



Reducing Reoffending Third Sector Advisory Group (RR3)

Via Zoom

Tuesday 29th March 2022

Attendees:

Jessica Mullen, Clinks (Chair)
Noori Piperdy, Clinks (Secretariat)
Adam Moll, The Social Interest Group
Alasdair Jackson, Recycling Lives
Carolyn Houghton, Rethink Mental Illness
Dez Brown, Spark2Life
Ellie McNeil, Liverpool and Sefton YMCA
Francesca Cooney, Prisoners Education Trust
Helen Dyson, Nacro
Khatuna Tsintsadze, Zahid Mubarek Trust
Lisa Dando, Brighton Women's Centre
Martin Blakebrough, Kaleidoscope
Paul Grainge, Recoop
Peter Atherton, Community Led Initiatives CIC
Peter Dawson, Prison Reform Trust
Pippa Goodfellow, Alliance for Youth Justice
Tina Parker, PACT
Vicki Markiewicz, Change Grow Live

Officials:

Adam Bailey, Deputy Director, Prison Outcomes, Resettlement and Reoffending, MoJ
Alana Ajani, Head of Prison Strategy and Implementation (Race Action) HMPPS
Bettina Crossick, Head of Third Sector Engagement and Grants Programme, HMPPS
Izzy Latham, Probation Policy Advisor, MoJ
Rachel MacLennan, Third Sector Engagement and Grants Programme, HMPPS
Ruth Boyd, Head of Stakeholder Engagement, HMPPS
Stephen O'Connor, Deputy Director of Probation Policy, MoJ

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1. Noori Piperdy welcomed the group. Jessica Mullen gave apologies for George Barrow, MoJ.
- 1.2. Stephen O'Connor announced he will be taking over from George Barrow following George's retirement. Jessica Mullen thanked George Barrow for his contribution to the group.
- 1.3. Adam Moll, Director of Operations for The Social Interest Group, is the newest member of the RR3 for the large provider seat.

2. Prisons Strategy White Paper

- 2.1. Adam Bailey highlighted the key points mentioned within the [Prisons Strategy White Paper](#) which include:

- **Making use of technology**

- Ensuring this is well maintained and used to reflect specialist needs where appropriate.
 - **Women's Estate**
 - There was a very clear message about the need for community support and that prisons should be reserved for the most serious crimes. Making sure there is a trauma-informed response. Ensuring family contact for women in prison. Strong theme of clear of arrangements for release especially for victims of domestic violence or sexual exploitation.
 - **Governor autonomy**
 - There will be training to ensure a proper understanding of neurodiversity.
 - A reflection on proposals to avoid inconsistencies and to consider the importance of accountability and performance measures to hold governor's account for the outcomes are they are delivering.
 - **Resettlement**
 - The main feedback from proposals showed a focus on employment. This included working directly with local employers to understand skill gaps and local employment needs. There should be a focus on building local links with prisons.
 - Preparing people for disclosure of criminal records, ensuring access to apprenticeships, finding the right level of employment for individuals, not setting people up to fail, and a smooth process for older people to receive pension credit or a state pension.
 - Resettlement passports will be introduced. These must reflect protected characteristics and will be digital and personalised.
 - Inclusion of in-cell tech to facilitate family contact.
 - Legislating to end Friday releases.
- 2.2. Adam Bailey acknowledged that there is not a direct mention of race within the White Paper, however made note that its recommendations will be incorporated by the HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Race Action Programme.
 - 2.3. He commented that there was a strong theme of the voices of people in prison, building their views into policy design and including them within the future prison regime.
 - 2.4. He noted that role of the voluntary sector is not necessarily at the forefront of the White Paper, however, gave reassurance that what ministers want to achieve will be achieved in partnership with the voluntary sector.
 - 2.5. Adam Bailey outlined the key next steps following the White Paper release which include reviewing responses and putting feedback to ministers. Then will come the implementation stage which looks at the allocations process and how the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will reflect the settlement from the treasury into funding.
 - 2.6. Jessica Mullen opened the discussion by asking if Khatuna Tsintsadze and Dez Brown would like to reflect on the the absence of race within the White Paper, given that they wrote and coordinated the letter response on that issue, signed by many members of the RR3.
 - 2.7. Khatuna Tsintsadze noted that as of today the MoJ has not identified the negative impact of race within the White Paper, whilst simultaneously acknowledging the disparity in positive outcomes and treatments for racially minoritised individuals. She felt this was a direct contradiction and asked to what extent race will feature within the final White Paper. She thanked Adam Bailey for mentioning the coordination with the Race Action Programme however commented that this programme is not necessarily sustainable and has its limitations. She urged for a direct focus on race within the White Paper.
 - 2.8. Dez Brown noted that when trying to address disparity Lammy called for performance indicators and accountability for reforms. He noted the mention of the voices of people in prison in the presentation and asked who will respond to those voices.

