



Ministry
of Justice

The payment by results Social Impact Bond pilot at HMP Peterborough: final process evaluation report

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The authors

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1. Summary

Background to the Peterborough payment by results pilot

Between 2010 and 2015, an intervention called the One Service operated at Peterborough Prison. This service provided ‘through-the-gate’ and post-release support to adult male offenders released from HMP Peterborough who had served prison sentences of less than 12 months, with an aim of reducing reoffending.

The through-the-gate support provided by the One Service involved contacting offenders before release in order to introduce case workers, assess needs, and plan resettlement activities. The One Service then implemented these plans by working with offenders for up to 12 months following their release. If an offender returned to prison within this period, the One Service aimed to ensure that support services continued back in prison.

The One Service was funded through a financing mechanism known as a Social Impact Bond (SIB), a form of payment by results. This is where private, non-government investors pay for an intervention, and if certain results are achieved, are paid back their initial investment plus an additional return on that investment.¹ In the Peterborough SIB, the Ministry of Justice, supported by the Big Lottery Fund, entered into an agreement to pay a return to investors if targets for reducing reconvictions were achieved. This pilot was the first SIB to be established worldwide.

The Peterborough SIB pilot was originally intended to operate until 2017, funding the delivery of the One Service to three cohorts of around 1,000 prisoners released from the prison. Support from the One Service was available to cohort members for a period of up to 12 months post-release, and engagement was on a voluntary basis. While the pilot operated on a payment by results basis under the SIB model for the first two cohorts of released prisoners, a third cohort received One Service support under a ‘fee-for-service’ arrangement, rather than under the original SIB funded payment by results model.

This change to the model was due to the roll-out of Transforming Rehabilitation reforms to probation, which introduced mandatory statutory supervision for short-sentenced offenders – the target group for the Peterborough pilot – and also included a payment by results funding

¹ For details of the Peterborough SIB structure and terms, see the Phase 1 and 2 reports for this study (Disley *et al*, 2011; Disley and Rubin 2014).

mechanism to incentivise providers to reduce reoffending.² This meant that while the pilot was concluded early in order to avoid any duplication in services to the same population, the alternative fee-for-service funding arrangement for the third cohort enabled the pilot to continue operating until the new Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)³ providers implemented their approach to rehabilitation.

The scope of this report relates only to the period of time during which the One Service operated on a payment by results basis.

Evaluation of the Peterborough pilot and aims of this report

This report presents findings from a process evaluation of the Peterborough pilot, commissioned by the Ministry of Justice in 2010.⁴ It is the third and final output from the process evaluation, and addresses the following five research questions:

1. How, if at all, did the pilot lead to better outcomes of reduced reoffending (including the role played by voluntary and community sector organisations and partner agencies)?
2. What wider costs and benefits, if any, do stakeholders feel were incurred through the implementation of the SIB?
3. To what extent did stakeholders feel that the SIB led to greater innovation and/or efficiency?
4. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the SIB contractual model as implemented?
5. What key messages can be taken from the Peterborough pilot that offer useful learning points for future payment by results models and SIBs?⁵

² Transforming Rehabilitation refers to a series of reforms undertaken from 2013, which 'opened the market to a diverse range of rehabilitation providers' and, of particular relevance to the One Service pilot, introduced mandatory rehabilitation for short-sentenced offenders. For more information on Transforming Rehabilitation reforms, see Ministry of Justice, 2013a, 2013b and 2015. The change to the pilot end date was announced in a Ministry of Justice press release: Ministry of Justice (2014b).

³ Under Transforming Rehabilitation reforms, the 35 Probation Trusts were reorganised into 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) and a single National Probation Service (NPS). The 21 CRCs are responsible for supervising medium and lower risk offenders.

⁴ The evaluation has taken place over three phases. Reports from the first two phases were published in May 2011 and April 2014 respectively.

⁵ As noted above, the policy context has changed considerably since the evaluation was commissioned in 2010. While the research questions have not changed as a result of this, in Phases 2 and 3 of the evaluation the research team was asked to identify lessons that might inform the development and implementation of Transforming Rehabilitation reforms.

Employing primarily qualitative methods, this process evaluation aims to provide insight into how the One Service operated, and how any observed impacts might have been delivered. It does not enable conclusions to be drawn about the impact or relative effectiveness of different elements of the One Service.

Separately from this process evaluation, the impact of the One Service on reoffending is being measured by independent assessors in order to determine whether an outcome payment will be made to investors.⁶ Results for Cohort 1 were published in August 2014, and found an 8.4% reduction in the frequency of reconviction events within Cohort 1 (Jolliffe and Hedderman, 2014: p. 3). While this was below the 10% target required to trigger an outcome payment for the first cohort, it is above the 7.5% target required for an outcome payment to be triggered for the final combined cohort, though this will depend upon the outcome of Cohort 2. Final outcome results are expected to be available in summer 2016.⁷

Research approach

This report is based upon interviews with 29 stakeholders involved in the Peterborough pilot, interviews with 15 offenders who were supported by the One Service, and a review of the case files of these 15 service users. Fieldwork took place between autumn 2014 and spring 2015. It also draws on information about support needs and levels of engagement, provided by the One Service from their case management database. Findings from earlier research phases are referenced where appropriate. The research methods and limitations of the approach are further detailed in Chapter 3.

⁶ An outcome payment (a return on investment) is paid by the Ministry of Justice and Big Lottery Fund in the event of a reduction in the frequency of reconviction events of at least 10% in either of the cohorts, and/or a reduction of 7.5% in the combination of those cohorts that do not achieve the 10% reduction.

⁷ For further discussion of the results, see Ministry of Justice (2014a).

1.1 Key findings

Drawing on evidence collected across all phases of this evaluation, the key findings in relation to each research question can be summarised as follows.

How, if at all, did the pilot lead to better outcomes of reduced reoffending?

Virtually all⁸ service users interviewed for this research (all of whom had voluntarily engaged with the One Service) were very positive about their experience, expressing satisfaction with the services they received and their relationship with One Service staff and volunteers. They felt that the ability of the One Service to respond to acute practical needs in situations that might otherwise lead to reoffending was particularly valuable. Interviewed service users were somewhat equivocal on the degree to which the One Service had an impact on reoffending more broadly, but emphasised that the One Service was an improvement on their prior experience of post-release support.

Cohort members were eligible for support from the One Service for one year, although in practice most chose to end their contact with the Service after a few months. Commonly there was an intense period of contact following release, after which contact tapered off. One in five cohort members were still in contact with the service after three months.

Interviewees perceived the following to be key strengths of the way in which the One Service operated and aimed to reduce reoffending:

- Delivering an individualised service, responsive to the identified needs of each service user.
- Addressing practical problems such as housing, benefits, training and education. Interviewed One Service users valued this practical support and thought that it might prevent reoffending in some instances.
- Investing time in the development of processes and procedures to operate within the prison and in the community as a through-the-gate service – for example, to improve and facilitate information sharing or practitioners' access to the prison.
- Actively supporting service users to engage with local statutory and non-statutory services, and establishing good partnership working with local agencies such as the local authority, Jobcentre Plus, and housing and drug services.

⁸ Almost all interviewed service users were very positive about their experience with the One Service. Where service members did have negative statements, these tended to be relating to issues that were outside of One Service control, for example where a cohort member was released out of the area or dealing with issues which One Service was unable to solve.

- Changing and adapting the approach to working with service users during the course of the pilot in order to improve delivery and address service users' needs. For example, new service providers were commissioned, and the role of existing partners and providers was amended. The pace of change reduced in later years, but new partnerships were being formed and new ideas tested right up to the end of the pilot in June 2015.⁹

What wider costs and benefits, if any, do stakeholders feel were incurred through the implementation of the SIB?

A number of wider benefits can be identified as a result of the Peterborough pilot.

- Some agencies were providing more services in HMP Peterborough (for a range of prisoners, not just One Service cohort members) than they were previously, as a result of relationships and ideas which had developed through the One Service.
- Some of the commissioned voluntary and third sector service providers reported that their involvement in the pilot had provided opportunities for learning about collecting and using data to monitor performance.
- Some elements of the One Service intervention model had been adopted by other local partner agencies. For example, HMP Peterborough had developed an 'Outside Links' centre to provide support for all prisoners on the day of release.
- Some of the services developed by the One Service continued to operate after the end of the pilot, such as the new training opportunity, TTG Training CIC.
- Stakeholders did not report any major costs or disadvantages from the operation of the pilot in the area, suggesting a consensus of opinion that the pilot was thought to deliver a good service and was well-integrated with local agencies.

⁹ For instance, 'TTG Training CIC', a residential construction and highways training centre, was developed in January 2015 by the One Service, Job Deal and a former trainer from John Laing Training.

To what extent did stakeholders feel that the SIB led to greater innovation and/or efficiency?

This report identifies a number of ways in which the Peterborough pilot might be considered innovative:

- It was the first intervention in the world to be funded by a SIB.¹⁰
- It delivered a new service to offenders in Peterborough serving sentences of less than 12 months, filling a gap in provision.
- Perhaps as a result of SIB funding, the One Service was perceived to be more flexible and agile than other interventions. For example, new providers were commissioned and new ways of working were implemented throughout the pilot.
- Funding of the service was also perceived as flexible; for example staff reported that it was quicker and easier than in other interventions to access resources to cover, for example, temporary B&B accommodation, phone credit and other consumables. This flexibility could prevent crisis situations (such as homelessness), and incentivise engagement.
- There were also a number of features of the One Service which stakeholders pointed to as innovative and that could be usefully adopted by other interventions. These included the appointment of a full-time One Service Director and the creation of an online case management database (accessible to practitioners from several agencies) and the use of these data to review practice, manage providers and report to investors.

¹⁰ The use of SIBs has since expanded in the UK, with over 30 SIBs in operation or in development at the time of writing (Cabinet Office, 2015), and worldwide, particularly in the US. A report from the Brookings Institute (Gustafsson-Wright *et al*, 2015) places the global number of SIB-funded initiatives at around 44.

What were the strengths and weaknesses of the SIB contractual model as implemented?

The SIB contractual model involved six types of relationships,¹¹ each governed by a separate contract. While Phase 2 of the evaluation identified a number of amendments that were made to one of these contracts – between the Social Impact Partnership¹² and the Ministry of Justice – interviews conducted for Phase 3 of this evaluation reported no further changes, suggesting the contractual model, as amended, was a sufficient basis for the pilot.

Interviewees from Social Finance and organisations invested in the Peterborough SIB felt that a strength of the model was that commissioned service providers from the voluntary and third sector did not bear outcome risk dependent on results. They were paid upfront or on a fee-for-service basis.

What key messages can be taken from the Peterborough pilot that offer useful learning points for future payment by results models and SIBs?

This initiative was the first of its kind in a number of important ways, both in terms of its use of the SIB funding mechanism and in its approach to partnership working to reduce reoffending. The following conclusions and lessons will therefore have relevance both for future through-the-gate interventions as well as ongoing debates around the use of SIBs and similar funding approaches.

All phases of the research indicated that **a dedicated service director, focused on coordinating and facilitating partnership working, was central to the implementation and operation of the pilot.** The work of the One Service Director was consistently reported as a factor in building and maintaining links between relevant services. Future similar initiatives could ensure that a similar role, responsible for high-level oversight of partnership development and maintenance, is included in the intervention design.

¹¹ These contractual relationships were: (i) Social Impact Partnership (the limited partnership set up by Social Finance which is the contracting entity in the SIB) and the Ministry of Justice; (ii) Social Impact Partnership and the Big Lottery Fund; (iii) Social Impact Partnership and the commissioned service providers; (iv) Social Impact Partnership and the investors; (v) The Ministry of Justice and Peterborough Prison Management Limited (the consortium which holds the private finance initiative contract for HMP Peterborough); (vi) The Ministry of Justice and the Independent Assessor.

¹² The limited partnership set up by Social Finance which is the contracting entity in the SIB.

Key stakeholders – particularly the One Service and HMP Peterborough – had worked to establish relevant processes and procedures (for example, in relation to information-sharing and arrangements for through-the-gate working) since before the start of the pilot. However, these issues required ongoing attention during the life of the pilot. Future similar initiatives should be aware that the details of these practical matters will need to be discussed and agreed upon between partners, and regularly monitored to improve practice.

Stakeholders reported a number of innovations in the pilot. Innovations included the flexibility of funding and the resultant adaptations of the service in response to local conditions and service user needs. The use of an integrated case management database was also seen as innovative in both the geographic area and in reoffending interventions. While these aspects of the One Service were in many ways innovative, with the exception of the use of the SIB mechanism, **these innovations were not necessarily a result of SIB funding**, as other (non-SIB funded) initiatives have exhibited similar characteristics.

The evaluation evidence suggests that **service users accessed individualised support that was mainly practical in nature.** This responded to the predominant needs identified among service users, relating to housing, finance, and employment. Prior research suggests that **this kind of support is central to the process of desistance.**

While the One Service made extensive efforts to engage service users, **longer-term engagement was challenging to achieve** since most service users disengaged from the One Service well before the expiry of their 12 months of available support. The challenges of establishing longer-term relationships are also reflected in prior research, and should be recognised for any future similar intervention.

