



Leading learning and skills

**Learning and Skills Council
Developing the Offenders' Learning
and Skills Service Regional Roadshow**

Birmingham Botanical Gardens, 26th September 2007

Supported by: Crystal Interactive: www.crystal-interactive.co.uk

Contents

1	Comments and Questions.....	3
1.1.1	Questions.....	3
1.1.2	Comments.....	4
2	Facilitated Round Table Discussion	4
2.1.1	Table 2 - WSSCUS	4
2.1.2	Table 3 - ECOM.....	5
2.1.3	Table 4 - WSNCOM.....	7
2.1.4	Table 5 - WSNCUS.....	8
2.1.5	Table 6 - Reg.....	9
2.1.6	Table 7 - ECUS.....	10
3	End of day feedback	11
4	Warm-up Activity.....	13

1 Comments and Questions

The group was invited to enter comments about the event and questions for the speakers from the morning section of presentations. 2 Tablets were also used as question stations to capture further questions during the coffee break and over lunch. The results were then categorised and used to form the basis of the Q&A session at the end of the day.

1.1.1 Questions

What questions do you have for this morning's presenters?

(If appropriate, please include the presenter's name)

- Will the yjb placement team really ponder over the education provision of an institution when placing a yp in custody at the end of the day
- Will feedback and q/a be emailed to attendees
- Round table discussion

1.1.1.1 Impact Of Proposals On Other Areas

- How will the lsc reconcile their proposals with the demands of the prison regime?
- Is there a contradiction between being targeted and tougher and the promise about being long armed and supportive to providers
- How will the provision of ict be consistent throughout the estate and satisfy the requirements of security?

1.1.1.2 Impact On Specific Groups Of Learners

- How do remands fit in
- How will young people going through long sentences have the continuum of provision when lasu/yoi's and adult prisons can not guarantee long term education provision
- Can the draft prospectus include meeting the needs of prolific offenders as they are currently a priority group for learning, due to being identified by local communities as causing most damage? they need to continue to have all issues relating to reoffending addressed whilst in custody
- With the short term / high turn-over nature of inmates in some establishments some participants may not have the opportunity to reach milestones, is there provision to pay some contribution for these people who will continue to need education

1.1.1.3 The Process/Scope

- Define who are the 'Partners' and what are they responsible for?
- Who contributes to CJAR and how do stakeholders have voices heard
- Is it accepted by the panel that the system for the electronic transfer of data will need to be in place by August 2009 to support the change of funding to outcome based?
- What will be the live date for the electronic ILP
- With new split of departmental responsibilities, how will youth and adults policy and delivery join up
- Who will access the ILP - JCP, community providers?
- Sue O'Hara mentioned oasys but failed to comment on how learning plans for YOUNG PEOPLE will be transferred between different systems used by the many Youth Offending Services. Wiring up Youth Justice is not here yet.
- With advent of output related funding, how will they ensure that targets in ilps are robust?
- Is there a timescale for the system to implement transfer of ILP's?
- What is the time frame for the cjar's?
- Prison courses take longer than the same course in college. A vocational course will need more embedded numeracy and literacy and learners take time out for prison courses, visits etc. Will this be taken into account in the funding

- Funding needs to reflect the cost of courses. Decent vocational courses have high materials costs. Will the new funding method reflect this?
- What are the timescales - will there be scoping for short term and long term funding
- How will we ensure continuity of plans and attention to detail of delivery?
- Can we have early and more information on the c jars
- Can we move away from time left to serve to qualify for learning to addressing needs identified by offender manager or sentence planning? If not a lot of prisoners will not qualify for learning in custody?
- Will community provision reflect the custodial estate, roll on roll off courses, continuation of learning and skills
- Still lack clarity on how continuity of training will be achieved when learners move between custody and community

1.1.1.4 Other

- Why does it still feel young people are an add on to the initiative?
- Can you define employability

1.1.2 Comments

Please enter you comments regarding this morning's presentations.

