

CASE STUDY

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

REDUCING RE-OFFENDING THROUGH SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT



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1: SAVINGS TO THE TREASURY

1.1 - The report to the ODPM by the Social Exclusion Unit (“Reducing Re-Offending by Ex-Prisoners” 2002) remains the most quoted reference regarding the cost of re-offending. At that time, the report found “In terms of the cost to the criminal justice system of dealing with the consequences of crime, recorded crime alone committed by ex-prisoners comes to at least **£11 billion** per year.” The report also states: “...a re-offending ex-prisoner is likely to be responsible for crime costing the criminal justice system an average of **£65,000**. Prolific offenders will cost even more. When re-offending leads to a further prison sentence, the costs soar: the average cost of a prison sentence imposed at a crown court is roughly **£30,000**, made up of courts and legal costs. The costs of actually keeping prisoners within prison average **£37,000** per year.” These figures do not include the cost of the crime to victims, the costs of supporting families (state benefits, health, foster care, education support) whilst an offender is in custody, or costs to the State in supporting ex-offenders’ unemployment (**thirteen** times as likely as the general population), substance misuse (**70%** of offenders) or homelessness (**32%**). Therefore, for the purposes of this report, a conservative estimate has been set at **£100,000** pa per offender.

1.2 - Having a job is given as the most effective means of reducing re-offending, by between a third and a half, whilst having stable accommodation reduces the risk by a fifth. Southampton City Council has four projects to provide support into employment for offenders referred by Prisons, Probation and Youth Offending Teams. Evidence of significant reduction of re-offending has been obtained through Police National Computer data. In November 2007, details of **588** offenders were shared with Hampshire Constabulary, including the date they enrolled with the City Council. Anonymised data was returned which evidenced that these offenders had collectively committed over **1863** crimes in the year prior to their involvement on the project, and **664** in the year after, representing a **62%** reduction. The majority of the reductions were in crimes against people and property. **115** of these offenders were MAPPAs (serious and violent offenders) and PPOs (Prolific and Priority Offenders) of whom more than **70** have not re-offended since involvement in the project. Further details are given at Appendix 1.

1.3 - This police data evidence is currently being further analysed by the Home Office. Currently, our figures relate to the number of crimes for the cohort rather than the number of offenders. However, as a crude analysis, given the costs outlined in 1.1 above, a 62% reduction by 588 offenders would mean a reduction by 365 offenders at £100,000 for the year, leading to an **annual saving** to the Treasury of at least **£36 million** (bearing in mind that this does not include the cost of state benefits, health, drug intervention, housing, the cost of crime, and support of families of offenders).

2: BACKGROUND

2.1 - Southampton City Council is unique in reducing re-offending through skills and employment, and the model has been promoted to other local authorities by the Local Government Association through its annual conference and the publication “Neighbourhood by Neighbourhood”.

2.2- There is often a perception that responsibility for resettlement of offenders lies with the criminal justice agencies and voluntary and community sector alone. However, this does not fully utilise the strategic, commissioning and delivery functions of Councils in relation to most of the seven “pathways” identified in the National Reducing Re-Offending Action Plan (accommodation, drugs and alcohol, children and families, health, finance benefits and debt, education training and employment and attitudes thinking and behaviour).

2.3 - Southampton City Council has received considerable recognition, including:

- David Hanson MP (Minister for Justice) and David Lammy MP (Minister for Skills) are actively promoting Southampton’s approach to other Local Authorities; David Lammy issued a press release giving Southampton’s approach as best practise (Dec 07);
- Southampton’s Chief Executive has been invited on the Regional Reducing Re-Offending Board;
- The Authority is a member of the Corporate Alliance;
- The Regional Offender Manager has booked to spend a day at the Council in the Spring;

- Visits have been received by NOMS commissioning managers and the Department for Innovation, University and Skills; and
- The work has been included in a White Paper.

3: APPROACH

3.1 - An individual, holistic service is provided for offenders from prisons, probation and youth offending teams through dedicated Information, Advice and Support Workers.