Finally, while **volunteers provided additional support to service users** by complementing the activities undertaken by paid caseworkers, and working with lower-risk cohort members in particular, **the recruitment of volunteers was sometimes challenging.** Challenges included identifying the 'right' volunteers, working through often lengthy procedures to access the prison, and the subsequent retention of good volunteers. This experience highlights the value volunteers can add, but also the need for future initiatives to be aware of the possible issues associated with the use and recruitment of volunteers, and the need for sufficient time and resources to address them.

2. Introduction

This report sets out findings from a process evaluation of the Peterborough payment by results Social Impact Bond (SIB) pilot. The pilot operated between September 2010 and June 2015, and aimed to reduce reoffending by adult male offenders sentenced to under 12 months in prison and released from HMP Peterborough, by providing an intervention known as the One Service. This chapter provides an introduction to SIBs, describes how the pilot operated (including an overview of the One Service) and sets out the policy context for this research.

2.1 Social Impact Bonds

SIBs are a payment by results funding mechanism whereby investors fund some or all of the upfront or operating costs of an initiative or intervention. If the intervention succeeds in delivering agreed improvements in outcomes for service users, investors are repaid their investment plus a return on that investment by central or local government departments. If agreed outcomes are not achieved, investors do not receive a return, and lose some or all of their investment.

As outlined in greater detail in the Phase 2 report from this study (Disley and Rubin, 2014), proponents of SIBs have hypothesised a number of potential benefits from their use.¹³ For example, it is thought that SIBs may incentivise and fund change and improvement in a range of policy areas, delivering better services and improving outcomes for users of those services. Some of the potential benefits that SIBs are hoped to bring about, for different stakeholders, include:

- For **government**, a SIB moves the upfront costs of service delivery (and the risk of paying for services that may prove to be ineffective) to investors, who lose their investment if interventions do not improve outcomes by an agreed amount.
- **Service providers** can assume lower levels of risk than under other payment by results mechanisms.¹⁴ We previously reported that SIBs include no risk to

¹³ See Ronicle *et al*, (2014, pp. 24–6) and National Audit Office (2015, p.19) for a discussion of possible benefits of SIBs and other forms of payment by results.

¹⁴ SIBs can provide the opportunity for commissioners to engage in a payment by results arrangement without requiring providers to bear the risk of not meeting outcomes. In a SIB, some or all of this risk can be borne by investors.

providers,¹⁵ but some more recent SIB-funded interventions have included elements of conditional payments to providers.¹⁶

- For **investors**, SIBs offer a new investment opportunity with a ‘blended return’; investors receive some financial return if outcomes are improved, but also value the opportunity to use their financial capital to try to achieve positive social outcomes.¹⁷
- For **wider society and service users**, SIBs may expand the availability of services or improve the quality of existing services, and improve outcomes and quality of life.

There is a small but growing body of research into the implementation and operation of SIBs, although the evidence base remains limited. This means that the potential benefits of SIBs listed above remain largely untested. Additionally, a number of (also largely untested) concerns regarding the use of SIBs as a funding mechanism have been identified, which include:

- Like other payment by results funding approaches, SIBs might create incentives for ‘cherry-picking’ service users likely to achieve the desired outcome, and ‘parking’ (i.e. not providing an intervention to) those who might be difficult to work with.¹⁸ As described in Section 2.3, the Peterborough pilot was designed to minimise such behaviours. Relatedly, programmes funded by SIBs and payment by results mechanisms might result in an over-focus on achieving the results measured by the main outcome metric, possibly leading to other (more) pressing needs not being addressed, or to harmful unintended consequences (Culley *et al*, 2012).
- The costs of establishing and operating a SIB, which have not been estimated for the existing SIBs in the UK or elsewhere, might outweigh any savings resulting from improved outcomes. This raises the question of whether the resources used to fund SIBs would be better spent on improving other commissioning approaches (McKay, 2013; Demel, 2012).

¹⁵ As reported in the previous reports of this evaluation (Disley and Rubin, 2014).

¹⁶ See Tan *et al*, (2015) and Gustafsson-Wright *et al*, (2015) for further description of other SIB models.

¹⁷ In the field of social investment the mix of financial and wider social outcomes is sometimes called a ‘blended return on investment’. Social investment is a shift from traditional understandings of investment and models of funding, built on an expectation that there may be both a financial and a social return on the investment (in the form of some improvement in social, health or wider outcomes) (ACEVO, 2010). Aside from SIBs, other social investment vehicles include debt capital, equity capital, mezzanine capital and hybrid capital. See Social Investment Taskforce (2011).

¹⁸ See Gash *et al*, (2013) for discussion of possible perverse effects of incentives in markets for public services.

- The mechanism through which a SIB might lead to better service delivery and improved outcomes has been hypothesised, but is not yet fully understood. This raises the question of whether the hoped-for benefits from a SIB could be achieved through traditional commissioning arrangements, other forms of payment by results, or through the use of other forms of social investment (Demel, 2012; Warner, 2013).
- SIBs can encounter challenges in measuring outcomes and attributing outcomes to the SIB-funded intervention (Dicker, 2011), and in assigning monetary values to the outcomes achieved to determine the appropriate outcome payments (Tan *et al*, 2015).

2.2 The Peterborough pilot

The Peterborough pilot used a SIB to fund an intervention – the One Service – to reduce reoffending by offenders released from HMP Peterborough having served a short prison sentence (of less than 12 months). This was a non-mandatory intervention, meaning that it was not prescribed as part of licence conditions, thus prisoners could choose whether or not to engage with the service. Social Finance, a not-for-profit financial intermediary, was responsible for coordinating the Peterborough pilot, and within this role raised investment funding from individuals, trusts and foundations.

Social Finance used this funding to commission a number of providers to work together under the banner of the One Service to deliver a voluntary, through-the-gate service, from prison into the community, that provided support to address a wide range of needs linked to reoffending, such as accommodation needs, help arranging benefits, or addressing substance abuse needs and mental health issues.¹⁹ Commissioned providers included:

- St Giles Trust, who provided case workers to deliver the through-the-gate service;²⁰
- Sova, who provided unpaid volunteers to support One Service cohort members, and a landlord liaison caseworker;²¹
- Mind, who supported cohort members with mental health issues;

¹⁹ For more on factors linked to offending, see Ministry of Justice (2013c).

²⁰ St Giles Trust also provided a peer advice trainer.

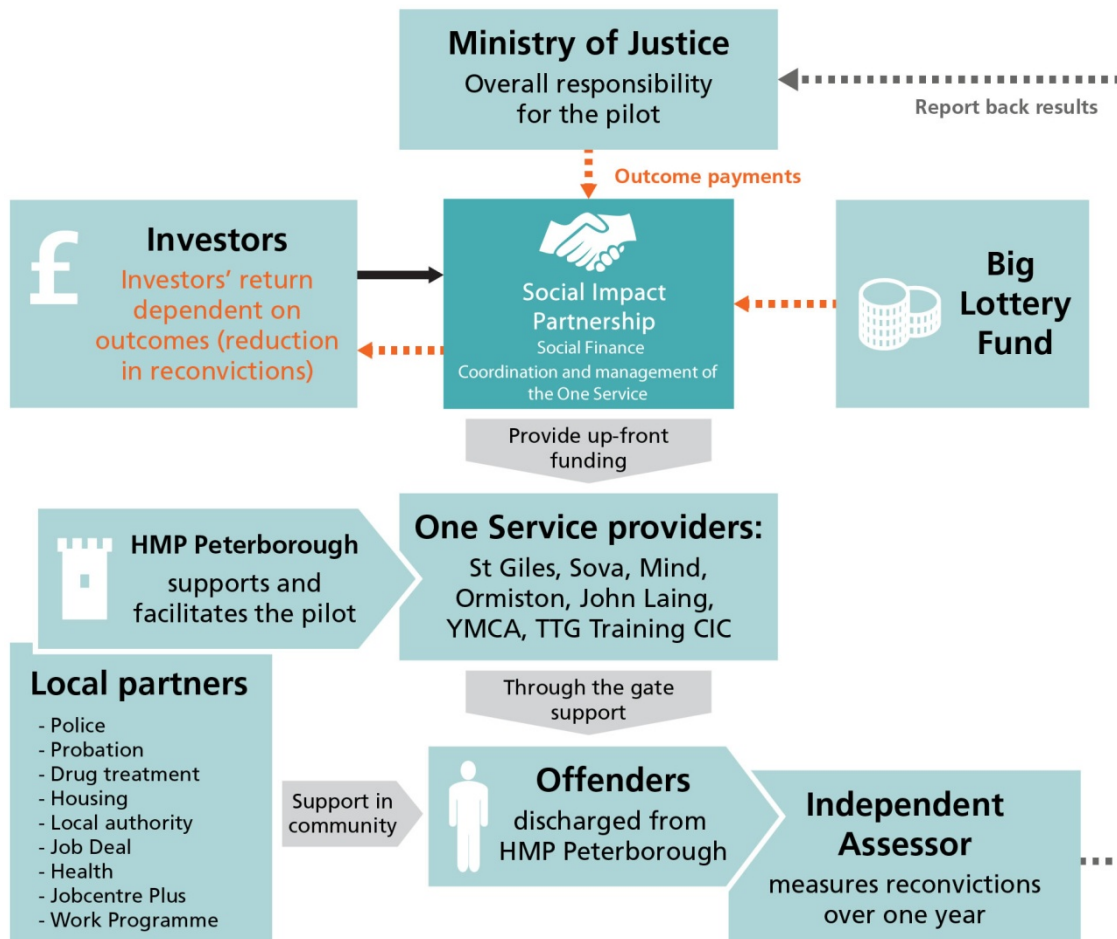
²¹ The Manager of the Sova service was a paid member of staff. The YMCA were involved in early stages of the pilot, initially providing local volunteers. YMCA were subsequently replaced by Sova, though continued to provide One Service cohort members with access to a gym.

- Ormiston Families, who provided support both to One Service cohort members and to their families, in order to strengthen family relationships;
- John Laing Training, who provided construction skills courses that were later recommissioned through a new initiative, TTG Training CIC.

Social Finance appointed a Director to coordinate and manage the One Service. The Director's role included building partnerships, commissioning and monitoring providers, and seeking ways to modify the service where necessary to ensure that it was designed and operated to meet the objective of reducing reoffending.

Figure 2.1 summarises the main parties involved. Further details of the commissioned services and the roles of each of the partners are detailed in Chapter 4.²²

Figure 2.1: Overview of Peterborough SIB



Source: RAND Europe

²² A fuller description of the pilot, including the investment and payment structure, can be found in the Phase 1 and Phase 2 reports from the evaluation (Disley *et al*, 2011; Disley and Rubin, 2014).

The Peterborough pilot operated on a payment by results basis for the first two pilot cohorts. During this time, two cohorts, each of approximately 1,000 men were recruited²³ onto the pilot and were eligible to receive support from the One Service for 12 months following their release, as follows:

- Offenders in Cohort 1 were recruited between September 2010 and June 2012. The support period for Cohort 1 members ended in June 2013.
- Offenders in Cohort 2 were recruited between July 2012 and June 2014. The support period for Cohort 2 members ended in June 2015.

Criteria for inclusion in the cohorts were that men had to be:

- at least 18 years of age at the time of sentencing;
- sentenced for a consecutive period of fewer than 12 months; and
- discharged from HMP Peterborough during the pilot after serving their sentence (or any part thereof) at HMP Peterborough.

In addition, a third cohort of offenders was given support by the One Service on a fee-for-service basis between July 2014 and June 2015. This cohort of service users was not part of the SIB payment by results pilot, and was therefore not covered by the evaluation.

2.3 Evaluating the Peterborough pilot

The Peterborough pilot has been evaluated in two ways: via a process evaluation of the implementation and operation of the pilot (the focus of this report), and by independent assessment of its impact on reoffending. The aims and objectives of the process evaluation are described in Section 3.

²³ All men released from HMP Peterborough meeting the inclusion criteria were included in the cohort. They did not have a choice to opt out of the cohort, although some men did not engage with the One Service.

Outcome evaluation by independent assessment

The impact of the One Service on reoffending is being measured separately by independent assessment using a national comparison group design. The outcome measure used for the pilot is the frequency of reconviction events,²⁴ which relates to offences committed in the 12 months after release from HMP Peterborough (during which time cohort members were eligible for support from the One Service).

Under the Peterborough SIB, the outcome measurement determines whether a payment is made to investors. An outcome payment (a return on investment) is paid by the Ministry of Justice and Big Lottery Fund in the event of a reduction in the frequency of reconviction events of at least 10% in each of the cohorts, and/or a reduction of 7.5% in the combination of those cohorts that do not achieve the 10% reduction.²⁵

The approach to outcome measurement was, in part, designed to reduce incentives for the pilot to 'cherry pick' those who were easiest to help: all offenders discharged from HMP Peterborough were included in the two cohorts, rather than just those who engaged with SIB-funded services. This provided an incentive to work with the most challenging cohort members. In addition, the frequency of reconviction events was selected as the outcome metric, rather than a binary measure of whether offenders were reconvicted or not, in part to incentivise the One Service to continue to work with cohort members even if they were reconvicted (reducing incentives for so called 'parking').