- Emphasis on community sentences very welcome
- Outcome lead provision can lead to distortion. Olass (although not generously funded) allows for a more imaginative approach to provision
- For young people in rural areas lack of variety and support such as transport prevent them accessing provision they would like to attend this needs to be factored in to any incentives offered
- Need to ensure providers in community are not disincentivised by funding considerations. Also need to ensure that community provision matches young peoples needs
- Lea's need to be included in future strategies as year 10 and 11 transition issues are the key to reducing lack of achievement in young people. Offending at this stage and the discrimination showed by many school heads prevent inclusion and frustrates my staff no end
- Remand provision leads to poor retention and achievement. With olass we can accommodate this other models could make remand provision unattractive
- Community provision tends to align to college terms and years. There are 52 week training organisations in areas like construction offering flexible course. Can they be brought into a solution?
- We have experienced difficulties with providers discriminating against yp who have had a final warning on the crb and have therefore declined to take them on a fe college course as a result yp are being denied a future based on one occasion a non violent offence they committed aged 12. Therefore providers need to be educated as part of the funding agreement in the rehab of offenders act. This applies to lea and schools as well

2 Facilitated Round Table Discussion

The delegates were split into table syndicate groups relating to their area of expertise and asked to answer questions relating to the Prospectus. The results are shown below:

2.1.1 Table 2 - WSSCUS

2.1.1.1 Objectives

Do you consider that our proposed four broad objectives, as contained in paragraph 30 of the Prospectus, are appropriate? Should there be any other considerations?

- What do you mean by historical arrangements?

- We need to build on existing good practice, not develop new and unchartered delivery, can this be confirmed?
- What happens to this prospectus if the NOMS is no longer in operation, (from recent press information)?

2.1.1.2 Priority groups

Do you consider our proposed priority groups for offender learning in custody at Annex B to be appropriate? What might be the impact on different groups?

- What about Remand prisoners?
- You cannot assume that anyone who has a sentence of more than one year will be below a level 2
- The idea that anyone who is only in for less than 12 months, not to have access to basic skills will severely impair their future development

2.1.1.3 Additional support

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a formal method of supporting offender learners in custody and in the community with additional learning support needs? This will have significant budgetary implications on a finite resource. How can the varying learning needs be most appropriately supported within that finite resource?

- Does point 96 mean that the LSC already established how the points mentioned in point 95 have been established for those in custody?

2.1.1.4 Clarifying the role of learning and skills

In relation to custodial provision, do you agree that the role of learning and skills as part of purposeful activity within prison regimes needs urgent clarification? How can learning and skills work in harmony with other interventions?

- The mindset of education providers (tutors) need to be encouraged to involve themselves with the programmes being delivered by the prison service
- Is purposeful activity meant purposeful for the learner or purposeful for the establishment?

2.1.1.5 Delivery through mainstream provision

In relation to community supervision, we do not believe that commissioning significant levels of offender-specific provision in the community would be beneficial. Is our intention to harness delivery through mainstream LSC-funded post-16 provision the most appropriate route? How can we best take this forward?

- To develop a robust mentoring programme

2.1.2 Table 3 - ECOM

2.1.2.1 Objectives

Do you consider that our proposed four broad objectives, as contained in paragraph 30 of the Prospectus, are appropriate? Should there be any other considerations?

- Agree that objectives are appropriate
- Some priority needs to be given to workforce development for HMPS and Probation staff. However, may fall outside the scope of the prospectus.
- safety and risk issues need to be considered but should not be a barrier to learning
- Need to ensure that offenders can receive individualised learning and an offer that is relevant to them

2.1.2.2 Priority groups

Do you consider our proposed priority groups for offender learning in custody at Annex B to be appropriate? What might be the impact on different groups?

- short sharp job focused training may be beneficial- those with short sentences should not be ignored
- Sector specific training may be helpful based upon local employment partnership model. Package could be developed for custody and out into the community

- Service still needs to be seamless otherwise it will fail. Access to services when they want/need it is important
- Cut off point at 12 months is not realistic- it must be more flexible
- point 2 - Important to maintain this as this basic learning will allow learners to progress to higher learning
- Point 5 (disabilities) don't agree with medium priority tag -needs to be higher .welfare reforms make this a priority group. If the LSC view is that other agencies will pick up this work then who will do this?
- Offenders with learning difficulties - are they therefore a low priority?