3.2 - Delivery of training and support is sub-contracted through a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

3.3 - Skills and employment are integrated across the “pathways” including co-commissioning with Supporting People to integrate employment and training into housing-related services, an emergency bed space, strategic work with the Drug Intervention Programme, care leavers and family learning, and targeted approaches through Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.

3.4 - The ultimate focus is sustainable employment. In addition to vocational skills provision for offenders, the Council works with employers to link skills and vacancy requirements with training provision, including using its statutory powers to negotiate with developers to integrate support for jobs and training.



4: PROJECTS AND RESOURCES

4.1 - The council is currently delivering 4 projects, all of which are European funded:

- Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) for unemployed offenders in the community, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight;
- “Building Bricks” construction skills and employment;
- “Exodus” supported employment for short term sentenced prisoners and prolific and priority offenders; and
- Equal Engage tri-region project to engage employers and support offenders into work.

4.2 - These projects are targeted with supporting over 800 unemployed offenders per year, at an annual cost of around £750,000. 16 members of staff are dedicated to the delivery of these services, and the funding also supports training costs, equipment and subsistence for offenders.

5: ADDITIONAL IMPACT

5.1 - In addition to the reduced re-offending statistics, the projects have made an impact in a number of areas:

- partnerships and working arrangements have been forged with HMP Winchester, Camp Hill, Ford and Portland, with Hampshire Probation and the Youth Offending Team;
- Robust referral, risk assessment and feedback systems are in place;
- To date, 900 offenders have been engaged, and over 60% have progressed to vocational training and employment.
- Additional support has also been provided including accommodation and help with national insurance numbers.
- The Council has contributed to National policy through presentation to NOMS, MoJ and DIUS audiences.

6: THE FUTURE

6.1 - Southampton City Council wishes to continue and build on this work. It would also like to focus more actively on linking Unpaid Work Orders with vocational

preparation, and with assisting the transfer of information regarding training and employment through custody to the community through consideration of the “Government Connect” initiative.

6.2 - However, all current funding finishes in mid-2008. The following sources are being pursued:

- Local Area Agreements (some allocation agreed, but not at the level required)
- Probation Boards (budget cuts/prioritisation issues)
- Regional Offender Manager (commissioning powers and role of NOMS changing)
- European Social Fund (limited scope this round and high competition)
- Learning and Skills Council (recent consultation document not in favour of specific community provision.)

6.3 - Therefore, despite significant demonstrable cost savings, ongoing involvement in this agenda is uncertain.



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APPENDIX 1: EVIDENCE OF REDUCED RE-OFFENDING

An analysis of a sample of 588 beneficiaries who had benefitted from either the OLASS or Exodus projects showed the following:

No of MAPPAs	95
% of MAPPAs	16.16%
No of PPOs	20
% of PPOs	3.40%
No of PYOs	7
% of PYOs	1.19%
No of PPOs plus PYOs	27
% of PPOs plus PYOs	4.59%

Of the 588 individuals:	Number of individuals	As a % of 588
No. of offences in 12 months after order date is less than the no. of offences in 12 months before order made	366	62.24%
No. of offences in 12 months after order date is more than or equal to the no. of offences in 12 months before order made	246	41.84%
No. with 0 offences in 12 months before <i>or</i> after order made	133	
No. with 0 offences in 12 months before order made	188	
Total number of offences in 12 months before order made	1863	
Total number of offences in 12 months after order date	664	

<i>Of the 588 individuals:</i>	Number of offences in 12 months before OLASS/EXODUS intervention	No. of offences up to 12 months after OLASS/EXODUS intervention	Actual drop in no. of offences	% drop in no. of offences
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON	214	84	130	60.75%
SEXUAL OFFENCES	36	24	12	33.33%
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY	141	65	76	53.90%
FRAUD AND KINDRED	41	11	30	73.17%
THEFT AND KINDRED	434	192	242	55.76%
PUBLIC DISORDER	160	66	94	58.75%
POLICE/COURT/PRISON OFFENCES	356	109	247	69.38%

DRUGS	136	28	108	79.41%
IMMIGRATION	0	0	0	
FIREARMS	18	7	11	61.11%
MISC OFFENCES	328	78	250	76.22%