

LEARNING VISIT REPORT
The HARRP Trust 12113

<p>1.1 Date of visit:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">31/03/2016</p>	<p>1.2 Name of visiting Grants Officer:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Joan Millbank</p>	<p>1.3 People met with:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Michael Buraimoh, Project Director David Dickson, Project Manager</p>
<p>1.4 Programme Area & Outcomes:</p> <p>Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Offenders - More ex-offenders successfully and sustainably resettled in the community and re-offending rates reduced</p>		
<p>1.5 Purpose of the award:</p> <p>£109,000 over three years (£31,000; £35,500; £42,500) towards the salary of a full-time Employability Officer and running costs of the 'Work Works' project, conditional on receipt of a reserves policy.</p>		
<p>MONITORING INFORMATION</p>		
<p>2.1 Project Outcome 1:</p> <p>65% of beneficiaries who engage on the project would not re-offend (retention rate). Progress made: Substantial progress has been made. In year one the project engaged with 42 ex-offenders of whom 35 completed the twelve month contact period. Of these only 2 persons were known to have re-offended, which gives a re-offending rate of approximately 6%. This is very low compared to official re-offending rates i.e. two-thirds of ex-offenders re-offending within a year of release ('Proven Re-offending Statistics' Quarterly Bulletin published by the Ministry of Justice 2013). In the first 6 months of year two project figures indicate a re-offending rate of 4%.</p>		
<p>2.2 Project Outcome 2:</p> <p>All beneficiaries will develop or show improved confidence/motivation/employability to progress into employment, training or further education. Progress made: Project monitoring indicates that the confidence and motivation of all participants to date increases as they progress through the project stages. HARRP believe this is because of the holistic nature of the support provided which is tailored to meet each individual's needs and wishes, and now delivered (mainly) on a one-to-one basis. Two specific case-studies and case files were presented which illustrated these assertions.</p>		
<p>2.3 Project Outcome 3:</p> <p>50% of beneficiaries per year will have generally improved their life chances by achieving one or more of additional key needs identified across the 7 nationally recognised pathways to resettlement, including drug/alcohol problems, mental health issues, accommodation issues, rebuilding family/ key support networks, lack of training/qualification etc. Progress made: Examples were shown of the individual action plans which are</p>		

prepared with each participant. Each plan sets out each participant's needs, issues and goals; progress is checked against SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) objectives. Each plan also set out and charts progress made on help with housing, drug/alcohol problems, and other issues which are likely to be barriers to successful resettlement. The case-studies discussed at the meeting demonstrated the scope of work undertake and the value of working collaboratively with other agencies e.g. housing providers, social workers, health workers, to address individual need.

2.4 Project Outcome 4:

Service-users will progress into employment: We will aim to progress a minimum of 20% of service users into employment. Of these 50% will remain in employment for at least 13 weeks.

Progress made: At the assessment meeting the project explained that it had kept the 'into employment' projections low to reflect their preference to a long-term-focused intervention rather than quick fixes that are often unsustainable. The cautious approach seems to be working. In year one 3 participants were still in work after 13 weeks with another 4 still within the 13 week period i.e. 20% participants into work. In the first half of year two 2 participants have moved into full time employment and 1 into a fulltime apprenticeship (11% into work to date).

2.5 Project Outcome 5:

We will organise a minimum of one job fair a year and invite employers from our network of socially responsible employers.

Progress made: A job fair was organised in 2015 and another is being organised for June 2016. Contact with employers continues to be an important feature of HARRP's work. Engaged employers include Premier Inn, Fifteen Restaurant, and local authorities.

GRANT OFFICER COMMENTS

The project approach has been developed on the understanding that ex-offenders have multiple and complex needs which are not adequately addressed through the established Work Programme. HARRP provides targeted, focused support and their initial findings highlighted earlier in this report indicates that their approach appears to be working i.e. participants in their Work Works approach have a low recidivism rate.

The charity has not been able to provide some elements of the proposed project. Change in prison policy has made it impossible to continue with the 'pre-release assessment'. No progress has been made on developing a peer support element due to project capacity pressures. In the last year the charity has lost its dedicated office and training room, and is unable to afford similar alternative premises. The charity has also reduced its staff team following the end of funding. In response

HARRP has changed its approach to Work Works, moving away from a mix of individual support and group work to almost entirely one-to-one provision. While they believe the quality of support and impact on the individual ex-offender has improved the delivery approach is more time-intensive and is therefore having a negative impact on the numbers of participants supported. It estimates helping between 40-50 ex-offenders in funding year 2 and 3, rather than 60 in year 2 and 80 in year 3 as originally agreed. It should be noted that the numbers were reduced at the initial assessment meeting to make them more realistic and it is considered reasonable to reduce them further. I have agreed to reducing the annual outputs to 45 while maintain the percentage benefit levels. This is a more realistic figure based on actual performance and will still mean that the charity is delivering good value for money.

Government changes in the delivery of the Work Programme (cessation of commissioned projects and return to direct delivery by the Job Centres) and the transforming reoffending agenda has caused uncertainty within the sector, although many third sector service providers – including HARRP - welcome the change as it believes that provision will be more integrated and more relevant to the complex and specific needs of ex-offenders. HARRP has built strong relationships with its local Job Centres and believe that it is seen – and positioned - as a credible partner. . More referrals are being made from the Job Centres and HARRP runs its ex-offenders disclosure training in the Centres.

HARRP's positive approach and response to changing operating environment is encouraging. It is learning from experience and adapting to changing circumstances while maintaining its mission to improve life chances for ex-offenders and contributing to reducing crime within the wider community.