- 2.9. Dez Brown added that in relation to Independent Monitoring Boards (IMB) recruitment there needs to be a drive to ensure the prison estate is represented. They should be used as a critical friend to prisons but also carry the voice of people in prison while ensuring that different ethnicities are reflected.
- 2.10. Adam Bailey responded that at the current level of development of White Paper, the proposals have not been identified as having a disproportionate impact on racially minoritised people in prison. He ensured that as the development of proposals continued, the issues will be assessed. If those issues are identified down the line, HMPPS will work closely with Alana Ajani, Head of Prison Strategy and Implementation (Race Action) for HMPPS, to ensure that the new policies address any protected characteristics.
- 2.11. Adam Bailey recognised that incorporating the voices of people in prison is something the MoJ do as much as they can and are coming up with better ways to ensure this continues, such as the Prison Leavers Project which seeks to embed lived experience into policy work.
- 2.12. Adam Bailey explained that he was not sure about recruitment for IMBs, but he will take that point away to the relevant team.
- 2.13. Alana Ajani stated that in relation to the Race Action Programme, she recognises that the project is timebound, however they are trying to set the foundation for inclusive policy making. This means engaging with voluntary sector experts and those with lived experience to include them within policy making. They have already trialled this with three policies, which have had good outcomes and proved to be an effective approach for policy makers. They hope to embed that into the lifecycle of policies outlined in the Prisons Strategy White Paper so that when the Race Action Programme closes, a legacy will be left for HMPPS.
- 2.14. Vicki Markiewicz asked what the level of feedback was in relation to substance misuse elements. She noted that substance misuse and mental health were not mentioned in the update, yet these are key areas of concern coming through in research for the community and prison estate. She was keen to know how much feedback was gained from consultations and what is next for engagement with the voluntary sector on these issues.
- 2.15. Pippa Goodfellow added that when consulting members it appears that the vision does not prioritise racial injustice and affirmed that this must be in the core of the White Paper rather than an add on.
- 2.16. Jessica Mullen echoed this and added that if it is not included in the strategy, it does not get translated on the ground as a priority.
- 2.17. Adam Bailey assured the group that this strength of feeling will be communicated back to his team. He added that the government published its drug strategy, which is linked to the White Paper. It outlines treatment for prison leavers; however, this is not the MoJ's direct area of responsibility. He will speak to Anna Lacey and discuss proposals around health and drug treatment.
- 2.18. Adam Moll raised the question of language used within the report with terms such as "dangerous" and "offender" being re-established. He noted that the MoJ sets the tone and culture of a system that it oversees, which is just as important as operations. He asked if the language represented a blip and asked what we can do collectively to challenge that language at the highest levels.
- 2.19. Adam Bailey acknowledged that language is important, however the White Paper reflects a wide range of views.
- 2.20. Paul Goodfellow commented that in relation to education, training and employment there is a cohort that cannot access skills, such as people in prison on long sentences. This is despite risk management plans highlighting the need for immediate purposeful engagement to support independence, particularly if they need health and social care. He urged for an emphasis on this overlooked cohort.

- 2.21. In response Adam Bailey highlighted that it is important to think about these things, however there are lots of reasons that prevent access. Prisons mirror education more widely and those with significant needs are the hardest to reach, however acknowledged the need for the right expertise within prisons.
- 2.22. Peter Dawson noted that it is encouraging that in future regime design there will be a new definition of purposeful activity, that isn't all geared towards release and takes into consideration purpose and hope.
- 2.23. Jessica Mullen explained that she hopes to get an update from the Future Regime Design team at HMPPS at the next Covid-19 special interest group (SIG) meeting.