Results for Cohort 1 were published in August 2014. Using the agreed approach, the analysis found an 8.4% reduction in the frequency of reconviction events within Peterborough Cohort 1 (Jolliffe and Hedderman, 2014; Ministry of Justice, 2014a). While this was below the 10% target required to trigger an early outcome payment for the first cohort, it is above the 7.5% target required for an outcome payment for the final combined cohort, though this will depend upon the outcome of Cohort 2. Final outcome results are expected to be available in summer 2016.

²⁴ A reconviction event is defined as an occasion on which an offender is convicted in court for a new criminal offence (or offences). See Jolliffe and Hedderman (2014).

²⁵ Further information about the approach to measurement and the targets to be achieved are described in the Phase 1 and 2 reports and the report from the independent assessor (Disley *et al*, 2011; Disley and Rubin, 2014; Jolliffe and Hedderman, 2014). See also: Ministry of Justice, 2014a.

2.4 Structure of this report

The content of the remaining chapters of this report, and the research questions addressed in each, are as follows:

- **Chapter 3** sets out the aims of this research and the methods used for data collection and analysis.
- **Chapters 4 and 5** describe the interventions delivered as part of the pilot, addressing research question 1. Chapter 4 is based on information from Phase 3 stakeholder interviews, and additionally presents findings in relation to question 4, in relation to the contractual model of the SIB. Chapter 5 is based on information from the sample of service users interviewed in Phase 3, and a review of their case files.
- **Chapter 6** addresses aspects of research questions 2 and 3 regarding the wider benefits, innovation and efficiency of the pilot.
- **Chapter 7** draws together findings and conclusions in order to address the research questions.

3. Aims of this research

In 2010, the Ministry of Justice commissioned RAND Europe to conduct an independent process evaluation of the payment by results pilot at HMP Peterborough.²⁶ The research questions, specified by the Ministry of Justice, are set out in Box 3.1.²⁷

Box 3.1: Research questions

- 1) How, if at all, did the pilot lead to better outcomes of reduced reoffending?
 - a) How did the One Service operate as a third-party provider within the prison and through-the-gate? What were the barriers/facilitators?
 - b) How were volunteers used in the One Service? Are there lessons for wider roll-out of the use of volunteers for short-sentenced prisoners?
 - c) How have voluntary and community sector organisations been involved in the One Service? What, if anything, has been done to facilitate the involvement of such organisations, especially small organisations? What are the barriers to involvement?
 - d) What were the opportunities and challenges of local partnership working?
- 2) What wider costs and benefits,²⁸ if any, do stakeholders feel were incurred through the implementation of the SIB?
- 3) To what extent did stakeholders feel that the SIB led to greater innovation and/or efficiency?
- 4) What were the strengths and weaknesses of the SIB contractual model as implemented?
- 5) What key messages can be taken from the Peterborough pilot that offer useful learning points for future payment by results models and SIBs?

²⁶ This study is conducted separately to the work of the independent assessor who is responsible for examining any reduction in reoffending achieved by the pilot.

²⁷ Note that the research questions have been revised slightly since the first phase of this research, in order to reflect the changed policy landscape.

²⁸ Aside from any financial payments made by the Ministry of Justice to the Social Impact Partnership, and aside from direct impacts from any reduced reoffending.

The process evaluation has comprised three phases:

- Phase 1 of the process evaluation reported in May 2011 and looked at the operation of the pilot between September 2010 and January 2011.
- Phase 2 reported in 2014 and looked at the operation of the pilot between February 2011 and June 2013.
- Phase 3 – on which this report is based – focused on the operation of the pilot between September 2013 and June 2014 – i.e. a period during which offenders were joining Cohort 2 and receiving support from the One Service.

This report:

- Presents new findings from interviews with stakeholders conducted between January and March 2015.
- Describes new findings from interviews with One Service cohort members and from a review of their case files.
- Draws key messages across all phases of the evaluation, combining Phase 2 findings with new information from Phase 3 data collection where relevant.

Research approach for Phase 3 of the evaluation

This report is based on data collected through four key methods:

Qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 29 stakeholders: An interview was conducted with at least one representative from each organisation, department and partner agency identified by the research team as playing a role in the Peterborough pilot. Interviews were conducted in person and by telephone between January and March 2015, and covered themes such as the One Service model, risk and needs assessments and partnership working (the interview protocol is provided in Appendix A, and interviewee roles are listed in Appendix C). A number of the stakeholders interviewed in Phase 3 had also been interviewed in earlier phases of the research.

Qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 15 service users of the One Service: Semi-structured interviews were conducted in person or by telephone with One Service cohort members in November and December 2014. Social Finance provided an anonymised list of 225 One Service cohort members who had engaged with the One Service at least once between May and October 2014. The One Service and prison staff supported the research team in arranging interviews to be conducted in prison, while Sova volunteers supported the research team by approaching cohort members in the community. Cohort

members who agreed to be interviewed were asked about their experience of using the One Service, why they chose to engage with it, and the positive and negative aspects of the service provided. More information on the interview process is included in the Appendices to this report.

A review of the case files of each of the 15 One Service cohort members interviewed:

The 15 service users who were interviewed also consented to their case files being reviewed for this study. Case files for each of the interviewees, extracted from the One Service case management database, were reviewed using a structured content analysis approach, to understand the range and types of contacts and engagements between One Service staff and volunteers and service users. In conjunction with the service user interviews, the data from this exercise offered a useful form of triangulation to develop a picture of what might be considered the service user's 'journey' through the One Service, from their first introduction to the service in HMP Peterborough, their experience of through-the-gate support and engagement with the One Service in the community, and finally to their discontinuation from the service either by choice or because their year of support had ended. The template used to extract relevant information from the case files is at Appendix B.

Information from the One Service case management database: Information from interviews has been supplemented in places with information from the One Service case management database, which was developed to record the needs of cohort members, the services with which they engaged, and interactions with staff and volunteers from the One Service and other agencies.

Strengths and limitations of the process evaluation

The process evaluation was commissioned to understand how the Peterborough pilot was implemented and operated, based upon the views and experiences of a range of stakeholders and, in this final phase, service users. The evaluation team was able to interview at least one person from all key partner agencies involved, as well as representatives from two of the investors in the Peterborough SIB, and is therefore able to base its conclusions on a range of viewpoints from people with knowledge of the intervention and its implementation. These interviews provide information about the nature of the intervention, relationships with service users and between partner agencies, and practices seen as valuable within the delivery of the One Service.

While the evaluation offers useful insight into how the intervention was delivered, the approach has a number of limitations which have an impact upon the conclusions that can be drawn:

- One limitation of the evaluation is the reliance on stakeholders' reports of the nature of the intervention and how it operated.²⁹ Data from offender interviews, case file reviews and from the One Service case management database provide some opportunities for the triangulation of findings from stakeholder interviews, but the evaluation is limited in the extent to which it can describe the content of the intervention for One Service cohort members. In turn, this limits the ability to draw conclusions about how the service might reduce reoffending.
- The case files were not designed for research purposes, and the data extracted from them were structured differently for each case. This offers no possibility of systematic quantitative analysis or transferability of findings to the wider cohort.
- There are limitations to the sample of offenders interviewed (and whose case files were reviewed), particularly around self-selection bias – those who agreed to be interviewed had all engaged with the One Service. Despite attempts by the research team, with the support of Sova volunteers, interviews with non-engagers could not be arranged. The sample cannot therefore be assumed to represent the full range of experiences that offenders will have had of the One Service, nor can it shed light on why some offenders did not engage with the One Service.

Nonetheless, data from this sample illustrate ways in which offenders used the One Service during Cohort 2, including the main reasons for and patterns of their engagement, as well as any lessons for future similar initiatives that can be drawn from this experience.

²⁹ Detailed management information about the work undertaken with service users was not available, as the case management database was not designed as a research tool and so case file data was analysed qualitatively. The evaluation also did not include direct observation of the One Service's activities with service users, which could have provided additional depth to the findings.

Challenges in understanding the effect of SIB funding

One challenge in evaluating SIBs (or other payment by results schemes) is to isolate the impact of the funding mechanism on the delivery of the intervention, and this is true of the Peterborough pilot. There was no comparison site implementing a similar intervention using an alternative funding model, and since the SIB was used to fund a new service in the area, it was not possible to compare SIB-funded services with those previously funded through other means. Findings from this process evaluation regarding the impact of SIB funding are therefore based on stakeholders' views and insights into how this particular funding approach may have affected the operation or effectiveness of the pilot.³⁰

³⁰ Analysis measuring the impact of the pilot on reoffending uses a comparison group (see Chapter 2 for more information). This enables conclusions to be drawn as to the impact of the pilot on reoffending when compared to the usual support provided to offenders leaving prison having served short sentences, but cannot isolate any precise impact of the SIB funding mechanism from other features of the pilot.

4. A description of the One Service intervention

Based primarily on stakeholder interviews, this chapter describes the intervention provided to One Service cohort members, and notes changes during the period covered by Phase 3 of the evaluation (i.e. September 2013 to June 2014). This description contributes to addressing the first research question relating to how the pilot might have led to better outcomes of reduced reoffending, as well as the following sub-questions:

- How did the One Service operate as a third-party provider within the prison and through-the-gate?³¹
- What were the opportunities and challenges of local partnership working?
- How were volunteers used in the One Service? Are there lessons for wider roll-out of the use of volunteers for short-sentenced prisoners?

This chapter also presents findings in relation to question 4:

- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the SIB contractual model as implemented?

Key findings

- **The One Service was a voluntary scheme offering through-the-gate support to reduce reoffending.** This support was individualised and needs-based, in practice primarily addressing service users' practical problems such as housing and benefits while also offering links to services such as mental health and addictions support. The scheme was delivered by a number of specially-commissioned providers, but also involved supporting service users to access and engage with a range of local agencies.
- Due to the voluntary nature of the One Service, particular emphasis was placed on securing participation and engagement by service users. Engagement in prison and on the day of release was high (around 70% of Cohort 2 members took part in a full in-prison needs assessment and 86% were met at the gate on the day of release). Rates of engagement were lower after release, with around 55% of Cohort 2 members engaged with the One Service after one month and 20% after three months.

³¹ Note that these sub-questions were added by the Ministry of Justice after the publication of the first report.

- **HMP Peterborough usually shared information to inform risk assessment with the One Service in a timely manner.** Information sharing processes were reported to be operating smoothly. It appeared that this represented some improvement on Phase 2 of the evaluation, when efficient and timely access to this information was identified as an area for improvement.
- **Volunteers provided by Sova provided support to cohort members in a range of ways,** such as accompanying them to appointments or simply meeting to talk. Advantages of the use of volunteers included their flexibility and the range of relevant skills they might bring from their previous personal or professional experience. One difficulty encountered was that it was time-consuming to arrange volunteers' access to prison due to vetting and security clearance processes.
- A number of changes were made to the One Service between September 2013 and June 2014, indicating that the service continued to evolve. However, there were fewer changes than in the initial years of the pilot.
- As in Phase 2, Phase 3 interviewees perceived partnership working and the provision of a through-the-gate service to have been strengths of the One Service. Provision of through-the-gate services was seen to have been supported by strong partnership working, which was enabled by co-location of key partners, effective management and coordination by the One Service Director, and consistent support from HMP Peterborough.

4.1 A description of the One Service

Needs-based, individualised support to reduced reoffending

Phase 3 interviews confirmed findings set out in the earlier Phase 2 report, that the One Service was a service-user-led, individualised intervention which aimed to address the particular needs of each cohort member. There was consensus regarding this among stakeholders, who described it as a bespoke and holistic service, based on a real understanding of the range of needs experienced by each service user. There was agreement among interviewees that the individualised nature of the intervention was a strength.³²

A multi-provider, through-the-gate intervention





Table 4.1 below provides an overview of the One Service and the role of the different providers and agencies involved, based on interviewee descriptions. The One Service was delivered by a range of commissioned providers, but an important feature was supporting service users to make use of statutory and non-statutory services to address needs relating to accommodation, training and employment and benefits, among others.

A voluntary service, requiring continual effort to engage cohort members





Offenders engaged with the One Service on a voluntary basis. One Service and prison staff stressed that the voluntary nature of the service was important to how the One Service operated, as it created a need to find ways to encourage cohort members to participate, and had impacts on the relationship between cohort members and case workers.





³² As noted in the Phase 2 report, no theory of change was articulated for the One Service beyond addressing individuals' needs. Possible disadvantages of this flexible approach were that it was challenging to evaluate whether individual elements of the One Service were effective, since the content of the intervention differed between cohort members and over time.

