



Quarterly Newsletter

Partnership and Collaboration Edition



Contents

CFO works collaboratively with community and custodial stakeholders to understand mandatory delivery, enabling coordinated planning, complementary activity and dovetail our services to align with other delivery partners.

Collaboration is well established with key stakeholders, with clear and active links across Probation, DWP, CRS, New Futures Network, Prison Employment Leads, and others.

Within you'll find out more about our work alongside these departments. Should you have any questions about the content within this newsletter, please email:

CFO-Communications@justice.gov.uk

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CFO Extension

I am delighted to share that CFO has formally secured a two-year contract extension through to April 2029. This is an important milestone and a strong vote of confidence in the impact that CFO is delivering across custody and community settings.

Since the CFO Evolution programme began, CFO has supported more than 20,000 referrals, helping people overcome barriers, build confidence, develop skills and move closer to sustainable employment. Those numbers matter, but what matters most are the lives behind them.

One participant recently reflected: *"For the last 15 years, my life has been a constant cycle of prison, police and probation, feeling like I can't get the support I need to make that change. Thanks to the help of the staff at the Hub, I finally feel like I have a future to look forward to, something I haven't had in decades."*

This extension means CFO can continue supporting people at some of the most critical points in their journey, working alongside providers, employers, prisons, probation colleagues and partners to create opportunities that can genuinely change futures. It also provides stability to keep building on what works, testing new approaches and strengthening the support available to people who want to move forward with their lives.

I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to this achievement – our staff, delivery partners, employers and stakeholders – but particularly the participants whose determination and resilience remind us why this work matters. The extension reflects confidence in a model that is delivering results, but it is also recognition of the collective effort from everyone involved in the CFO. We look forward to continuing that journey together through to 2029.

Mark Nickson, Head of HMPPS CFO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Nickson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Intensive Supervision Courts

Supporting participants through partnership working.

Intensive Supervision Courts (ISC) aim to address underlying needs of offenders and target the root cause of offending behaviour.

Multi-agency team working is at the centre of the ISC model, being important to the success of the initial pilots. CFO has been a key partner in the process from an early stage, offering an alternative to custody through engagement with the programme. Benefits have been seen by participants, probation and judges throughout these pilots.

Dedicated Support Workers are available at CFO Activity Hubs to provide tailored support in overcoming personal barriers from the point of referral through to completion of the court order, helping participants navigate many of the challenges that can otherwise lead to further offending or breaches.

Participants are supported in an encouraging environment to understand the requirements of their order, which increases compliance and helps them to make sustained positive changes.

Outcomes have included a streamlined referral process, collaborative approaches with reduced duplication, stronger feedback loops, trauma and gender-informed support, and a reduction of reoffending for ISC participants. Participants have been more likely to engage with the Hub (and wider services), reported improved mental wellbeing, life skills, education and training, and reduced substance misuse.

These problem-solving courts have reduced reoffending across the world, and pilots have been successful throughout England. Now the pilots will be expanded, rising from 5 sites, to 11 nationwide, with focussed delivery including support for women, substance misuse and low-level prolific offenders.

CFO's support for the ISC process will continue to complement this expansion. On this increased support, CFO Courts Thematic Lead, Sadie Tutton, said: *"As the programme expands, there is a real opportunity for CFO to build on the success already demonstrated, extending the reach of our CFO Activity Hubs and helping even more people access the support they need to break cycles of offending, rebuild their lives and contribute positively to their communities."*

Key to the success of CFO's involvement has been consistency of staffing, attendance at weekly meetings to share information and receive referrals and recording of data to track progress successfully.

Judges have been positive about CFO's support for ISC participants too. HHJs Potter, Swinnerton and Brandon said: *"Each time we go [to the CFO Activity Hub] we are renewed in our determination to encourage people on probation to go."*



One of the initial pilots took place in Liverpool, with the CFO Activity Hub being heavily involved. Partnership & Court Liaison Manager, Kirstie McNally has been a key figure in CFO's involvement in the pilot process. Her weekly presence at the court has been beneficial in supporting professionals in understanding the CFO offer, and in gaining referrals to the programme.