3. Partnership Framework

- 3.1. Rachel MacLennan discussed the proposal for a Partnership Framework which aims to outline the ways in which HMPPS will engage with the voluntary sector and how HMPPS can raise the profile of the sector. The proposal for a framework received approval from the Third Sector Strategic Partnership Board on 16th March and outlined a three to six month period to develop the framework. The framework will include sharing evidence and research, collaboration and partnership, and identifying what the best delivery process is to meet the needs of HMPPS, the Youth Custody Service (YCS), MoJ, voluntary organisations, staff and service users. The team will consult and collaborate with key stakeholders to scope out and identify roles and responsibilities, develop an understanding of how things operate on the ground locally, and think about what is efficient and realistic to achieve. The Partnership Framework will also include principles of engagement and the processes to support wider work.
- 3.2. Initial thoughts for the Partnership Framework include:
- That it will help HMPPS to define what we mean by the "third sector" and what is in the scope of the engagement work.
 - It will maximise engagement and opportunity.
 - The team will investigate sector capability and capacity. This is important in establishing gaps, training, and support needs, and promoting sustainable growth.
 - The framework will be useful in mapping out existing activities and initiatives in the business and voluntary sector.
 - It will promote national and regional approaches, connectivity, and common understanding.
 - It will identify what HMPPS will do to encourage the sector and effective ways of working in practice.
 - The team will think about the feasibility of introducing a regional Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Coordinator role.
 - The framework will support specialist services for specific groups such as women and racially minoritised cohorts.
 - The first task will be a stakeholder analysis.
- 3.3. Bettina Crossick expressed that this is an exciting opportunity with regards to how we take this forward and create a framework for working together. She hopes that this will join up all the dots. Rachel MacLennan has been brought in at a high strategic level and she recommends that Rachel holds a SIG on this to take place three times a year, including members of the RR3 and others.
- 3.4. Dez Brown asked what the SMART goals might be for this framework and what outcomes are to be achieved in the time that they have. He commented that often these projects can feel very general and there are similar things like this happening right across the sector so he wanted to know what would constitute success.

- 3.5. Rachel MacLennan explained that one of the key goals is to join the dots. She recognises the breadth of activity happening in the sector and so the framework aims to take a helicopter view and look at any areas of duplication and any gaps for implementation.
- 3.6. Bettina Crossick invited Dez Brown to flag any similar frameworks that have been created. She understands this is a long-term piece of work, but this will be a continuum of the Third Sector Strategic Partnership Board.
- 3.7. Francesca Cooney asked if there was scope for an establishment placed role at a senior level, to enable partnership work in prison.
- 3.8. Vicki Markiewicz stated that some of the networks she has been part of previously, have missed opportunities to draw in the expertise of the voluntary sector. She felt that there has been a disconnect previously, so this feels welcomed. She also echoed Dez Brown in asking what is going to be different.
- 3.9. Adam Moll also echoed previous comments around outcomes and making procurement and contracts more inclusive for smaller organisations. He asked if there is role for something regional and how can we ensure equal voluntary participation in every region and welcomed a more bespoke approach.
- 3.10. Rachel MacLennan affirmed that it is important to take account of the nuances of each local area. She added that her team are already engaging with Heads of Community Integration who work in the probation regions.
- 3.11. Jessica Mullen added that she will speak with Clinks' Heads of Area Development about where this is working well and formulating some key principles for partnership that can be applied in any context.
- 3.12. Carolyn Houghton added that there is a danger that when there is overlap, some of the smaller organisations could get lost. She noted that with the probation framework they have seen that the big-name providers then subcontract the smaller ones. It is important that smaller organisations are linked into different networks and unnecessary duplication is avoided.
- 3.13. Helen Dyson confirmed that she supports the framework. She added that there will need to be consideration as to how smaller organisations are linked into local as well as central opportunities, referring to probation regions and Heads of Community Integration.
- 3.14. Jessica Mullen added that it would be useful to think about how we support engagement with the development of this work. A SIG could work as a vehicle but there may be different approaches that would also allow us to bring people in at different stages.

4. Updates

- 4.1. Dez Brown shared insights from his recent discussion about probation on 8th March, looking at the difference between grants and contracts, and those that are on the Dynamic Framework. He asked if grants can be made more accessible particularly for those that fund services for people with protected characteristics or specific categories. There was discussion around giving grants for under £1 million and some of the legalities around that. Organisations led by racially minoritised people were finding it very hard to get on the framework but there was a suggestion on the criteria and guidance surrounding those grants and ensuring a proportionate amount is allocated to racially minoritised-led organisations.
- 4.2. Rachel MacLennan added that her understanding was that there will be two pieces of guidance provided; one to regional probation areas and then an additional piece of guidance on how to commission specialist services for racially minoritised people. She added that she will chase this up. Her reflection was that it was positive in that it specifically referenced structural racism.
- 4.3. Dez Brown then referenced discussions about capacity building and support for those organisations, that may need help to grow and develop.