Table 4.1: Overview of the One Service intervention model and role of key partners and providers

 Provider role	 In prison	 On day of release	 Weeks/months following release
Commissioned providers			
St Giles Trust – caseworkers <i>Six full-time caseworkers</i>	Met cohort members in prison (usually within one week of arrival in prison) with the Sova Manager. A risk and needs assessment was undertaken. Caseworkers made referrals so cohort members could access services in custody or on release.	Met cohort members at the prison gate, helped cohort members to attend appointments and secure housing.	Provided hands-on mentoring support to access a range of services to address the needs reported by cohort members. Proactively sought to engage those who were not in contact with the One Service. Might have attended court with a service user to provide support and relevant information to the court.
St Giles Trust – volunteers <i>Up to six St Giles Trust volunteers (individuals who may be currently on probation, be serving prisoners on day release, or have personal experience of the criminal justice system).³³</i>			Worked alongside a St Giles Trust caseworker performing administrative tasks and directly providing support to cohort members. Attempted to make contact with cohort members who had disengaged.
Sova Manager	Met cohort members in prison (with the St Giles Trust caseworkers) to inform matching with a volunteer, needs and risk assessment.		Managed and supported Sova volunteers and the landlord liaison caseworker.
Sova volunteers <i>Approximately 50 lay volunteers recruited, trained and managed by Sova.</i>	May have met cohort members in prison (once the cohort member has been met by the Sova Manager and a St Giles Trust caseworker and a risk and needs assessment undertaken).		Provided individualised, hands-on support to cohort members. Generally worked with cohort members assessed as lower risk. Provided opportunities for and accompanied cohort members during purposeful activities to provide alternative and productive use of time and build relationships.

³³ Part of the original intervention model included six St Giles Trust volunteers working in the One Service office and helping to engage with cohort members. However, it was not possible to fill all these positions at all points of the pilot due to challenges in finding individuals, recently released themselves, who were ready to take on the challenging role of providing support to cohort members (see Section 4.3, below).

 Provider role	 In prison	 On day of release	 Weeks/months following release
Sova landlord liaison caseworker (this post was created in 2013)	Developed and delivered an accredited pre-tenancy course to cohort members in prison.		Provided help to cohort members to maintain tenancies. Acted as a contact point for landlords and housing benefit department regarding tenancy support. Aimed to identify new sources of housing for use by the One Service.
Mind One part-time recovery worker	Met cohort members in prison pre-release or if a cohort member returned to prison having started the intervention in the community.		Provided a drop-in service at the One Service Office one day a week offering one-to-one appointments. Undertook some group work addressing topics such as stress management, coping, anger management and improving motivation.
Ormiston Two part-time family specialist practitioners	Delivered a parenting course and a drop-in service offering one-to-one support to cohort members. Ran prison family days.		Provided one-to-one support to cohort members, parenting courses, drop-in sessions, support to families of cohort members (while the cohort member was in custody). Coordinated with local Troubled Families Programme and other statutory sector teams.
John Laing Training One trainer	Delivered a construction multi skills course to selected cohort members (started in the prison and continued in the community). Provided a residential training centre. From January 2015 this was commissioned via TTG Training CIC.		
HMP Peterborough			
HMP Resettlement Staff	Ensured cohort members accessed appropriate prison-based interventions. Provided single point of contact for One Service queries including access to risk information. Facilitated multi-agency meetings. Managed Connections peer advisers.	Issued discharge grants and travel warrants.	Provided two Outside Links venues as access points for former prisoners.
HMP Peterborough Connections peer advisers	Met cohort members on reception, informed cohort members about the One Service and conducted a basic needs assessment (usually within 24 and 48 hours of reception).	Supported cohort members nearing release and on the day of release.	

 Provider role	 In prison	 On day of release	 Weeks/months following release
Other partners			
YMCA <i>One part-time fitness coach</i>	Provided healthy lifestyle sessions in prison.		Provided subsidised gym sessions in their Peterborough gym. In early stages of the pilot, provided volunteers to support cohort members. This role was transferred to Sova.
Jobcentre Plus <i>Advisers and partnerships manager</i>	Arranged for cohort members' benefits to be ready upon their release.		Liaised between the One Service and the Work Programme so that cohort members were able to attend One Service training programmes while maintaining their benefits. Provided advice to One Service staff.
Job Deal <i>One employment support caseworker based at One Service one day per week</i>	Provided employment advice and support.		Provided employment advice and support and assisted with practical help such as funding travel, ID and clothes for work. Funded training placements, including on the One Service construction programme, until June 2015.
Aspire Drug Services <i>One part-time worker based at One Service one day part-time</i>	Provided assessment and support to prepare cohort members for release, including providing clinical interventions.	Arranged for prescriptions to be ready for cohort members.	Supported with recovery in the community and arranged drug testing as required.
Local authority <i>Housing adviser</i>	Interviewed cohort members in custody to assess homeless applications.	Placed in temporary housing if eligible for housing.	Provided access to longer term housing and advice.
Police <i>Officers, Integrated Offender Management Team, Police Community Support Officers, Senior Staff</i>			Information sharing and cooperation. Notified One Service if cohort members were arrested or had other interactions with the police. Provided targeted support for cohort members on the Integrated Offender Management cohort.
Probation			Information sharing and cooperation in relation to cohort members who were also on the probation case load.

Source: RAND Europe

Stakeholder interviews and the case file review indicate that One Service staff put considerable effort into engaging and trying to contact cohort members who had lost touch with the service. Approaches to engaging service users remained the same as in earlier years of the pilot, and included: ³⁴

- Providing information about the One Service in prison via leaflets to the wings, and through peer support advisers.
- Addressing some needs on the day of release, and taking service users to appointments.
- Providing drop-in sessions offering a range of services at the One Service office, and providing opportunities for purposeful activities. This 'drop-in' aspect provided flexibility for cohort members with chaotic lifestyles who found time-keeping difficult. By organising (sometimes ad hoc) purposeful activities, cohort members were provided with team-building and enjoyable experiences which were intended to maintain engagement (or re-engage those with whom the One Service had lost touch).
- Proactively contacting cohort members who were not engaging, by letter, phone call or face-to-face contact, including through home visits. When the One Service did not have contact details or did not receive a response, they tried to contact cohort members through other services such as the police or probation.

Two challenges to maximising user engagement were mentioned by interviewees. The One Service model required staff to make repeated and regular attempts to engage with cohort members, even those who had declined offers of help from the service. One particular example of this was that One Service staff might meet a cohort member at the prison gate on the day of release even if they had indicated that this was not needed. One Service staff noted the importance of providing plenty of opportunities for cohort members to access support from the service, but recognised that the service was voluntary and that cohort members had the right to refuse to engage. The challenge of balancing this right to decline with some pressure to engage was explicitly noted by caseworkers.

³⁴ These are described in the Phase 2 report (Disley and Rubin, 2014), Section 4.5.

A second challenge was ensuring engagement from and providing support to cohort members who were released out of the Cambridgeshire area. Physical distance from One Service staff meant it was difficult to provide the same, intense support to these cohort members, and staff knowledge of and relationships with agencies in other areas were not as established as those in and around Cambridgeshire. The One Service Director described a number of steps taken to mitigate this: two caseworkers from St Giles Trust were assigned responsibility for out-of-area cohort members, and travelled to meet them face-to-face; Sova recruited volunteers across the UK to provide support to out-of-area cohort members; the One Service arranged for 'flags' to be placed on the Police National Computer record of each cohort member. The flag indicated to anyone accessing the record that the individual was being supported by the One Service. The flag also included contact details for the One Service. It was also reported that the One Service had built relationships with key agencies in some London Boroughs as well as in some other counties in order to support cohort members who were released outside of the Cambridgeshire area.

Data on engagement rates from the One Service case management database were made available to the research team by Social Finance. Table 4.2 shows levels of engagement at each stage of the service. Eighty-seven per cent of Cohort 2 members engaged with the One Service by taking part in an initial needs assessment while still in prison, carried out by a Connections Worker, while 70% received a fuller needs assessment by a caseworker while still in custody. Eighty-six per cent of Cohort 2 members were met at the gate on release. The proportions of Cohort 2 members engaging in the One Service after one, three and six months post-release were 55%, 20% and 13% respectively. According to these data, levels of engagement were higher for Cohort 2 members than for those in Cohort 1 across all these indicators.³⁵

³⁵ While it is not possible within the scope of this evaluation to know why engagement levels increased from Cohort 1 to Cohort 2, it seems likely that this increase reflects the range of improvements made to the service over the life of the pilot (for example, strategies learned by prison and One Service staff to encourage engagement) and also possibly a better understanding among prisoners of what was on offer from the One Service.

Table 4.2: Engagement rates in the One Service

Stage of the One Service	Proportion of Cohort 1*	Proportion of Cohort 2**
Initial assessment completed by a Connections worker in prison	74%	87%
Fuller needs assessment by St Giles Trust caseworker and Sova Manager in prison	50%	70%
Met at the gate on day of release	64%	86%
Engagement rates		
One month post-release***	37%	55%
Three months post-release****	10%	20%
Six months post-release	5%	13%

* Cohort 1 includes approximately 1,000 individuals released between September 2010 and June 2012.

** Cohort 2 includes approximately 1,000 members released between July 2012 and June 2014.

*** Social Finance undertook two steps to calculate engagement one month post-release. First, the month is divided into two equal time periods. Second, the cohort member must complete at least one activity in each of those two periods to be considered to be engaged for one month post-release. For example, two contacts in the first half of the month and none in the second half would not count as engagement. It is possible that some offenders do not have contact in the first month, but subsequently engage with the One Service.

**** A similar process was used to calculate three- and six-month engagement rates

Source: Social Finance. The research team was not able to verify the information provided.

Cohort members were eligible for support for 12 months following their release. The majority of service users engaged with the service for around three months or less, but were able to re-engage at any point during the 12 months. There was a process to allow service users to be recorded (on the One Service case management database) as having 'exited' the One Service earlier than 12 months after release if their caseworker was assured that they were 'stable' and had had their needs addressed, but in these cases service users were nonetheless able to return to the One Service for support within the 12 months following release.

4.2 Risk and needs assessment in the One Service

Needs assessment

One Service staff used a specially developed needs assessment tool to identify, in discussion with cohort members before release, their most pressing resettlement needs.³⁶ In this phase of the research, stakeholders reported that no changes had been made to the way in which the One Service assessed cohort members' needs between September 2013 and June 2014, and that the needs assessment process worked well. One Service staff noted that an initial needs assessment was usually just a starting point, as other issues and challenges arose or were subsequently disclosed to One Service staff. For this reason, as discussed further in Chapter 5, initial needs assessments did not always provide a comprehensive record of service users' needs, and were regularly reviewed.

Table 4.3 below lists the type of needs that were reported by cohort members and recorded in the One Service case management database. This is based both on initial needs assessments undertaken in custody and additional needs identified during subsequent engagement with the service – therefore representing all needs identified throughout a service user's engagement with the One Service. Over a third of service users were recorded as having a need relating to each of the following areas: accommodation; finance, benefit or debt; and education/training and employment. A quarter had needs relating to addiction, with about a fifth having a health and well-being need.

³⁶ The needs assessment tool was used by One Service staff to identify service user needs such as accommodation, education, training and employment and health and well-being. The report from Phase 2 of this evaluation covered needs assessment in more detail.

Table 4.3: Proportion of cohort members recorded as reporting a need

Need identified	Combined (cohorts 1 and 2)*
Accommodation	40%
Finance/Benefit/Debt	39%
Education/Training and Employment	36%
Addiction	25%
Health and Well-being	19%
Children and Families	15%
Legal	12%
Purposeful Activity	8%
Attitudes/Thinking/Behaviour	10%
Immigration	3%
Information Technology	1%

* Cohort 1 included approximately 1,000 individuals released between September 2010 and June 2012. Cohort 2 included approximately 1,000 members released between July 2012 and June 2014. Cohort members could have more than one need recorded.

Source: Social Finance. The research team was not able to verify the information provided.

While in practice the One Service staff primarily addressed service users' material needs relating to accommodation, finances and education or employment, case workers also reported helping service users to cope with substance misuse or mental health needs, for example by helping them to access or re-access mental health services or by providing emotional support:

I've just finished with one client who has, over the past 10 years, been drinking heavily, continuously in trouble, and we've managed to settle him down. He's now engaging with probation, he's doing some volunteer work, he's also liaising with his doctor on mental health support. But with all that came the rent arrears and so on that the council wanted, and that adds to the issue. Where you think your client is stabilised, he then becomes very anxious and mental health issues start coming in. He may start drinking, because his coping strategies aren't there. So my job is to put in a strong coping strategy for the client, or through the help of others.

Case worker, St Giles Trust

Building up that trust and rapport was the most important bit and the patience and just being really positive, the more positive you are with them it starts to transfer onto them a bit and they become more positive about their own life chances about receiving help, about how you can help them.

