**WORKSHOP 1 - STAFFING STRUCTURES TO PRODUCE A POSITIVE FAMILY AND SIGNIFICANT OTHER FOCUS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM EUROPE/DENMARK**

Sandy Watson, Children and Families lead HMP Oakwood, led a workshop primarily about the prison service in Denmark. The following points were noted:

1. Sandy Watson, staff from HMP Oakwood, an ex-offender and prisoner family members visited various prisons in Denmark to look at the current system in operation. It was noted that a process of normalisation was running throughout the prisons. Communal kitchens where prisoners prepare and eat meals together, outside play areas for families and, at one particular prison, sunbeds are available for prisoners. When asked about facilities at HMP Englesborg staff responded “Why wouldn’t we do it?” At Skejby half way house accommodation is split between 70%prisoners/30% members of the public. When Sandy spoke to members of the public who live in this accommodation, she found they were comfortable with the situation. This was due to the fact members of the public were already aware why they had been in prison
2. Measures have been rolled out at HMP Oakwood using ideas seen in Denmark. A new kitchen has been fitted which allows prisoners to prepare and eat a meal together with their families. For Mother’s Day prisoners were encouraged to write a poem. Those judged the best had the opportunity to sit down with their mother and have tea using china service. Other schemes include scouts and homework club where prisoners sit with their children and help with homework (support for this is provided by prison education staff). For prisoners who rarely receive a visit there is the Step Project where outside organisations visit and engage with prisoners. Looking towards the future there are plans to introduce University of the 3rd Age for elderly prisoners and a Dog Family Day where visitors can visit with their pet dogs.
3. Opening the floor for comments some commented that we were heading in the direction already with approved premises. It was noted that money was a factor in implementing ideas. Sandy asked that people present try to take on board in their own establishments idea’s and thoughts discussed in the workshop

**WORKSHOP 2 FAMILY LEARNING-DEVELOPING POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACHES**

John Charlton

New Prison Education Framework will commence 01/04/19.

Four main points:

Choice – choice of provider

Empowerment – governor can decide on allocation of budget

Accountability – accountability applies to both provider and prison

Flexibility – ideas can be introduced and changes made when items don’t work

With the new Framework comes the introduction of the Dynamic Purchasing System; this is a more flexible way for governors to purchase educational services outside of the core common curriculum. It allows for special educational projects to be put forward which can focus on areas such as the arts, sports, digital services and engaging/involving families. These allow the prison to look at something different to see if it works within the system.

A brief must be presented of approx. 750 words along with costings.

Examples of projects already trialled by NOVUS a current provider are:

**Family Time Project:**

Homework club which encourages children to engage with the father in completing their homework. They cook tea together and the mother is given some free time.

Provides normality, fosters a bond and allows the father to be involved in the child’s education.

**Gamelan:**

Music workshop in which the learner showcases the skills they have learnt with their family. Gives new experiences, an introduction to the arts and a feeling of pride and achievement.

**Tate Exchange:**

Project to build community awareness of isolation and stigma that prison has on the prisoner and their family. Life sized cells were created at the Tate Museum with families involved in the artwork and then being able to visit the exhibition and feedback.

Projects could be applied across all educational departments i.e carpentry involved in the building of the display, maths involved in the calculation of complex geometric displays.

**White Water Writers:**

Challenge was set for a group of learners to write a book in one week. The family members were invited to help illustrate the book and share in the story. Once signed off by the prison establishment, the book was published and is now available to buy on Amazon. All proceeds go to charity (one decided on by the prisoners). There was then a family event which involved a book signing and extracts being read.

**Horse & Bamboo**

A theatre company helped learners to bring stories to life through puppetry. This enabled them to play and connect with their children and construct the puppets.