- 4.4. Jessica Mullen gave updates on the Stewardship Fund, which is the money made available to support engagement with racially minoritised groups through which Clinks provided consultancy support.
- 4.5. Peter Dawson gave up an update on the Covid-19 SIG and reiterated that the staffing crisis is not just due to Covid-19. He urged that the group would like to see the new key performance indicator (KPI) framework that is due to start soon.
- 4.6. Khatuna Tsintsadze echoed that the group need to see the KPI framework, and to provide accountability on this via the SIG.
- 4.7. Helen Dyson mentioned that she attended the same meeting as Dez Brown and found it useful to present challenges from both large and smaller organisations. There was an acceptance that things were rushed in the transition to a unified Probation Service and that Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) contracts could have continued longer to have a more gradual transition. There were a lot of recommendations regarding commissioning of services.
- 4.8. Helen Dyson also gave an update on the Third Sector Strategic Partnership Board and the engagement strategy led by Clinks and the HMPPS Insights team. They discussed how evidence can be collated from across the sector and where there might be gaps. The group discussed how grants will be taken forward in 2023, asked for an acknowledgement that the climate is very different from two years ago, and stated that there is a need to consider things like indexation and cost of living, which is likely to impact the sector going forward.
- 4.9. Alasdair Jackson gave an update on his recent meeting with Alicia King, Head of Reducing Reoffending and Resettlement Policy, HMPPS, which enabled him to go into depth regarding the employment strategy. He felt encouraged that the Prison Employment Leads have started to be posted in prisons and Employment Advisory Boards will be set up. He has been invited to become the Chair for the HMP Preston Employment Advisory Board, from which he hopes he will be able to provide “insider” insights which he can then feed back to the group.
- 4.10. Vicki Markiewicz met with Anna Lacey to discuss substance misuse and expressed thanks to Bettina Crossick and Stephen O’Connor for making that possible. In this meeting she shared feedback from colleagues from Collective Voice, a voluntary sector group working in the drugs and alcohol support sector. Group commissioning arrangements make it difficult for some elements of Prisons Strategy White Paper and drugs strategy about continuity of care to be implemented. It was the clear that the influence of HMPPS in this area is not big as the sector might have hoped it was. The broader conversation was around how White Paper suggestions can be made a reality. She was keen to get across that Prison and Probation Officers were previously seen as part of the solution. Another key focus was around substance misuse and mental health KPIs. Drug recovery wings and what they might look like was also mentioned. She hopes to pull a group together around these issues to discuss details on how this work can be carried forward.
- 4.11. Lisa Dando discussed joining up the work of the RR3 and the Women’s Network going forward, as well as the work of the Women in the Criminal Justice System Expert Group, and how we can triangulate these partnership forums.
- 4.12. Tracy Wild and Jessica Mullen gave an update on their work around the Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 (CAS3) specification, whereby they went back to the accommodation SIG and shared the specification for CAS3 contracts and asked for feedback. The main concern was that contracts provide little provision for actual support and how the voluntary sector might be more involved in this. Another concern was how those with complex needs can get specialist support in that context, and how this area links up with the Probation Service and their capacity.
- 4.13. Bettina Crossick mentioned the Innovation Grants Programme starting in Autumn. Through this she is keen to put forward micro-grants for smaller organisations working with

protected characteristics and those working around the Justice Secretary's priorities of employment, accommodation, and substance misuse. She asked that should any members of the group have ideas that could feed into this, to contact her directly.

- 4.14.** Stephen O'Connor added that he is replacing George Barrow in the RR3 group and has an open inbox policy for anyone who would like to add how he can best contribute to this new role. He highlighted some points in response to the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, including a pilot that is running in partnership with the Metropolitan Police in some boroughs, aiming to shift the focus on legal advice for children to an opt-out mechanism. This seeks to address the concern that children are less likely to seek legal advice, particularly those from racially minoritised backgrounds. He also raised the idea of providing support from Out of Court Disposal schemes to people who are found to be in possession drugs, which seeks to deal with them in a structured treatment way as opposed to criminalisation. He also raised the desire for the government to continue Stewardship Fund arrangements.

5. Close