Volunteer, Sova

Assessment of risk

As reported in Phase 2 of this evaluation, the One Service did not have a single, standard risk assessment process relating to either risk of reoffending or risk posed by service users to One Service staff. Nonetheless, in Phase 3, risk assessment was described by interviewees as important to the operation of the service, primarily to ensure the safety of staff. One Service staff said that risk assessment of service users was conducted on a case-by-case basis and that each commissioned provider had their own process for assessing whether, how and where their staff should meet with service users. For example, as outlined in Table 4.1 (pp. 24–26), Sova volunteers would generally work with lower-risk cohort members, whereas St Giles Trust caseworkers also worked with higher risk service users. Such risk assessments were described as dynamic, taking into account the service user's current situation. As described below, the One Service also had access to the risk assessment conducted by HMP Peterborough as an input to decision-making.

Phase 2 of this evaluation identified some challenges faced by the One Service in accessing information about risk of reoffending and risk of harm in a timely way.³⁷ The One Service did not have access to the Police National Computer to review previous convictions and other relevant information, so relied on the prison, probation service and the local Integrated Offender Management Team³⁸ to share this information. In Phase 3 of this research, the One Service Director reported that the sharing of information by HMP Peterborough had improved and was now more consistent and timely.³⁹ Some stakeholders from commissioned service providers interviewed in Phase 3 still expressed concerns about whether the One Service had sufficient, up-to-date information to undertake risk assessment, but did not elaborate on how this might be improved. One Service staff were said to seek out further information when there appeared to be gaps or inconsistencies.

³⁷ Phase 2 report (Disley and Rubin, 2014) Section 4.4.

³⁸ Integrated Offender Management is described as “an overarching framework for bringing together agencies in local areas to prioritise interventions with offenders who cause crime in their locality” (Home Office and Ministry of Justice, 2010). For more information see Home Office (2015).

³⁹ This information was now shared with the One Service by the Offender Categorisation Allocation department in HMP Peterborough, who entered relevant information directly onto the One Service case management database. The One Service had provided information to prison staff explaining the importance of receiving risk information promptly and the prison had allocated more resources to this.

4.3 The use of volunteers in the One Service

Sova volunteers

As part of the One Service, approximately 50 lay volunteers were recruited, trained and managed by Sova to deliver 'individualised mentoring support' (as described by the One Service Director) to cohort members.

Sova were commissioned by the One Service during the first year of the pilot, and no significant changes were reported in the way in which Sova volunteers were used in the period covered by this report (September 2013 to June 2014) compared to earlier stages of the pilot. One volunteer interviewee described the work undertaken with service users as including practical help, being available to talk, and keeping in contact to monitor progress:

Some [service users] it'll be just going for coffee, having a chat, trying to talk about their attitude, where they are in life. Whereas other ones it'll be more practical support, going to appointments with them like Alcoholics Anonymous, Jobcentre, giving them support filling out forms, things they find a bit more scary or tricky. So it's catered to the client... every single one was different... [for one service user] ... it was about once every two weeks I'd ring him – because he was in another city – for a catch up. I've got other ones I see once a week.

Volunteer, Sova

Sova volunteers came from a range of backgrounds, and included university students, retirees, ex-magistrates and police officers. Some volunteers brought specialist skills to the role, for example, knowledge of benefits, finance or the criminal justice process. Some Sova volunteers had personal experience of offending or imprisonment. One Service staff highlighted similar advantages to using volunteers with a range of skills and backgrounds, as they had in the previous phase of this evaluation.⁴⁰ For example, volunteers had more flexibility than paid staff, were subject to fewer time pressures than case workers (which enabled them to spend more time helping service users), and brought a range of relevant skills and experience that could be put to use to support service users. Volunteers were described as a useful resource to support case workers. Interviewees reflected on how volunteers' characteristics might have an impact on their relationships with service users, thus highlighting the importance of developing a relationship and careful matching between service users and volunteers. For example, some service users may have responded better to older volunteers, preferring to work with someone older and with more life experience; others enjoyed interacting with younger volunteers.

⁴⁰ See Section 4.8 of the Phase 2 report (Disley and Rubin, 2014).

St Giles Trust volunteers

In the One Service model there was a role for up to six volunteers with experience of the criminal justice system,⁴¹ provided by St Giles Trust. At the time of the Phase 3 interviews there were no St Giles Trust volunteers involved in the One Service, and throughout the pilot only one or two such volunteers were in post at any time. Phase 2 of this research reported on the perceived advantages of involving staff and volunteers with experience of offending, as well as difficulties in relation to the retention and recruitment of these volunteers. During an interview for this phase of the evaluation, the One Service Director reflected that it had proved challenging to recruit and manage individuals who had recently been released from prison who were ready to take on this quite demanding role. However, the Director stressed that recruitment and retention issues arose irrespective of the type of volunteer, and the need to ensure volunteers were suited to and prepared for the role applied to volunteers with or without experience of the criminal justice system.

4.4 Changes to the way the One Service operated

Interviewees from a range of organisations and agencies reported some changes to the One Service between September 2013 and June 2014, but that these were smaller in number and scale than the extensive changes to the service during Cohort 1.⁴² Stakeholders said there had been a period of initial learning in the first year of the pilot, and that it had taken time to build partnerships, agree the roles that providers should play, and establish working practices. In Phase 3, the One Service was described by staff and partners as embedded and stable.

In terms of the learning from this, interviewees thought that any programme needed time to iterate in order to find a good working model.

I think the reality is any of these entrenched problems, you need a multi-year period to make a significant impact [...] you can't get it all right in the first year [...] in the first few months we were bedding down working relationships [...]

Senior Manager, Social Finance

⁴¹ Often individuals who were on probation, serving prisoners on day release, or who had past personal experience of the criminal justice system.

⁴² For instance, during the first year of the pilot the One Service commissioned Mind and Ormiston Children and Families Trust to increase the range of services available to cohort members. The One Service also altered the role played by caseworkers and volunteers. For a more detailed description of changes in Cohort 1, see Section 5.3 of the Phase 2 report (Disley and Rubin, 2014).

The following were among changes to the One Service made between September 2013 and June 2014.

The creation of a landlord liaison caseworker employed by Sovo

The aim of this post was to act as a point of contact with landlords, to encourage them to take and keep service users as tenants. The landlord liaison caseworker took on three main roles within the One Service: to identify access routes into accommodation; to act as the point of contact for housing information within the One Service; and to provide an accredited pre-tenancy course. It was reported that the landlord liaison caseworker successfully preserved the available housing stock in Peterborough by addressing landlords' needs and by helping service users with their benefits so that landlords continued to accept One Service cohort members in their properties (although housing options available to One Service cohort members were said to have remained limited). As described by the landlord liaison worker, the benefit of this new post was the collation of information about landlords into one access point, and streamlining access to landlords.

Changes to the way Mind provided services

As described in the Phase 2 report, the One Service previously spot-purchased blocks of six appointments with a Mind recovery worker for service users. In Phase 3, stakeholders reported that the One Service paid for a recovery worker to work in the One Service office one day per week. This arrangement enabled the recovery worker to deliver up to eight one-to-one appointments with service users (in the community and in the prison), or work with service users in groups. This change was reported to have improved the flexibility of this service – service users with poor time-keeping may have been more likely to use the service if they could drop in at any time of day than if they were given a timed appointment. It was reported by an interviewee from Mind, familiar with the service, that engagement with this service had increased.

The development of a new residential training opportunity for One Service cohort members

A new addition to the intervention model in the later stages of the pilot was the development of a residential construction and highways training centre for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It was developed by the One Service, Job Deal, and a former trainer from John Laing Training, one of the commissioned providers. This later became a Community Interest Company called TTG Training CIC. It provided cohort members with construction training and on-site accommodation. TTG Training adopted the through-the-gate model by interviewing cohort members in prison. The One Service Director noted that while

TTG Training predominantly served the One Service (at the time of interview in early 2015), referrals from other agencies were likely to increase (TTG Training were reported to have already received referrals from the local Community Rehabilitation Company and other local stakeholders). Interviewees were very positive about the training. One commented that all the individuals who had undertaken the training had gained employment (although it is possible that this could have happened without the training). Another commented on the skills of the trainers as well as the direct link between the training and employment opportunities:

[the trainer] ... working there had credibility with the offenders ... he was there to teach them how to do stuff and at the end of it ... there was the chance for all of them to work. None of them [service users] that went there reported negatively on it.

IOM Team, Cambridgeshire Police

The One Service became a Jobcentre Plus ‘approved activity’

Working with the One Service became an ‘approved activity’ – it qualified as a purposeful activity so that cohort members were eligible to receive benefits if they engaged with the service.

The One Service Director reported that other changes may have been explored if the One Service had continued. These included purchasing bed and breakfast accommodation (in collaboration with the local council), and exploring the feasibility of establishing video links from the One Service office to courtrooms and HMP Peterborough in order to better utilise staff time.

4.5 Operating within the prison and through-the-gate

One of the aims of this research was to explore the extent to which the One Service operated as a through-the-gate service. As shown in Table 4.1, central elements of the One Service included meeting cohort members in the prison and at the gate on the day of release, as well as continuing to work with cohort members if they returned to prison. Interviewees in Phase 3 of this research reiterated the perceived benefits of through-the-gate support, in terms of providing continuity in the service delivered and increasing the take-up of support:

[...] initially when we started the One Service we were actually struggling to get buy-in from the prisoners, and were focusing entirely in the community [...] we weren't getting access to prisoners, because they either didn't know about us or weren't interested [...] now] we [...] have one member of staff working in the prison and one member of staff working out and are able to coordinate really well [...]

Regional Director, Ormiston

Access to the prison for staff and volunteers

Interviewees felt that One Service staff had good access to prisoners, and described systems that aimed to minimise the burden on the prison of providing access – for example, St Giles Trust caseworkers went to prison on fixed days. However, it was reported that arranging for volunteers to access the prison was time-consuming due to the need to carry out vetting and security clearance processes. The prison attempted to mitigate the situation by providing training sessions and workshops for volunteers to give guidance on completing security clearance applications. Delays in gaining clearance could have an impact upon the delivery of the One Service if it meant that the volunteer was not able to meet a service user to whom they had been assigned, thus disrupting continuity in the relationship through-the-gate.

Support from HMP Peterborough

As in Phase 2 of the evaluation, there was consensus among interviewees from a range of stakeholder groups that HMP Peterborough had played a central role in facilitating the One Service to deliver a through-the-gate service. One new way in which this was evidenced in Phase 3 was inviting One Service staff to attend cohort members' discharge boards. These meetings were organised by the prison resettlement team and held three weeks before prisoners were released. Their purpose was to ensure necessary arrangements for a prisoner's release were in place (such as housing and benefits). Attending these meetings provided the One Service with the opportunity to identify service users' unmet needs as well as to check information such as release address.

4.6 Local partnership working

An important part of the One Service was helping cohort members to access services such as housing, benefits, healthcare and drug treatment. As described in the Phase 2 report, the One Service involved 'more than signposting' cohort members to these other agencies. One Service staff did not just make referrals or advise cohort members where they could get help; they supported cohort members to overcome practical barriers to using existing services, sometimes physically transporting and accompanying cohort members to appointments. To this extent, the One Service coordinated service users' engagement with a range of services. This coordinating role of the One Service was seen as central to the successful operation of the intervention by both Phase 2 and 3 interviewees.

The range of agencies with which the One Service worked remained largely the same in the later stages of the pilot as in the earlier stages, and most stakeholders in Phase 3 reported positive experiences of communication between the One Service and local agencies to coordinate services and avoid duplicating work. The following factors were perceived (in both Phase 2 and Phase 3 interviews) to have contributed to effective partnership working in the Peterborough pilot:

- **Time spent by the One Service Director building relationships with local agencies:** Interviewees from agencies that were not part of the One Service mentioned that the One Service Director invested in building, maintaining and coordinating partner relationships, for example through regular communication and meetings.
- **Co-location:** Commissioned service providers were co-located in the One Service office, which operated as a 'hub' where cohort members could meet with One Service staff. It allowed support to be provided flexibly if a cohort member dropped in without an appointment. Some local agencies were also based in the same building (some of these had moved their office into the same building as the One Service during the pilot). This co-location helped One Service cohort members to access services offered by partner agencies.
- **The length of the Peterborough pilot:** The length of time for which the Peterborough pilot was commissioned meant that partner agencies felt it was worth investing time in relationship-building, as this interviewee commented:

Seeing [relationships between agencies] evolve [...] over the last kind of four years, it's obviously a lot more settled now [...] it takes a good, well a good year really to kind of settle into [...] joint working that's really effective [...] it's been quite nice to be part of a project that has been around for that long so you can see the progression and what's worked

Area Manager, Sova

A small number of stakeholders (from agencies commissioned by the One Service and external partner agencies) voiced concerns about partnership working. They *inter alia* suggested that different organisations shouldered unequal burdens in delivering the service, and noted that agencies had different ethos or perspectives that were not always completely aligned. However, without detracting from the validity of these interviewees' comments, given the extensive level of partnership working within the One Service model, it is, perhaps, unsurprising that some partners experienced friction in these working relationships. Conflict is a consistent theme in existing research on inter-agency working in criminal justice⁴³ and is not necessarily negative or a sign of dysfunction, as it can also indicate active engagement from stakeholders. Moreover, given the level of partnership working involved in the One Service approach, the relatively low prevalence of conflict as a theme in stakeholder interviews is notable and suggests that it was kept to a minimum.

