the reality of detoxing in a prison environment is not fully understood. She also added that individuals who haven't used drugs can choose to go to ISFLs.
- 2.21. Adam Moll echoed the need for a rounded training package that is not too recovery focused but looks at relationships, dual diagnosis, etc. and ensures staff can recognise specific issues. He wanted to know if those officers will have clinical supervision, and what can be done to support staff, as staff turnover will have an impact of the success of ISFLs and Drug Recovery Wings.

- 2.22. David Morgan raised the concern of recruitment and resources in prisons. ISFLs and Drug Recovery Wings will be more resource intensive than standard wings, and therefore questioned whether resources would be drawn from other areas of the prison, subsequently impacting the regime.
- 2.23. Anne Fox also raised the issue of staffing, asking whether staff on the wings will consist of a Prison Officer with extra training, and what the implications will be for people in prison engaging with staff who are Prison Officers but also recovery workers.
- 2.24. Josh Stunell vocalised the need to be cautious about the reliance on Prison Officers.
- 2.25. Carolyn Houghton wanted to know how trauma-informed working will be measured and noted that a focus on drug recovery could mean the importance of dual diagnosis being lost in relation to mental health. She also commented that alcohol use is not mentioned in relation to the new wings.
- 2.26. Peter Dawson stated that there is a real opportunity for those with lived experience to be involved in training staff.
- 2.27. Vicki Markiewicz mentioned that models have been used previously where Prison Officers know about peoples' needs, as the relationship between staff and people in prison is fundamental. She highlighted the need to recruit dedicated Prison Officers. She also suggested that peer mentors be attached to the Drug Recovery Wings.
- 2.28. Anne Fox suggested that the Clinks Policy Team could draw together suggestions on what training could look like.
- 2.29. Given that HMPPS are ready to roll out both wings, Anne Fox suggested advice on how they can implement best and learn as they go.
- 2.30. Dez Brown wanted to know more about the criteria for ISFLs and Drug Recovery Wings, do people self-refer, who decides the criteria and is this consistent across prisons, as this may not be viable given the cohorts in individual prisons. How will they encourage people to join the wings?
- 2.31. Anne Fox questioned what exactly incentivised means.
- 2.32. Maria McNicoll asked how this work links in with other initiatives, such as the Co-Financing Organisation Project. She highlighted the need for this work to not be done in isolation.

3. Updates and general discussion

- 3.1. Bettina Crossick vocalised a desire to utilise the expertise of RR3 members more and asked if the wider sector contacts members in relation to their participation in the RR3. The consensus was that this does not happen on the whole.
- 3.2. Vicki explained that she has engagement with the wider sector because she engineers opportunities.
- 3.3. Bettina Crossick suggested that a short bio for each individual's specialism seats be published on the Clinks website, and asked what more could be done to raise the profile of the RR3.
- 3.4. Peter Dawson asked for an HMPPS/MOJ organisation chart, so that people can contact the department. Bettina Crossick acknowledged that is important to link RR3 members to the right people in the department.

- 3.5. Bettina Crossick updated the group in relation to the delays in decisions being announced for HMPPS grants to the voluntary sector, particularly those for organisations led by or focused on racially minoritised people. She stated that going forward there will be more consultation and acknowledged that the grants were not handled well and that information had not been given at the right time. She suggested potential interim funding.
- 3.6. Anne Fox added that she has written to Amy Rees, CEO of HMPPS, and consequently had a meeting with Matt Grey, Executive Director for Reducing Reoffending, Partnerships and Accommodation at HMPPS. In this meeting, Anne strongly advised that the grants for organisations led by or focused on racially minoritised people be prioritised. Anne stated the outcome of the conversation was that HMPPS confirmed that the grants will be accelerated. She also challenged the criteria for the grants, for example, the criteria for women's grants changed, with commercial considerations imposed upon assessment of applications not being mentioned in the original tender for the grants.
- 3.7. Bettina Crossick stated she has made this clear to the relevant people, and that the criteria must be very clear.
- 3.8. Dez Brown wanted to know when the sector will have an answer in relation to the release of the grants for organisations led by or for racially minoritised people.
- 3.9. Anne Fox added that if the Ministry of Justice cannot release the grants to organisations led by or focused on racially minoritised people in good time, then they cannot claim to have racially minoritised people as one of their priority areas.
- 3.10. Bettina Crossick confirmed these are being accelerated but there is no timeline currently. She will update Anne when she knows and asked Dez Brown to inform Clinks which organisations are waiting on updates about the grants.
- 3.11. Stephen O'Connor delivered updates from HMPPS. Over the next three months there will be a great deal of activity within the department, whilst it is not a main priority, he added that we can expect to see the department talking more about Out of Court Disposals about this in the future. A consultation has taken place on the two-tier system for Out of Court Disposals and a decision has already been made. Half of police forces already use the two-tier framework. Stephen would like a smaller consultation group on this topic.
- 3.12. In relation to the Pre-Sentence Report pilots taking place in 15 Magistrates Courts, Steve O'Connor stated that the feedback on how they have worked is mixed. The pilots tried to achieve three things: investing in training, pre-plea protocol, and to drive up the number of Pre-Sentence Reports being completed for certain groups (racially minoritised people, women, and younger people). He will put something out about this and will contact the group on how voluntary organisations can feed into it.
- 3.13. The department are taking the next practical steps in relation to Problem Solving Courts and we can expect four sites to open in June 2023.
- 3.14. In relation to young adults, Steve O'Connor wants to ascertain if this is a priority for the RR3. The consensus was that this is not yet considered a priority but is something that could be incorporated into the new workplan.
- 3.15. As its sponsor, Vicki Markiewicz gave a brief update on the Future Regime Design Special Interest Group of the RR3, stating that the first meeting was a thorough overview of HMPPS' intention for the new National Regime Model for prisons. She admitted that the second meeting did not achieve as much, however

the sponsors have suggested information in advance of the final meeting to enable better engagement from members.

- 3.16. The meeting concluded with a session to develop a new RR3 workplan for 2023/24. We look forward to sharing this in due course.