



Public Social Partnership: Low Moss Prison Throughcare Pathway



The opening of the new Low Moss prison in 2012 provided a significant opportunity for the public and third sector to work together to ensure services accessed by prisoners could be as effective as possible. The Public Social Partnership model was identified as the most effective approach to this engagement and was adopted for the re-design of the throughcare pathway for convicted short-term prisoners and those on remand. This approach already appears to have brought significant shared learning and benefits for public and third sector partners.



Background

The new Low Moss Prison opened in 2012 replacing the older prison accommodation that had previously occupied the site. It holds 700 cells, with a population made up primarily of convicted short-term and remand prisoners from the North Strathclyde and Glasgow Community Justice Authority areas (CJAs).

Reducing reoffending is a priority both locally and nationally. As a result the Leadership within Low Moss Prison and the CJAs chose to engage with the third sector in a Public Social Partnership (PSP).

Ready for Business delivers PSP support on behalf of the Scottish Government as part of the Developing Markets for Third Sector Providers programme.

With the support and guidance of Ready for Business the Low Moss Prison Throughcare Pathway PSP was developed. This represents a new and innovative approach to service redesign resulting in a step change in the way reducing reoffending is tackled both in Low Moss and in the community.

Scope and focus

The Low Moss PSP was initiated following open discussion between leadership in the North Strathclyde and Glasgow Community CJAs, the Prison itself, and multiple third sector organisations. Turning Point Scotland was selected as lead organisation to drive the PSP forward. The fledgling partnership engaged Ready for Business, to support them step-by-step through the Public Social Partnership Lifecycle as part of the Scottish Government's

Developing Markets for Third Sector Providers programme.

There was awareness between all parties that reoffending had to be tackled, with national statistics for Scotland showing a reoffending rate of 53% for the short term prisoner population. The timely rebuild of HMP Low Moss presented the opportunity to look at the current services and to design a new way of working:

- A model of throughcare delivery which would improve prisoner outcomes by reducing the risk of recidivism after liberation.
- A model which would boost the level of beneficial contact prisoners had with relevant support organisations and mechanisms.
- A model which could introduce control, confidence and transparency into the prisoner throughcare pathway.

The partnership quickly reached agreement that any new service model would have to be appealing to all partners involved in delivering services to offenders. This would cover not only third sector organisations currently engaged, but also the many supporting public bodies such as health, mental health, job support agencies and housing, who are all key to improving outcomes for the targeted service user cohort.

Based on this knowledge, the initiating leaders agreed that the PSP model would be the best route to achieve the following:

- Bring all the relevant organisations and stakeholders together
- Capture and evidence the challenge
- Commence and maintain robust partnership working
- Develop a service specification based on evidence and service user consultation
- Pilot and refine a service until it is at its optimum

- Develop a new sustainable service to be tendered competitively and which all providers could fairly bid for.

Public Social Partnerships (PSPs)

are strategic partnering arrangements, based on a co-planning approach, through which the public sector can connect with third sector organisations (voluntary organisations and social enterprises) to share responsibility for designing services based around service user needs. Once designed and piloted, services can then be commissioned for the longer term through a competitive tendering process.

Implementation

The partnership once established made rapid progress in developing and delivering their PSP Plan. The key activities and products developed in the course of the PSP service design lifecycle, which lasted from April 2012 to November 2012, included:

- Focus groups and one to one interviews quickly brought to life the issues which habitual offenders felt were levers in their journey back into crime, ranging from addictions through to housing and employment.
- Development of quantitative baseline data underpinning the business case helped the partnership to clearly evidence the case for change. These were:
 - ❖ The outcomes offenders needed improving and how the new service model would impact on these.
 - ❖ Identifying the cost of reoffending to the public sector and the financial business case for a return on investment.
- The process of developing a Logic Model was pivotal to understanding the outcomes that needed to be achieved, along with the levers and activities which could potentially change the identified outcomes.
- The Low Moss PSP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalised the

way the partnership would operate. It allowed open discussion over potentially contentious subjects (such as the sharing of data or Intellectual Property) and then set clear boundaries within which all organisations could comfortably work. It covered 14 organisations and was signed by the key parties who attended the launch of the PSP.

- A detailed Service Design was developed, which coordinates the delivery of services to offenders from third and public sector organisations, supported by dedicated case workers and peer mentoring. The design has now been reviewed by two separate pilot funding bodies (Scottish Government and The Robertson Trust). Both have now approved the design and provided funding for the pilot period.
- A launch day for the throughcare pathway was held in November 2012 with an open invite to all stakeholders who had engaged or wanted to engage with the PSP. At this event the final pathway model was debated to ensure that it would deliver the benefits the PSP vision intended.