4.7 The contractual model

The SIB was governed by six types of contractual relationship,⁴⁴ which are described in detail in the Phase 1 and 2 reports. As no substantive changes or additional findings emerged from Phase 3 interviews in relation to the contracts, these relationships are not further elaborated on here. The need for contractual amendments to the contract between Social Finance and the Ministry of Justice had been identified and addressed in earlier, implementation stages, of the pilot.

In relation to contracts between Social Finance and service providers, all commissioned providers continued to be paid upfront, and did not bear any outcome risk – the Phase 2 report outlined that Social Finance and investors saw this as an important feature of the design of the pilot, and this was reiterated in Phase 3.

⁴³ See, for example, Crawford and Jones (1995); Sampson *et al*, (1988).

⁴⁴ (i) Social Impact Partnership (the limited partnership set up by Social Finance which is the contracting entity in the SIB) and the Ministry of Justice; (ii) Social Impact Partnership and the Big Lottery Fund; (iii) Social Impact Partnership and the commissioned service providers; (iv) Social Impact Partnership and the investors; (v) The Ministry of Justice and Peterborough Prison Management Limited (The consortium which holds the private finance initiative contract for HMP Peterborough); (vi) The Ministry of Justice and the Independent Assessor.

5. Findings from interviews with One Service cohort members and case file review

This chapter examines the experience of individuals who engaged with the One Service and, along with Chapter 4, contributes to addressing the first research question relating to how the pilot might have led to better outcomes of reduced reoffending.⁴⁵ Additionally this chapter addresses the following sub-questions:

- How did the One Service operate as a third-party provider within the prison and through-the-gate?
- What were the opportunities and challenges of local partnership working?

The chapter draws on 15 interviews with One Service cohort members and a subsequent review of each of their case files. While this small sample only included cohort members who had engaged with the service, and therefore cannot represent the views of non-engagers, these data do provide a picture of the service user journey through the One Service and the impacts of participating in the One Service as seen by interviewees. While each service user's experience of the One Service was different, typically involving different levels of engagement and support, all journeys involved four common steps: an introduction to the One Service; experience with the service prior to release and on the day of release; support received in the community; and discontinuation of use of the One Service. The chapter concludes with discussion of service users' perceptions of the impacts of the One Service.

Key findings

- **Virtually all interviewed service users** (all of whom had voluntarily engaged with the One Service) **were very positive about their experience**, and emphasised that the One Service was an improvement on prior experience of post-release support.
- Interviews and case files indicated **the One Service primarily provided practical support to cohort members to address a range of needs**. Housing, employment and benefits support were the most common service user needs recorded in case files and mentioned in interviews.

⁴⁵ As noted in Section 2.3, final outcome results from the pilot are expected in summer 2016.

- Case file analysis showed that **engagement with the One Service was generally brief but intensive**, with a high level of contact in the days and weeks immediately post-release. Contacts between service users and One Service staff and volunteers focused primarily on specific, practical problems, although the number of contacts with One Service staff varied quite considerably between service users. Once specific needs were addressed during an initial intense period of work with service users, contact tended to taper off quickly.
- While service users did not always feel that the One Service stopped their own reoffending, **most recognised the One Service's value to stop others' reoffending** and saw particular value in the material and financial support offered by the intervention.

5.1 Introduction to and the decision to participate in the One Service

All cohort members interviewed first heard about the One Service while in prison, but not all were able to recall exactly how they had been introduced to the service. It was standard practice to inform prisoners about the One Service during induction, but more than half of the interviewees did not register the information at this point, indicating that they had first been told about the service by a friend, through a leaflet, or could not recall how they had heard about it. Some interviewees said that they had not fully understood the purpose of the One Service until later during their time in prison, learning more through fellow prisoners, staff, Connections workers or leaflets. This highlights the importance of communication with and outreach to cohort members at several points during their sentence to ensure they were fully aware of the service, thereby increasing opportunities for uptake and greater engagement.

Reasons that service users indicated for their decision to participate in the One Service were primarily related to the help they expected to receive upon release – for example, with housing, benefits, or accessing specialist help.

5.2 Experience of the One Service before and on the day of release

Depending at least in part on the length of their sentence, interviewees may have had extensive experience with the One Service and related services before their release, or they may only have had a cursory meeting with their caseworker and/or a Connections worker during the needs assessment process. Some interviewees, particularly those with very short sentences, reported having little understanding of the One Service prior to release:

Q: Is it something that they work with you all the way through your sentence or do they just start working with you just before the end?

A: Oh no, when you get out they come and see you. They meet you at the gate and then it starts from there basically.

One Service cohort member

Others worked more with their caseworker to arrange appointments and communicate with services in advance of their release – for example, relating to benefits or specialist help:

In prison itself, I spoke to the key worker a couple of times and explained that I needed – I used to go to [service] for alcohol, it's basically like rehabilitation. He got in contact with them for me and told them my release date ... He got in contact with [a mental health service as well] ... Yes, they helped me out a lot in prison.

One Service cohort member

Interviewees tended to focus their description of the support from the One Service in prison on the appointments arranged in preparation for release. Supporting this, most contacts recorded in case files while service users were in prison involved release preparation rather than services received in prison. However, a few of the interviewees did access services related to the One Service within the prison, such as counselling, CV development or a family support programme prior to release. However for most interviewees, their contact with the One Service prior to release was limited to a needs assessment with a St Giles Trust caseworker, and in some cases also initial meetings with their assigned Sova volunteer. The first meeting with a cohort member, as recorded in the case files, tended to be a month or less before their release date.

All interviewees were identified in their case files as having been met at the gate on the day of release by their caseworker. Some interviewees were given support to address a number of needs on the day of release, such as finding a place to stay, transport from the prison and

to various appointments that had been arranged, while others only met their caseworker and exchanged contact details at the gate. Alongside transport and accommodation support on the day of release, interviewees emphasised the importance of being given a phone, which was seen as valuable for all of the tasks they were facing in the days after release:

They met me at the gate, wanted to give me a lift to the station and offered me a phone and stuff, obviously because I didn't have a phone, so I could use that to ring people. Yes. No, that's quite helpful. It's more help than the usual, isn't it?

One Service cohort member

5.3 Experience of One Service support in the community

Length and nature of engagement

For all interviewees, most of the support they received was in the community. Generally, the case files reviewed tended to show higher volumes of contacts in the first month or two after release, and unless new acute needs arose, interviewees' contact with the One Service tended to decrease in frequency thereafter.⁴⁶ This pattern of engagement was reflected across all One Service cohort members, as shown by engagement rates reported in Chapter 4, where only one in five cohort members were still in contact with the service after three months. Among the 15 interviewees, engagement was reported as generally goal-oriented, and case files suggested that it was brief (in line with the wider pattern of use discussed above). Case files analysis suggested that the One Service tended to work with offenders on specific issues, such as housing, accessing benefits, and arranging appointments with relevant services, rather than on provision of broader support, such as ongoing contact or mentoring outside of specific needs (e.g. 'someone to talk to'), though there were some exceptions.⁴⁷

Due to limitations in the case file data it is not possible to indicate the level of service user engagement with volunteers in the One Service distinct from their involvement with paid caseworkers. While interviews sought to gather evidence on this point, it was not clear that service users always differentiated between volunteers and staff. A minority of interviewees explicitly acknowledged a benefit from working with the Connections workers in prison, and felt that the peer support was helpful, but it is not possible to present more definitive claims about service users' experience of volunteers in the pilot.

⁴⁶ Volumes and frequency of service user contact were measured by the research team during the review of the case files, by noting the number of contacts recorded in the case file by date.

⁴⁷ It should be kept in mind that the limited sample leaves open the possibility that others did use the service as more of a general support mechanism.

Common practical problems for which the One Service provided support

Within the sample, the need most interviewees expected to face upon release, and which occupied a substantial amount of their contact time with the One Service, was related to accommodation, with 9 of 15 interviewees identifying this, and 13 of 15 case files identifying housing, housing benefit or accommodation needs (identified either during the assessment in prison or identified post-release). This aligns reasonably well with the management information reported in Chapter 4, which in both cohorts 1 and 2 show a consistently high proportion of assessments identifying housing-related needs. The importance of housing in desistance is also reflected in wider empirical literature (Maguire and Nolan, 2007).⁴⁸

The One Service regularly helped cohort members find and pay for a place to live – for example, by paying for short-term accommodation (particularly in a local B&B that was used frequently by the One Service for cohort members), providing deposit funds or a first week's rent,⁴⁹ and communicating with landlords, particularly through the recently-established Sova-supported landlord liaison caseworker.

In some cases, housing needs were a recurring theme for service users who changed accommodation multiple times after release. Accordingly, in the case files reviewed for this research, the majority of contacts recorded in the community were with St Giles Trust caseworkers, who had specific experience in providing housing support. The particular importance of housing to the service users was a common theme:

Personally, I think it's the housing because with me... As soon as I'm out, I'm going to go back to what – does that make sense? I'm going back to what I know. If I've got my own roof, then I'm alright, basically. That's how I see it. I don't need anyone else. Obviously you need money to get your own deposit, so they're helping to do that for you.

One Service cohort member

⁴⁸ See, for example, Maguire and Nolan (2007); the Resettlement Pathfinders evaluation (Lewis *et al*, 2003) also identified accommodation as the most common priority problem for prisoners at their initial assessment.

⁴⁹ In the early stages of the pilot, the One Service provided these funds as loans to service users, but this became complicated to track. Subsequently, and for most of the life of the pilot, these funds were given without expectation of repayment.

Most interviewees also required support with accessing benefits. The case files of 13 interviewees showed some form of support with this, ranging from filling out forms, arranging appointments, and in some cases advocating to relevant services on behalf of the service user. Finding employment or accessing training was also important to service users, with 13 interviewees or case files identifying needs in one or both of these areas. Support for employment or training included helping service users develop their CVs, finding funding for courses or places in job-training services, and helping service users prepare for interviews: this included helping them to find appropriate clothes through the One Service Sova clothes bank or driving them to interviews.

Other needs in relation to which service users received support included family support (which could include parenting skills as well as family counselling and conflict resolution support), health, and mental health.⁵⁰ Five interviewees used the One Service to help them engage in other activities to support their rehabilitation and provide purposeful activity, such as fishing or sports.

Drug or alcohol abuse-related needs were identified in six of the cases, with two of the interviewees having both drug and alcohol needs identified in their interview or case file. Where these were identified, they tended to exacerbate issues relating to employment and accommodation – for example, where accommodation providers required abstinence from alcohol or drugs as a condition of residence.

Non-practical forms of support

As noted above, interviewees tended to focus their descriptions of the One Service on the specific forms of material support offered by the service, rather than (for example) the value of having someone to talk to, which was less of a motivation for contacting the One Service among the interviewees. However, a few of the interviewees did note the importance of meetings with caseworkers and volunteers as a way of accessing emotional support:

The thing with me, I lose my head sometimes and I've got mental health problems. They said they'd sit there and just listen to me if I've got problems and all that. I lost a few family members and all that just recently. Like I say, I knew they'd be there for me to talk to them. So that's the kind of stuff they do so supporting me in that kind of way.

One Service cohort member

⁵⁰ These needs were commonly identified explicitly by interviewees and were identified through the case file analysis.

Yes, of course the meetings are useful because obviously you're talking about your life and that and what you're going to do with it when you get out and whatnot. It gives you something, you're going out for something. Do you see what I'm saying?

One Service cohort member

Other challenges identified by interviewees included issues with immigration paperwork, accessing legal aid services, and living outside of the One Service main release locations upon release. Despite efforts being made by One Service staff and volunteers, these issues were not within the gift of the One Service to resolve on the service users' behalf.

5.4 Ending engagement with the One Service

Most of the Cohort 2 service users interviewed appeared relatively at ease with the prospect of discontinuing their involvement with the One Service, whether voluntarily or because they were coming to the end of the 12-month provision of support from the One Service. Most interviewees felt that their needs had been addressed and that they either no longer needed support or, alternatively, were appropriately connected with other forms of support so that the One Service was no longer required.

In terms of voluntary discontinuation, once cohort members felt that specific needs were addressed, contact tended to taper off quickly:

Q: Do you think that you'll keep working with [One Service] for a longer period?

A: I don't think so. The last time I spoke to the lady – she's a very nice woman – (...) she asked, well, "Is there anything else I can do to help?" And I said, "No, because I have looked at (...) the elements that caused me to offend... And I've gradually changed them all, so the chances of reoffending have disappeared.

One Service cohort member

Contact might also taper off if the One Service was unable to provide support. For example, two cohort members faced immigration issues that they could not resolve through One Service support, and in both cases contact decreased substantially thereafter.