Speaking about the impact of CFO's involvement with the ISC pilot, she said: *"Personal growth has been important. Participants are choosing to engage with this, and that's actually massive in showing an attitude change."*

The Liverpool ISC pilot revolves around offenders experiencing substance misuse challenges. Whilst services are mandated to help tackle this barrier, the Liverpool CFO Activity Hub has provided wraparound support, as Kirstie explained: *"There's a lot more on offer around ETE, CBT and more. CBT has been quite beneficial for people, especially because of what they've been going through. They probably thought they're going to get custody, and they haven't, that's a lot emotionally to deal with. So, we've had lots of participants get support through CBT."*

Probation staff have even been attending the CFO Activity Hub to meet their ISC participants, with the expectation that participants can see the CFO Activity Hub firsthand, increasing engagement as a result. Kirstie added: *"It's alleviating people's worries. I book them in for their future appointments and they come in and I'm a familiar face; they're going in blind. When judges and probation have new clients, they can say, I've been to the Hub – it just again alleviates their anxiety."*



Feedback from participants has been positive, and not solely in Liverpool, as Keira* who was supported in Birmingham said: *"My time at the Hub has been very helpful. Everyone is friendly and always have good suggestions on what I can do. I always come out feeling I have achieved something."*

Similarly, feedback was strong from judges, as HHJs Potter, Swinnerton and Brandon added: *"We met some of those we are supervising, engaged in booking onto job skills courses, completing digital college courses, having lunch or simply having a chat. It offers a wide range of constructive ways to utilise their time, improve their life chances or simply have some company in a welcoming environment."*

To learn more about how CFO engage with stakeholders to deliver positive participant outcomes, please visit: [CreatingFutureOpportunities.gov.uk/Working-With-CFO](https://www.creatingfutureopportunities.gov.uk/Working-With-CFO)



Young Adult Hub

An innovative pilot increasing engagement among young adults.



Young adult offenders are classed by the probation service as persons between ages 18–24 within the criminal justice system. Typically this cohort displays low levels of engagement. To address this probation and CFO in Yorkshire are working collaboratively on a new delivery pilot.

With space available within the same building as the Leeds CFO Activity Hub, staff collaborated to create a risk-managed space which successfully removed the authoritarian feeling of typical probation offices.



Together staff curated a space branded with bright CFO colours, gym equipment, softer surfaces and comforting elements. The non-authoritarian meeting space for probation appointments has been successful, especially in the case of managing risk around gang activity within the region.



Yorkshire and the Humber Young Adult Lead, Caroline Clements, said: “Although the hub is still in the early stages, we’re already seeing encouraging improvements in engagement. Young adults are telling us they feel more comfortable, less anxious and more willing to talk openly in the hub environment.

By creating welcoming, age-appropriate spaces and bringing support services together in one place, we’re helping young adults build positive relationships, access opportunities and engage more meaningfully with probation.”

Early reports indicate participants being more likely to engage in further rehabilitative activities with CFO – such as cooking and independent living – having met their Probation Practitioner at the CFO Activity Hub. Participants can be cross-referred for additional support through CFO, and reasonable adjustments are available to create comfort for those with neurodifferences.

65 young adults have engaged with the pilot so far, including those attending appointments through the gate, and traditional non-engagers.

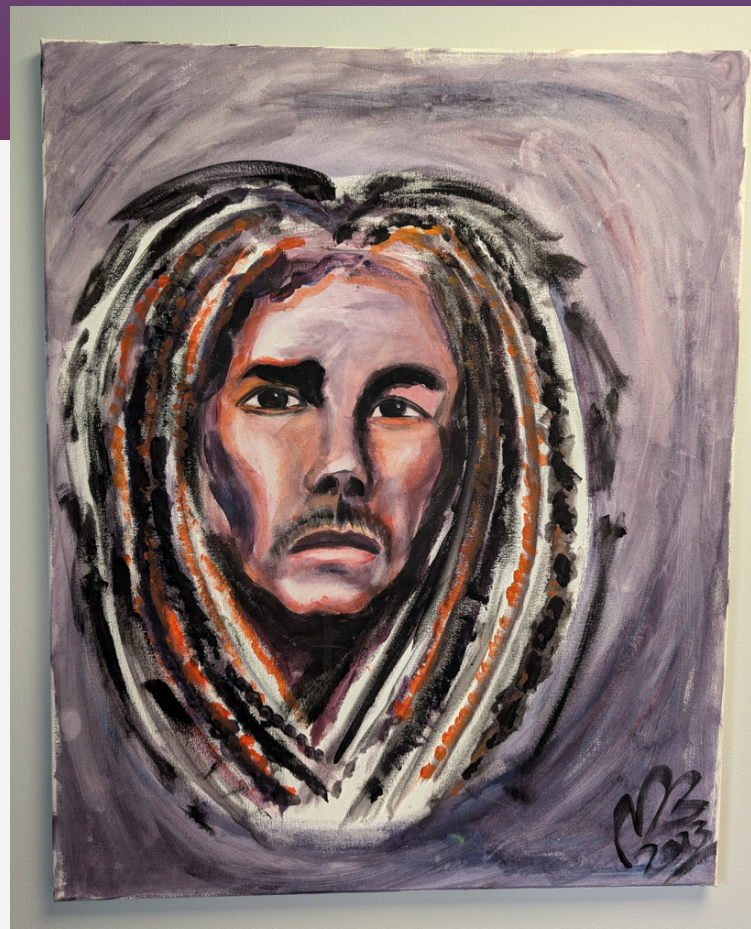
Employment activities have been keenly engaged with among the group; multiple participants have attended construction and scaffolding courses, moving closer to work and reducing reoffending as a result. Three participants have already moved into employment having taken part in activities including CV creation, the disclosure process and other employment elements.

