



Supporting the voluntary sector
working in the criminal justice system

Member advisory forum meeting notes

Tuesday 17 January 2023, 13.00 – 15.00 via video call

Attendees

Chris Stacey	Clinks (Chair)
Maisie Hulbert	Clinks Trustee
Riana Taylor	Circles UK
Peter Merrifield	Support When It Matters (SWIM)
Matina Marougka	Together for Mental Wellbeing
Bex Roberts	Junction 42
Dawn Harrison	Changing Lives
Josh Stunell	bthechange CIC
Laura Munt	Hestia
John Speyer	Hear Me Out
Lucy Ball	New Bridge Foundation
Emma Kidger	Clinks
Paul Bernard	Clinks

Apologies

Janine Alcantara	Employment 4 All
Lynn Kelly	POPS
Khatuna Tsintsadze	Zahid Mubarek Trust
Christopher Leslie	Inside Out Support Wales

1. Welcome and introductions

- Chris S welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- We are considering holding our July meeting face to face, as we will have a new Chair then and would be a great opportunity to meet.

2. Priorities for 2023/2024

- **What should be the key priority areas of development for Clinks through support of MAF members?**
 - Clinks is trying to be all things to all people – smaller number of priorities would help make real progress.
 - Suggestion to remove the focus on COVID recovery from the list.
 - Bigger organisations within the group – how they can influence and support smaller orgs within things such as procurement. Prime and sub-contracting for smaller orgs –

convening power at Clinks, what is best practice for sub-contractors, what tricks will primes use, how can the voluntary sector navigate this – guidance “Hive Mind” approach could be taken.

- Focus on collaboration and supporting smaller orgs e.g. within procurement.
 - Building a resilient workforce – landscape has changed and CJS operating environment - How are organisations doing this? Sharing learning across organisations and sharing costs – how to define “a resilient workforce” e.g. 1:1, clinical supervision, case management sessions.
 - Clinks could look to run mini events or focus groups on this topic to better support the sector.
 - Help in engaging with commissioners – how to sell yourself as an organisation, the more commercial side of a charity e.g. evidencing impact and outcomes, utilise the membership network on skill sharing and not the process of “all info going into Clinks and going back out again”. Support organisations who don’t have a contract management team or a procurement lead / bid writer etc.
 - Supporting ethnic minority individuals in probation service
 - All organisations to be able to focus on ethnic minorities and make progress collectively, speaking to best practice and how other organisations are able to share ideas and best practice amongst the membership. Promoting the race equalities network – building organisations to be able to support others to be the best at what they do.
 - “Member asset map” – tool to see who is “good” at commercial, for example.
 - Facilitator of collaboration, special interest groups on specific areas of work – chair forums to progress work areas, “expert” members to share guidance, peer learning opportunities and thinking about collaboration. Specific support for specific groups of people e.g. older prisoners.
 - Future of commissioning and the overall process, cost of living crisis, procurement and technical skills, support to small and specialist organisations who don’t have commissioning expertise.
 - NCVO and ACEVO – collaboration in commissioning. Session or guidance on how you practically bring in smaller specialist expertise.
 - Assest bank idea as part of directory of services.
- **How can MAF members be involved with these ‘projects’ e.g. more regular sub-group meetings, use of Teams channel sub-groups to progress work etc.**
 - Take a design thinking approach to address the priority areas – looking to shorten down priority list, looking to use smaller groups on ad-hoc basis. Look at specialisms and speak to those specialisms within the forum. Task and finish groups – specialists within each group – speaking to what the problem is – define the problem and delve down into the problem and break it down.
 - Look at four disciplines approach – smaller goals / objectives and then focus on lead behaviours.
 - MAF aims should speak to Clinks strategic aims of what we are and how they link in.
 - Rank the priorities based on what membership issues are and ask them to prioritise – what areas do Clinks members see as priority?
 - How do we give a voice to our members and wider society and how is that voice heard?

- Innovation and how to approach this, how to give people the tools to tell their story and how to share that
- Sharing things that worked really well e.g. sharing best practice with each other. Older people support. Key issues that organisations are facing, it helps with collaboration.

3. What issues/opportunities are we seeing facing the sector at the moment?

- Funding process and delays – amount of work to hit a deadline which was incredibly challenging, notification on the delay and the mistrust that some ethnic minority communities have experienced of MoJ. How open and transparent MoJ are being with delays is very disconcerting.
- Lost approved premises (AP) properties due to delays. AP contracts already being told that these will be delayed for 14 months time.

4. Keeping in touch

- We're keen to have a system that allows us to keep in touch between meetings, particularly when we're working in smaller groups on our priority areas. We trialled Microsoft Teams, but not all members were able to join our group due to technical problems we've not been able to overcome.
- Suggestion to try something as simple as a good distribution list to help communication and a dropbox account to hold shared documents.

5. Meeting admin

Next meeting: 25 April 2023 (10:00-12:00) – please note change of time and amend your calendars.

2023 meeting dates for your calendar:

- 25 April 2023 (10:00-12:00)
- 18 July 2023 (13:00-15:00)
- 17 October 2023 (13:00-15:00)

Action points from today:

- **All:** Email paul.bernard@clinks.org a few bullet points outlining what you would consider to be your expertise that you could bring to the forum and in supporting the wider membership.
- **Emma/Paul:** Cross-reference responses with priority focuses for the year ahead and put that out to the wider membership to get their input into agreeing 2 or 3 areas that we collectively think are priorities for the group.
- **Paul:** Create and share a distribution list for the group and set up file sharing (e.g. Dropbox).