5.5 Offender views on impacts of the One Service

When asked about the impacts of having engaged with the One Service, most interviewees believed that it provided valuable support for them, and could be valuable for others as well. Interviewees who had previously been to prison unanimously believed that it was an improvement on their prior experience of post-release support. In most cases interviewees reported having no support after previous sentences:

I've been in jail five times and it's only this last time that I've been in jail that I've actually had any support or help offered. Before that, nothing... Whereas this time round, having the One Service there, even though I haven't needed them much, knowing that they're there and if I need them they're there, it's been brilliant.

One Service cohort member

Almost all interviewed cohort members were very positive about their experience with the One Service. Where service users did make negative statements, these tended to relate to matters that were outside of One Service control – for example, one service user went to live outside of the Peterborough area, and another had a problem relating to immigration that the One Service was unable to solve.

When asked if support from the One Service could help or had helped to reduce their reoffending, interviewees' answers were often equivocal or even contradictory. The following quotation is indicative of the view of a number of interviewees – it both suggests that the interviewee believes reoffending is a personal choice, thus suggesting it could not be influenced by an intervention, but also that in their opinion, a situation of need may have resulted in reoffending were it not for the One Service:

Q: So has the One Service helped you in avoiding reoffending?

A: Well, I wouldn't have reoffended anyway; it was just a stupid mistake. Well, like I say, if I didn't have my flat when I came out, I would have done whatever means possible really to make money... Like I say, they kept a roof over my head and, at the end of the day, if you've got a roof over your head the rest comes in time, doesn't it?

One Service cohort member

Responses from a number of interviewees indicated that this kind of short-term support had kept them from 'returning to old ways', in particular, the ability to quickly access accommodation-related funding (e.g. first week's rent, short-term accommodation, deposit funds), goods (such as small home appliances or a stereo) and services (such as a mobile phone and credit, electricity top-up cards, train tickets and bus passes). This might have had impacts on offender quality of life and potentially on reoffending behaviour:

When I first got out of prison, for a good few months, the One Service were supplying [me] with food vouchers because my benefits were being messed up. Now if they weren't there doing that for me, then I would have gone out and committed a crime to get the money, just to feed myself. So the fact that One Service was there and helped me out with £25 a week in vouchers was brilliant. That prevented me from going out and committing a crime.

One Service cohort member

When asked about the potential influence of the One Service on reoffending by *others*, service users interviewed saw particular value in the available material or financial support:

Q: What is it, particularly, about the One Service that can help stop offending?

A: Well, I don't know, if you didn't have money or you're thinking about robbing something to get some food, you don't have to do that. Or if you have to get somewhere, you don't have to jump on the train and stuff.

One Service cohort member

These quotations illustrate how the One Service provided material support in situations that might otherwise have created acute pressures on cohort members, and which in turn could have led them to reoffend.

6. Wider benefits from and innovation in the Peterborough pilot

This chapter presents findings on the perceived wider costs and benefits of the pilot, and describes elements of the Peterborough pilot that interviewees thought were innovative. It addresses the following research questions:

- What wider costs and benefits, if any, do stakeholders feel were incurred through the implementation of the SIB?
- To what extent did stakeholders feel that the SIB led to greater innovation and/or efficiency?

Key findings

- The Peterborough pilot led to **wider benefits** such as improved relationships between local agencies, commissioned providers and HMP Peterborough. At the time of this research, these agencies/ providers were delivering more services in prison than before the One Service began. Some elements of the One Service, perceived as good practice, had been adopted in the work of the prison and other agencies.
- The Peterborough pilot was innovative in that it involved the first implementation of an intervention funded through a SIB, and that it delivered services to a new target group – short sentenced prisoners – who, at the time the pilot was launched, had no systematic or statutory support on release.
- **The flexibility of SIB funding was considered by interviewees as innovative.** In contrast to other funding sources where decisions about spending could be slower and more constrained, SIB resources were said to be made available quickly, in response to pressing service user needs.
- **Another feature considered innovative was the willingness to adapt the service to achieve better outcomes** in light of learning from practice, rather than adhering to an initial specification of provider roles and activities. Interviewees felt that SIB funding – involving payment by results – had led to a focus on outcomes.
- The fourth way in which **the pilot was considered innovative related to some features that were said not to be common practice in other interventions.** These included the appointment of a full-time One Service Director to provide local leadership in building partnerships, managing commissioned providers and identifying opportunities to improve the service, as well as the creation of an online, multi-agency database, and use of these data to reflect on practice, manage providers and report to investors.

6.1 Wider perceived benefits of the pilot

Analysis of the Phase 3 interviews suggested two main ways in which the pilot created wider benefits.

The first was by facilitating improved relationships between some local agencies and HMP Peterborough: interviewees from partner agencies indicated that their agency's relationship with HMP Peterborough was strengthened following the pilot. This was evidenced, for example, by these agencies providing more services in prison than was previously the case:

[The pilot has] enabled us to collate all the work together, so we were doing a couple of days' one-to-one delivery in the prison [...]. Now that's actually developed to the point where we're doing two days a week in the prison [...]. We've also been able to access more opportunities in the prison because of that relationship building, because it's a bit more cohesive. We've just started running Get Set motivational courses, for example, in the prison.

Chief Executive, Peterborough and Fenland Mind

Because of what's happened with the One Service, we're now talking to the Governor of the prison, looking at his education and training, and looking to make sure it links up with the sectors that are important within his area.

Partnership Manager, Jobcentre Plus

Secondly, some elements of the One Service, perceived as good practice, were adopted into the work of other agencies. For example, the YMCA's 'No Cracks' service aimed to replicate the One Service for people coming out of young offender institutions. Other examples related to HMP Peterborough implementing elements of the One Service for other groups of prisoners. For example, the prison:

- Commissioned Mind and Ormiston to provide services for women and non-One Service prisoners in the prison.
- Developed an 'Outside Links' centre – to provide support for all prisoners on the day of release.
- Set up a helpline for those released into the community, and rented a city-centre property as a support centre.
- Adopted the One Service caseworker model, and used individual case workers to support prisoners.
- Implemented new procedures that prison managers thought improved the discharge process. Prisoners had previously been discharged through the vehicle gate, but were subsequently discharged from the prison's reception and walked

through the visitors' exit into the Outside Links and Visitor Centre. Family members, as well as One Service and other agencies' staff, were able to wait for prisoners in this facility, and this was reported to have created a positive environment for cohort members that could enable post-release engagement.

6.2 Innovative elements of the pilot

This section explores elements of the Peterborough pilot considered innovative by stakeholders. Innovation refers to something that is 'new and different', although how new and how different are context-dependent.⁵¹

The services offered by the pilot – an intensive through-the-gate intervention aimed at short-sentenced prisoners – have long precedents in England and Wales,⁵² and so in a broad sense, it cannot be said that the pilot invented this kind of intervention. However, the One Service initiative was new to the specific population at HMP Peterborough, and the ways in which local providers were arranged and connected with service users was unique both to the area and, in some respects, nationally and internationally. In addition, the financing mechanism – the use of a SIB – was the first of its kind in any context.

The following interpretation covers elements that were innovative in a local sense, and those that were fundamentally new to the way in which reoffending interventions had historically been delivered.

The world's first SIB

The Peterborough pilot was itself an innovation in that it involved the implementation of the world's first SIB, a new way of funding services using investment from private individuals or organisations, foundations and charities. Since its launch in 2010, the number of SIBs implemented in the UK and internationally has grown to around 44 (Gustafsson *et al*, 2015).

⁵¹ Gustafsson-Wright *et al*, (2015: 43) suggest that 'an intervention can be considered innovative if it has never been implemented: at all; within a given population; in a particular service delivery setting; by a particular service provider; in a given geographical area; in combination with other interventions; [or] some or all of the above'.

⁵² The most relevant set of examples are the Resettlement Pathfinder initiatives in the late 1990s and early 2000s. These involved a number of interventions that had extensive similarities with the One Service model (Lewis *et al*, 2003) in both the balance of services available and the pre- and post-release support offered to service users.

Just as the pilot has provided valuable learning about the implementation and operation of a SIB, the conclusion of the pilot provides lessons about how SIBs end. Although the SIB pilot in Peterborough was originally intended to operate until 2017, it only operated on a payment by results basis for the first two cohorts of released prisoners, while the third cohort of prisoners received support under a fee-for-service arrangement. An interviewee from Social Finance suggested that the fact that a SIB-funded programme might be terminated was a factor that investors may take into account when assessing future SIBs. The two investors interviewed for this report were also invited to reflect on the earlier than planned conclusion of the payment by results element of the pilot. Both acknowledged that their experience had highlighted the risks of policy change when contracting with government and that this would be something to think about when making future investments, although both said they would still consider investing in future SIBs. One investor expressly acknowledged that government needed to maintain the ability to alter policy direction, and noted that the roll-out of services as part of the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms was a very welcome development.

A new target group

The Peterborough pilot could also be considered innovative to the extent that its target group – prisoners serving sentences of less than 12 months – was not (at the time the pilot was launched) subject to statutory supervision by the Probation Service and thus had no systematic support on release from prison. This group of prisoners now has access to post-release supervision as a result of the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms.

Both investors interviewed for Phase 3 of this research reported that their objectives in investing in the Peterborough SIB had largely been met because the pilot had delivered services to offenders following short prison sentences, thus filling a service gap.

Innovations stemming from SIB funding

Some of the following features, identified by interviewees as innovative, may have been a result of the SIB funding of the One Service.

Flexibility of funding

Phase 3 interviewees described how resources could be made quickly available in the pilot to support work with cohort members, without having to undertake formal procurement processes. Findings from the case file review (see Chapter 5) supported this, providing examples of how the One Service had quickly provided funding for accommodation and a range of small consumables and purchases, such as train tickets, furniture and electrical appliances.

While there is no reason in principle that interventions funded through traditional commissioning and contracting (for example, through block contracts)⁵³ should not have similar flexibility, as the following quotation illustrates, in interviewees' experience this was not typical of other funding arrangements:

[B]eing on a project that's so innovative and where you can come up with ideas that you go back to the funder and then things can happen, you know, when you normally have a contract and you've got a set amount of money you can't really be that creative unless you've put it in the budget in the beginning. So that's been really good and we've developed lots of kind of models of working and new ideas that we'd like to replicate... that's been really beneficial to us.

Area Manager, Sova

Adapting the service model

There was consensus among interviewees as to the willingness of Social Finance and the One Service Director to adapt the service model to ensure the needs of cohort members could be addressed by the range of services available. As described in Section 4.4, some changes were made to the One Service between September 2013 and June 2014, and a number of changes had been implemented in the initial years of the pilot (described in the Phase 1 report). This continuous process of reviewing and iterating the intervention model so that the service evolved was reported as innovative and beneficial by a range of interviewees in Phase 2 and Phase 3:

I think just the way the project has evolved [...] I mean it has changed every year [...] we used statistics and data to help work out what works and what's needed and we've been able to respond to that and be creative and so that's been really great.

Area Manager, Sova

I think the compelling message for me is... how positive the experience of delivering to outcomes is in terms of service evolution, i.e. your ability to adapt the service to reflect your deeper and better understanding of need, and your understanding of what is successful and what yields better outcomes, and being able to move money to [focus] more on... those types of interventions... the evolution of the service is a really exciting angle.

Senior Manager, Social Finance

Both investors interviewed for this report commented that they had been kept informed about adaptations in the One Service model, and an interviewee from Social Finance similarly

⁵³ Where commissioners pay a fixed amount to a provider to deliver a service, regardless of the number of service users or the complexity of their needs.

commented that investors had been able to have a greater level of engagement in the evolution of the One Service than they would have had in other grants.⁵⁴ Being kept up-to-date about changes made to the One Service in the first year of the pilot was also important to managing expectations about outcomes. Both investors were asked for their views on the Cohort 1 results, which had showed a reduction in the frequency of reconviction events among the Peterborough cohort, but not of a sufficient size to trigger an outcome payment. They both reported that their expectations regarding the likelihood of a payment for Cohort 1 had been realistic. They anticipated that the reduction target might not be achieved for Cohort 1 because the first year of the pilot was spent iterating and adjusting the intervention.

As with the flexibility of funding, it is not possible to ascribe the willingness to adapt the delivery model entirely to the fact that the Peterborough pilot was funded by a SIB. There is no reason why interventions funded through block contracts could not be adapted to better meet need.⁵⁵ However, this aspect of the pilot was considered by interviewees to be an unusual feature of the SIB, and not common in interventions funded through other means.

Possible innovations in the intervention model

The One Service intervention model – delivering individualised services, through-the-gate and responsive to needs – was not in itself a new idea (on the contrary, the approach aligns with theory and evidence from desistance studies),⁵⁶ but during interviews in Phase 2 and 3, interviewees highlighted some features of the delivery model which represented new practical approaches to supporting offenders through-the-gate and for connecting relevant services with one another.