Importantly, the initial group of young adults experiencing success has broken down barriers for their peers, reducing stigma around engagement with rehabilitative services such as CFO.

“Practitioners are reporting that the spaces help them build stronger relationships with young adults and have more productive and natural conversations about risk, responsibility and future opportunities.”

Caroline Clements, Yorkshire and the Humber Young Adult Lead

Reece* has been an early success story for the Young Adults Hub. Alongside his probation meetings, he has engaged in a range of activities around independent living and employability. Speaking about his experience so far, Reece* said: *“I like coming and doing all the different activities. I spend a lot of time by myself so doing cooking, learning to look after myself that’s been really good. I’ve done a CSCS course and the Hub have helped me find a job, I want to find new work so I can come here more.”*



The young adult pilot will continue to be monitored as delivery develops. To learn more about CFO's innovative approach to rehabilitative support, please visit:

[CreatingFutureOpportunities.gov.uk/CFO-Evolution](https://www.creatingfutureopportunities.gov.uk/CFO-Evolution)

Celebrating Excellence in Veteran Support Across HMPPS.

HMPPS CFO was proud to host another successful Veterans in Custody and Community Support Officer (ViCSO) Forum and Awards recently, bringing together colleagues and partners from across government and beyond to celebrate the outstanding work being delivered in support of veterans.

ViCSOs play a crucial role in helping veterans navigate their rehabilitation journey. Alongside their primary responsibilities, they go above and beyond to ensure veterans are identified, connected to the right services and supported both in custody and the community. Their commitment helps create pathways to positive change through collaboration with internal departments and the extensive network of veteran-specific charities and support organisations.

The forum provided a valuable platform for sharing best practice, strengthening partnerships and identifying innovative solutions to improve outcomes for veterans. Attendees heard from an impressive range of speakers, including Matt Grey, Executive Director for Rehabilitation and Change, as well as representatives from the New Futures Network, the Department for Work and Pensions, Nacro, Anglia Ruskin University, the Scottish Prison Service, Welsh Probation, Op NOVA, the Forcer Protocol and Warwickshire Police.



The awards ceremony extended recognition to colleagues across both prison and probation services, reflecting the One HMPPS approach to supporting veterans from custody through to successful resettlement in the community. Although awards were presented to individual winners, the event was fundamentally a celebration of the dedication, professionalism and compassion shown by all those working to support veterans within the criminal justice system.

The awards recognised excellence across a wide range of categories, celebrating those who had developed strong partnerships, created veteran-friendly environments, improved wellbeing, driven innovation and used lived experience to shape service delivery. Together, these achievements are helping to improve outcomes for veterans, strengthen rehabilitation and reduce the likelihood of reoffending.



The highest honour of the evening, Outstanding Veteran Support Officer of the Year, was awarded to James McMillain for Custody, and Danielle Crozier and Paul Smith for Community. Through their exceptional dedication, consistency and impact, they have demonstrated the very best of veteran support. They have also championed support for staff who have served in the Armed Forces, further strengthening the veteran community across HMPPS.

The event was a reminder of the difference that committed individuals and strong partnerships can make. Through the dedication of ViCSOs and their colleagues across prisons and probation, veterans are receiving the support they need to rebuild their lives, reintegrate into their communities and create brighter futures.

To learn more about the work CFO undertake with veterans in custody and the community, please visit:

[CreatingFutureOpportunities.gov.uk/Armed-Forces-Covenant](https://www.creatingfutureopportunities.gov.uk/Armed-Forces-Covenant)



Working in Partnership with DWP

Supporting participants to engage in a safe and welcoming environment.

Partnerships with DWP continue to develop and strengthen at both national and regional levels, with co-location arrangements now established across most CFO Activity Hub locations. The presence of DWP colleagues within CFO Activity Hubs provides participants with direct access to support, helping to break down barriers to engagement and strengthen connections with DWP services.

This collaborative approach offers a range of benefits for both participants and professionals, including:

- Strengthened engagement with DWP, including opportunities for participants to re-engage through the familiar and supportive CFO Activity Hub environment, with guidance from CFO Support Workers.
- Improved access to DWP employment, skills and training opportunities, including Sector-based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs).
- Direct advice and support from DWP Work Coaches, enabling participants to better understand and access the support available to them.
- Increased awareness and use of the DWP Flexible Support Fund, helping to address barriers to employment, training and progression.
- Enhanced collaborative working between CFO and DWP staff, supporting information sharing and more joined-up service delivery.
- Greater coordination of support services, ensuring participants receive the support they need to aid rehabilitation and progress towards employment and social inclusion.