Ready for Business acted as a critical friend throughout this preparatory period, providing tools and templates to structure and shape key deliverables required to establish the PSP. This preparatory work involved including supporting the following:

- Development of effective ways of joint working
- Capturing a robust baseline
- Consideration of service redesign options
- Consideration of appropriate governance structure for the PSP. Ready for Business sat on the governance group to support this process.
- Consideration of guidance underpinning the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between partners.
- Development of the business case and funding proposals.

Key Challenges

There were inevitably a number of challenges which the PSP partners were required to address and overcome. These included:

- **Timescales.** The design group was required to baseline current provision and develop the new approach to managing and delivering throughcare services within tight timelines – approximately four months. This required strong commitment from all participants. However it also provided a key focus for the group and ensured continued progress.
- **Stakeholder Management.** Due to the nature of services to prisoners, there were a significant number of stakeholders across the public and third sectors. This required continued engagement through a number of forms of communication. However, ensuring this dialogue took place allowed key participants to understand, comment and advise upon project proposals.
- **Partnership Working.** Although working in partnership is by no means new to public and third sector partners, the PSP model is a new approach for many. The process of building an understanding of the model took time. However, this ultimately provided the foundation for maintaining progress throughout the project.

Outcomes

Use of the PSP approach delivered a number of key benefits to the Low Moss project. These included:

- **A simpler, more innovative service.** The collective knowledge of Turning Point Scotland and their partners provided key insight into offender needs and what the local community can provide to help eliminate ‘blockers’ in the existing service delivery model and to

support the move towards more innovative service delivery.

- **Diverse Provider Market.** The PSP provided a structure and control mechanism, which providers could engage with and freely participate in developing a new service knowing that they had clearly articulated the boundaries of the relationships to ensure provider developed Intellectual Property was not at risk. Through this structured knowledge sharing and partnership working, it has increased the number of viable providers who are delivering beneficial services to Low Moss Prison and the depth and effectiveness to which they are providing it.
- **Iteration through Piloting.** The piloting phase will allow the Throughcare Pathway a robust period of testing before tendering. This means that the partnership will be able to identify and address strategic, operational, and governance challenges, in a safe environment. Also, service user feedback will continually be incorporated into the service design to further improve and develop the final design to be tendered.

Critical success factors

There are a number of critical success factors which have underpinned the positive delivery of the model to date.

- **Third Sector Driven.** The PSP activity was chiefly driven by the third sector, with Turning Point Scotland as the lead organisation with strong contributions made by Alternatives WD, Families Outside, the Wise Group, Sacro and Action for Children. Being driven from the third sector potentially could have presented a challenge in having to effectively engage with service commissioners and funders within the public sector. However, the partnership quickly overcame this and used their detailed service knowledge to develop a strong service design and a robust business case which clearly evidenced the case for change.
- **Varied Skills and Knowledge.** The PSP journey required a blend of skills, including leadership, project

management, service user engagement, and analytical skills. The partnership approach meant that various skills and knowledge pools could be drawn from when needed. In addition however a central dedicated resource was still necessary to ensure the timely production of the products mentioned in the above implementation section.

- **Open-minded Approach.** This project was approached without pre-conceived ideas about the PSP model and what was not achievable through it. This meant that the new service model was approached with a blank slate, thereby allowing partners to table innovative approaches to reducing reoffending.
- **Working to timescales.** The project was reliant on accessing external funding sources for the pilot period, with each funder having its own timescales to adhere to. This meant that the service design and any supporting proposals had to be delivered to set timescales to ensure the best chance of obtaining funding. This focused group efforts on delivering all products within a robust and focused project management approach and to agreed timescales.
- **Partnership working.** The shared approach of multiple organisations working together has meant that there has been a real opportunity to holistically consider how services are delivered to offenders, and to improve understanding of how relationships between providers operate. Consequently, partners were able to identify how they could improve service user outcomes by working collaboratively and introducing common and shared working practices such as information sharing protocols.
- **Commitment to Sustainability.** In a time of considerable constraints in statutory funding and uncertainty over the future landscape of service commissioning, significant focus was placed upon ensuring service sustainability. Commitment has been made by the CJAs on behalf of public sector partners to continue funding the service, contingent upon the pilot demonstrating success against agreed measures and the outcome of the Spending Review in 2014. This underlines the commitment of public

partners to the PSP's success and has been key to gaining funder support for the pilot process.

Future ambitions

The next steps for the partnership are as follows:

- **The pilot period has now commenced.** The partnership is currently recruiting for key roles such as the partnership manager and case workers to deliver the pathway. Secondment arrangements are also being considered to ensure the skills and knowledge of partner organisations can be used to maximum benefit.
- **Further funding.** Although funding has been approved by two sources, there is an outstanding application for funding to BIG Lottery which partners will focus on completing.
- **Sustainability.** Once established and operational, the partnership will then seek to evidence the case for long term sustainability, in support of the sustainability commitments made to date. This will be done by analysing the interventions, their effectiveness and the impact on service user outcomes.

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Appendix One

Proposed Low Moss Service Throughcare Pathway Design