A local manager focused on establishing and maintaining partnerships

During Phase 2 interviews, Social Finance described the appointment of a full-time Director for the One Service as important for facilitating the implementation and operation of the pilot. Phase 3 interviewees from a range of stakeholder groups – including partner agencies and investors – agreed that this role was important in developing and managing partnership working, raising the profile and visibility of the One Service locally, and communicating and coordinating with local agencies such as housing, Jobcentre Plus, Probation, Police and others.

⁵⁴ Investors noted that they had no influence on the way in which the One Service was delivered, but received good information about (for example) implementation, challenges and changes to the model.

⁵⁵ For example, initiatives such as the Social Prescribing Service pilot in Rotherham, which was not SIB-funded, had a similarly flexible funding base that allowed regular adaptation and improvement (Dayson *et al*, 2013).

⁵⁶ See, for example, Bottoms (2013) and McNeill *et al*, (2012).

Both investors interviewed were of the opinion that Social Finance had managed and implemented the pilot well, and one commented that Social Finance provided a more stringent oversight of and reporting on the operation of the One Service compared to other grants provided by the investor.

A shared approach to collection and use of case management data

The Phase 2 report from this evaluation outlined how information collected for the One Service case management database was used to identify needs which were not being met by existing services, to monitor progress and providers, and to report to investors. This was again mentioned by Phase 3 interviewees. In particular, it was seen as beneficial that all commissioned providers, some partner agencies and prison administrative staff were able to access and input information to the shared database. The database could be accessed in the community and in prison, the latter both by One Service staff and prison administrative staff who could, for example, add prisoners eligible for the One Service into the database, and record information about risk assessment. The benefits were summarised by a staff member at HMP Peterborough:

[...] going straight onto the system that's used by their provider has to save time, really, rather than an exchange of emails or exchange over the telephone, so I think it's a good thing that it's input directly onto a system that different people can use.

Manager, HMP Peterborough

A small number of interviewees suggested that the case management database may also have been a result of SIB funding, though it does not seem to be unique to SIB-funded initiatives. Shared databases are not uncommon in, for example, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) initiatives (Home Office, 2014), which are not SIB-funded. However, especially at the start of the pilot in 2010, this level of information technology integration and inter-agency accessibility was not common in criminal justice initiatives in the UK,⁵⁷ and such a resource was not previously present in Peterborough or Cambridgeshire.

There were some tentative findings from Phase 2 interviews indicating that commissioned service providers in the One Service were gaining experience in using management information to track cohort members' needs and the extent to which these were being met, and making changes to the way they worked in order to better meet need, increase

⁵⁷ For example, a 2009 report for the Department of Work and Pensions (Pleace and Minton, 2009) noted how shared databases were rarely being developed in the UK in the context of probation and related criminal justice and third sector partners, even where there was no legal impediment to sharing.

engagement and deliver an improved service. To further explore this, Phase 3 interviewees from commissioned service providers were asked directly whether they thought that being part of the One Service had provided any learning or capacity building for them. Responses were mixed. Interviewees from some providers did not identify major capacity building or learning as a result of their involvement in the One Service, to the extent that they reported that collecting and using information was part of their usual practice in service delivery for other commissioners and was not just something they did as part of the One Service. Others, however, provided some evidence of learning for commissioned providers in relation to data collection, performance management and monitoring:

[Our organisation] learned an awful lot from being part of this project [...] the performance management and monitoring has been [...] good practice to follow [...] you're getting as much data as you can [...] to review your work and fine-tune things and make changes, so that's been really good

Area Manager, Sova

Investors commented that the level of detail contained in reports from Social Finance to investors was a strength of the pilot. This was possible because case management information was available.

New partnerships and practices

Further examples of adaptations and practices implemented by the One Service represented new approaches to offender support in the context of offender resettlement in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. These have already been mentioned in Chapter 4, and include:

- The introduction of TTG construction training.
- The creation of a landlord liaison caseworker.
- The exploration of purchasing B&B accommodation and establishing video links with courts.
- Co-locating commissioned service providers and the fact that other agencies were based in or moved to the same location.
- Some of the strategies to engage cohort members, such as meeting cohort members at the gate, even when they had indicated it was not needed, and opening the One Service office so cohort members could drop in (rather than giving fixed appointment times).

7. Conclusions and lessons for future payment by results and Social Impact Bond schemes

The Social Impact Bond launched in 2010 at HMP Peterborough was the first SIB ever established in the UK or elsewhere, and the through-the-gate service funded by the SIB – the One Service – was the first of its kind available in the area. The Peterborough pilot has provided valuable knowledge and lessons for both the implementation of future policy initiatives aimed at reducing reoffending, and for the development and implementation of SIBs and other forms of payment by results-based commissioning. This closing chapter sets out five key messages that are grounded in the process evaluation findings, drawing on all phases of this process evaluation.

While this evaluation was not intended to determine whether the pilot improved outcomes in terms of reoffending – and the data gathered have a number of limitations as outlined in Chapter 3 – it is possible to assert that the pilot was successful in meeting the initial intention of the pilot, which was to develop and implement a new service for those serving sentences of less than 12 months at HMP Peterborough, funded by social investors rather than government. It also adapted to local conditions while maintaining and building strong partnerships with key relevant agencies.

The following conclusions and lessons offer insights for future efforts to establish individualised, through-the-gate support mechanisms for offenders, as well as SIBs.

A dedicated service director, focused on coordinating and facilitating partnership working, was central to the realisation of the pilot

The evaluation was asked to examine how the pilot led to greater innovation, efficiency, or wider benefits. Throughout the three phases of this research, the one factor that was consistently reported as underpinning the continuous improvements and local innovations in the pilot was the presence of a Director of the One Service. The Director took a leadership role in developing partnerships and in creating opportunities for better integration between partners, including co-location, joint access to the management database, and increased pre-release contact between relevant services and service users in the pilot.

While a minority of stakeholders referenced instances of friction between partners involved in the pilot, given the extensive partnership working, the level of inter-organisational conflict reported to this evaluation was strikingly low, and this was, in part, attributed to the role played by the One Service Director. The relationship between the One Service and

HMP Peterborough, in particular, was consistently described by stakeholders (including from the Prison) as a strong and constructive partnership, and was perceived to be vital to facilitating through-the-gate support.

It was also clear that other organisations in the Cambridgeshire area, including HMP Peterborough and a number of agencies associated with the One Service, took cues from the One Service's partnership model in developing better links with one another to support offenders not included in the One Service pilot, and in some cases to improve performance management as well.

For future similar initiatives aiming to coordinate multiple relevant services, the evaluation findings therefore suggest that a similar oversight role could be developed, which may benefit both the specific initiative and the development of partnerships more widely.

Information-sharing and arrangements for through-the-gate working required ongoing attention during the life of the pilot

Another learning point from the Peterborough pilot for prisons and providers developing through-the-gate interventions relates to the complexity of establishing the processes and procedures needed to facilitate through-the-gate working. Information sharing (for example, in relation to cohort members' previous convictions, of reoffending, or the risk they might pose to staff and volunteers), arranging physical access to the prison, and coordinating support in preparation for release were just some of the elements which needed to be agreed between HMP Peterborough and the One Service, and put into practice, for the service to operate as it did. Future similar initiatives should be aware that the details of these practical matters will need to be discussed and agreed upon between partners well before services are operational, and regularly monitored to improve practices.

Stakeholders reported a number of innovations in the pilot, although these were not necessarily as a result of SIB funding

The evaluation examined whether the fact that this pilot was funded through a SIB contributed to benefits (or introduced costs), led to innovation, or improved efficiency. Certainly, the primary innovation of this pilot was its use of the first-ever SIB, which was a global innovation that has since grown rapidly in its use. It also provided individualised support for short-sentenced prisoners being released from HMP Peterborough, who had not previously been systematically supported through-the-gate.

In both Phase 2 and Phase 3 of this evaluation, interviewees thought the One Service was different to other (alternatively funded) interventions in its flexibility of funding. As outlined in Chapter 6, stakeholders with experience in other similar services commissioned through other funding approaches tended to agree that this level of flexibility, while not impossible, was highly unlikely in, for example, block contracts.

Stakeholders also felt that the ability to adapt the One Service in an outcomes-oriented fashion was made possible by the SIB, and it was suggested in interviews that the integrated information management approach may also be related to the fact that the pilot was SIB-funded.

While other kinds of service contracts may not have easily facilitated this flexibility of funding and other innovative aspects of the service model, there remains a counterfactual possibility that these kinds of innovations or approaches could result from alternative funding mechanisms (for example, other payment by results strategies or even block contracts). There are examples of using flexible funds to meet short-term needs, adaptation to local conditions and integrated performance management in other (non-SIB-funded) pilot initiatives and social services.

As supported by recent research on SIBs (Gustafsson *et al*, 2015), there is no compelling reason to believe that SIB funding on its own fosters innovation. A more plausible conclusion is that innovations are fostered in projects and initiatives led by committed partners who are able to look at service delivery with 'fresh eyes' and with an outcome-focus, question traditional approaches, and who have freedom to make changes and test new ways of working. Such features might be *more likely* to be present within SIBs – because SIBs are often established to encourage new approaches to service delivery, and require substantial attention to outcomes due to their payment structure – but these kinds of innovations are not necessarily lacking in other funding and delivery models.

Nonetheless, there is a lesson to be drawn from the flexibility offered by the SIB funding in this pilot. Other interventions, regardless of how they are funded, may wish to consider the availability of resources that managers have discretion to spend with minimal processes for approval and sign-off to support service users at crisis points. As well as possibly removing risk factors for offending (such as homelessness), using resources in this way may enhance engagement by service users.

Additionally, for those seeking to develop SIBs, the Peterborough SIB protected service providers from performance-related risk and also protected government in the event that the One Service did not achieve the agreed level of success. As noted earlier, this protection of providers was seen as important by providers themselves, and was an important part of investors' motivation to take part. As the SIB market has developed, some SIBs have begun to include performance-based payments for providers, and this should be monitored for its potential effects on flexibility, adaptation and provider performance, as well impacts on service users.

Service users accessed individualised support that was mainly practical in nature. This kind of support is central to the process of desistance.

Virtually all interviewed cohort members (who had all voluntarily engaged with the One Service) were very positive about their experience, and emphasised that the One Service was an improvement on prior experience of post-release support. They reported past support to have been very limited for short-sentenced offenders, with no systematic or statutory support available prior to the beginning of the One Service.

Interviews and data analysed for this evaluation all indicated that the primary needs addressed within the pilot were practical and related to material needs such as accommodation, finance, and education and training. Practical support of this sort is well-established as a key step in desistance from offending, and offenders reported that the One Service could contribute to reduced reoffending.⁵⁸

The service also offered access to other forms of support – for example, linking service users to addiction and mental health services partnered with and commissioned by the One Service, and informal support for behaviour change, through relationships that developed between caseworkers, volunteers and service users.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Maguire and Nolan (2007) on the importance of housing to support desistance.

Longer-term engagement was challenging to achieve. The relatively short period over which most service users were engaged with the One Service, and the focus in early months on practical issues (ensuring cohort members had stable accommodation, access to benefits, etc.), raises questions about whether the One Service had time to challenge cohort members' 'offender' identities, develop their motivation to change, and encourage them to re-assess priorities. Evidence indicates that these are also important elements of a desistance process and are central to long-term behaviour change.⁵⁹ The One Service Director indicated that addressing these kinds of issues was part of the day-to-day interactions between cohort members and One Service staff and volunteers. However, these interpersonal interactions, to the degree that they were part of routine One Service practice, were not reflected extensively in other evidence sources available to this evaluation, and so it is not possible to know how prevalent these were within the intervention.

Under Transforming Rehabilitation reforms, supervision for those released from prison sentences of less than 12 months is mandatory, which could lead to longer periods of engagement, and might provide further opportunities to address such issues. However, Transforming Rehabilitation or any other non-voluntary scheme should be monitored in terms of the impact of mandatory engagement on the ability to establish positive relationships between caseworkers and offenders, as such relationships may be important in establishing longer-term desistance.

⁵⁹ See, for example, Bottoms (2013); LeBel *et al*, (2008); McNeill *et al*, (2012); Ward and Maruna (2007).

Volunteers provided additional supports for service users, but recruitment of volunteers was often challenging

A final potential learning point relates to the use and recruitment of volunteers. As part of the One Service, volunteers were able to complement the activities of paid caseworkers, working with lower-risk cohort members and providing ongoing contact after an initial intervention period by paid caseworkers.

The Peterborough pilot found that the vetting process through which volunteers were approved to gain access to the prison could be very time-consuming, and in some instances delayed contact between volunteers and cohort members in prison. Experience of the pilot also highlights potential challenges in recruitment and retention of the 'right' volunteers, particularly where volunteers were also ex-offenders (while their past experience could enhance their abilities to support cohort members, they also needed to be adequately advanced in their desistance 'journey' to be stable enough to help others).

Future initiatives should be realistic about the challenges associated with the use and recruitment of volunteers, and the timescales required for security vetting. They might also make efforts to track the relative benefits of using volunteers from a range of backgrounds to supplement work by paid caseworkers, in order to develop a better empirical understanding of their impacts on reoffending and offender well-being.

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Appendices

See separate document