**WORKSHOP 3 DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY**

Corin Morgan-Armstrong

**What are the challenges for a prison in establishing community partnerships?**

Both groups came up with reasons as to why it was difficult for local communities to be involved with prison activities to assist with rehabilitation:

* Vetting
* Funding
* Policies
* Ownership/Responsibility
* Security
* Logistics (invariable)
* Staffing
* Lack of diversity (invariable)
* Policies and procedures
* Communication between prisoners and staff
* Technology
* Lack of knowledge

Both sessions came up with solutions to potential overcome current obstacles:

* Share information between prisons
* More directions from Governors and PGD
* Vetting support
* Volunteers
* Host employers fairs within the prison/ invite voluntary communities to the prison
* Review Agency contract e.g. what would be the deliverables
* Research policies
* Flexibility and support to those that wish to be more inventive
* Share resources across establishments (communication forum for governors, and each functional departments within the prison)
* Data capture (identify what prisoner interests are, how far majority of visitors travel etc)
* Utilizing space within the prison (using visitors centres and the visits hall to host events
* Change prison culture

**WORKSHOP 4 EXTENDED VISITS – INNOVATION IN FAMILY AND SIGNIFICANT OTHER INTERACTION AND PRACTICE**

Dave Charlton and Alison Goddard

**Acorn House** (AH)

Extended visits HMPPS project established in 2008. Initially focused on mothers and their children (under 18), promoting the mothering role. Expanded to include wider families and significant others (i.e. grandmother, niece, adult children) – this was very much evidenced by the residences’ testimonies.

Facilitated by the prison’s Family and Significant Others Team where risk based assessments are considered by multiagency colleagues. Applicants are considered on an individual basis, including those with complex circumstances (i.e. care leavers, pre ROTL/ Pre Release, final contact. APVS has been accessed by those using AH.

Usage figures- has increased from 67 visits in 2017 to 144 in 2018.

Further research – Mothering from the Inside and the work of Ben Railes including the COPING project. Dr Kelly Lockwood’s work on imprisoned mothers maintaining their identify as mothers during prison sentences and the Corstan Report 2017.

**Lincoln Departure Lounge (DL)**

Like many establishments, the structure is not easily adapted and at HMP Lincoln prisoners being released exited from the same entrance/exit, as visitors, prison staff and onto main road. The opportunity to support prisoners was lacking and the new governor was happy to look at changes within the current reception area. This resulted in a room being re-designed into a departure lounge, and a exit. from the prison which gave the prisoner dignity.

DL went live in July 2015 and a six month snapshot identified that out of 516 men who went through the DL, 85% of them engaged.

Funded by Lincolnshire Action Trust and charitable organisations (not the prison).

Benefits include:

Improved dignity, enhanced desistance, and enhances and overcomes gaps in service provision. Positive family engagement, signposting and direct intervention work undertaken as a result of engagement. Identifies themes for the wider prison and community to focus on at pre and post release. Invaluable data collection is available.

Overall,

The general consensus was how do we do this back at the establishment – Key thoughts:

1. Engagement with the right departments – get them on board. Useful external contacts are the Local Safeguarding Board.
2. Whatever the plans you have – do it in bite size pieces
3. Re-evaluate your plans and outcomes and share your challenges and success stories.
4. As you progress through your work you may identify gaps in service provision – this can be a good sign
5. Present data (snapshots) to the SMT
6. Share the emotional benefits
7. Use research to back up your business plan
8. Don’t underestimate the impact small changes have on individuals and families – which can be a driver for change.

**WORKSHOP 5 - HOW CAN WE ENSURE WE HEAR THE FAMILIES AND VISITORS VOICE?**

Rebecca Cheung and Lynn Kelly

Workshop 5 was hosted by POPS – Partners of Prisoners & Families Support Group. The service has a presence in 11 establishments in the north-west, and also covers the larger community in Greater Manchester.

Speaker Lynn Kelly gave a brief overview of the services POPS provides and outlined the key topic of the day: A Voice For All.

The key issues discussed were:

* How do we encourage and engage with the user?
* What hurdles are there to integrating the user voice in a more meaningful way?
* How might you build bigger and better platforms for users to speak from?

Many positive initiatives were discussed, which included:

* Working groups with PACT where families are invited to attend – they join in with activities and are included in discussions regarding strategy. Attendees are also able to ask questions and provide feedback.
* The Visitors’ Voice events run by NEPACS involve families in various arts, music and photography activities. Both organisations interact with families in visitors centres.
* Prisons run celebration events and other initiatives to encourage family participation.

Some difficulties regarding family interaction were identified:

* Safeguarding – some establishments are unable to host family events due to prisoners offences
* Trust
* Security
* Interaction with families in visitors centres
* Families do not generally look at posters in visitors centres – how information is displayed or given is key
* Timing of events – the timing of family events or forums is important in encouraging engagement