A partnership meeting involving CFO, DWP, NFN, Redemption Roasters and Clinks took place recently. The meeting focused on supporting the upcoming New Futures Network Unlocking Hospitality campaign, which will see the CFO Activity Hub in Lewisham host an employment fair for CFO participants.



The partnership continues to flourish, demonstrating the value of collaborative working across both community and custodial settings. Within custodial environments, CFO Support Workers work closely with DWP Work Coaches, Prison Employment Leads and Resettlement Teams to support participants through the gate and into sustainable opportunities in the community.

Speaking on the benefits of strong collaboration with DWP, CFO Stakeholder Lead, Kate Dugdale said: *"Our partnership with DWP continues to demonstrate the value of collaborative working. Through a joined-up approach, we are enhancing the support available to participants, increasing access to opportunities, and creating sustainable pathways into employment, training and rehabilitation. Together, we are helping individuals overcome barriers and achieve positive outcomes."*

Partnerships with DWP continue to progress, and to learn more about how CFO collaborate with government departments to achieve outcomes for participants, please visit:

CreatingFutureOpportunities.gov.uk/Working-With-CFO

Benefits of DWP co-location for participants:



Understanding support in the community



Multi-agency support



Cross referrals for additional support



Increasing employment opportunities



Safe environment to engage

**Specialist employment team,
connecting prisons and
employers whilst developing
an employment system.**

Stronger communities. Brighter

We connect people, partners and places to break down barriers to employment through employment

Platinum Accounts

Large, national employers who recruit across multiple prisons and regions and champion the employment agenda.



Unlocking Employment Campaigns

National recruitment campaigns focussed on specific sectors (e.g. Construction/Hospitality) running for up to six weeks.

Employment Hubs

Dedicated spaces where employment partners are based, allowing prisoners to access specific employment support.



Oversight of Prison Employment Leads and ID & Banking Administrators

Dedicated prison roles that match prisoners to jobs and ensure they have Right To Work ID and a bank account before release.

Employment Advisory Boards

Business-led boards that advise, support and challenge prisons to strengthen their employment offer and align training with employer demand.



Employment Councils

Regional forums with Employment Advisory Board Chairs, Probation and DWP leaders to tackle shared challenges and develop a joined-up approach to employment.

Working with DWP

Through a National Partnership Agreement, we ensure HMPPS and DWP are working jointly to support people to access coordinated employment and job centre support in custody and as they move into the community. DWP have staff – Prison Work Coaches – in prisons and this is increasingly expanding beyond the prison gate to provide better continuity between custody and community services.

Creating Future Opportunities



For futures. Opportunities for all.

Own barriers, open doors and create lasting change in skills and opportunity.

Programme empowering individuals to gain skills and confidence to achieve sustainable, successful futures.

Vision Communities Futures

her to remove
skills and create
that change lives
in communities.

Aim 1 – To provide a purpose to participants through clearly defined progression routes in custody, the community and through the gate.

Aim 2 – To provide safe spaces where participants can engage in positive activities which encourage social inclusion, improve wellbeing and increase skills, including employability.

Aim 3 – To increase engagement with mainstream rehabilitative services.

Aim 4 – To encourage engagement with activities that help to reduce reoffending.

**Employment
and Work**



**Finances
and Debt**



**Practical
Courses**



**Personal
Skills**



**Independent
Living**



**Social
Inclusion**



**CFO can
support with:**

CFO provides tailored support for hard-to-reach offenders who face disadvantages and barriers to community reintegration, struggle to engage with mainstream services, lack the practical and soft skills employers require, and are not fully supported by existing programmes.

CFO
support is
available in:

Custody



**Through
the gate**



Community

N and CFO – Learn. Develop. Succeed.

ers Information,
e and Guidance
ecialist flexible
vision, procured
locally

Libraries
Improving literacy
and reducing
resettlement
barriers

**Digital Education
Platform**
New secure IT system
improving data
access and innovation

**Higher and Further
Education**
Enabling higher-level
distance learning
opportunities

Make a Referral

Referrals can be made to CFO Evolution via:

CreatingFutureOpportunities.gov.uk/CFO-Evolution-Referrals

or by scanning the QR code!



Please note: any data stated is comparative and some of the measured change may be attributable to factors external to the CFO programme.

*Names changed throughout to avoid disclosure of identity

CreatingFutureOpportunities.gov.uk