2.1.2.3 Additional support

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a formal method of supporting offender learners in custody and in the community with additional learning support needs? This will have significant budgetary implications on a finite resource. How can the varying learning needs be most appropriately supported within that finite resource?

- Agree that ALS is helpful. Can other funding sources be levered in to supplement this - such as funding for learning difficulties?
- Will need to be prioritised - will it be the same as that applied to general public?
- Should we aim to support fewer learners? Is that ethical?
- Clear plan as to how it is picked up i.e. could this be done when receiving IAG?
- Potential for this to be swamped by offenders.

2.1.2.4 Clarifying the role of learning and skills

In relation to custodial provision, do you agree that the role of learning and skills as part of purposeful activity within prison regimes needs urgent clarification? How can learning and skills work in harmony with other interventions?

- effective sentence planning would help so as to ensure that delivered provision is relevant
- HMPS may need to provide a clearer definition as to what this should include
- Need to find out what is exactly happening in custody - learning/experience then needs to continue in the community in order to make best use of learning. Need to ensure that any learning obtained when doing PA is not lost.
- Assessment of needs must be done properly. This will ensure that all learning is relevant
- Requirements of the order also need to sequence so that they complement other interventions.

2.1.2.5 Delivery through mainstream provision

In relation to community supervision, we do not believe that commissioning significant levels of offender-specific provision in the community would be beneficial. Is our intention to harness delivery through mainstream LSC-funded post-16 provision the most appropriate route? How can we best take this forward?

- We need to scope what is currently being delivered then we will be able to identify gaps etc
- What does significant levels mean - is this cash or levels of provision
- Need to retain some in order for us to engage with offenders - especially those with the most need
- Current funding for skills for life is insufficient - needs to be more
- Does this mean that only FE provision can be commissioned- may need more flexible delivery - some offenders will need additional support before they are ready to access mainstream provision
- Very difficult to engage some people (not just offenders) with mainstream delivery - not suitable for all
- Mainstream providers need to be much more flexible and responsive - roll on roll off delivery is needed
- Does this not go against leitch- we need to go the extra mile to ensure they will engage - not restrict the choice of available providers
- Offenders must be able to access the full range of provision from a variety of providers. Provision must be tailored to need.

- CJARS may help with this. Need to know/understand how effective current providers/delivery really is
- Provision must meet local needs. Mainstream providers must respond to what the users want
- Ensure that good practice disseminated

2.1.3 Table 4 - WSNCOM

2.1.3.1 Objectives

Do you consider that our proposed four broad objectives, as contained in paragraph 30 of the Prospectus, are appropriate? Should there be any other considerations?

- acknowledgement and clarity of whether the prospectus is aligned to the 14-19 strategy
- there is no direct proposal in the prospectus of how learning provision in the community and custody can create a seamless service for learners
- timescales are not included in the prospectus although it is acknowledged that this may be included at a later date
- What are the incentives for learners to ensure that their learning is maintained
- Who will own the prospectus at a regional level

2.1.3.2 Priority groups

Do you consider our proposed priority groups for offender learning in custody at Annex B to be appropriate? What might be the impact on different groups?

- Are young people going to be treated holistically rather than sitting within a specific priority group
- Should those on remand be identified as a priority group so that they are given some support and structure? For those on remand if they are going through the crown court they can be on remand for a long time
- should PPO's be considered as a priority group

2.1.3.3 Additional support

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a formal method of supporting offender learners in custody and in the community with additional learning support needs? This will have significant budgetary implications on a finite resource. How can the varying learning needs be most appropriately supported within that finite resource?

- the idea is agreed with but a scoping exercise is needed to find out existing provision
- working more closely with voluntary agencies
- closer involvement with children and young people's services
- At what level is additional support for learners stopped and will it be decided at a local level

2.1.3.4 Clarifying the role of learning and skills

In relation to custodial provision, do you agree that the role of learning and skills as part of purposeful activity within prison regimes needs urgent clarification? How can learning and skills work in harmony with other interventions?

- YES!!!!!!
- The problem with some YOI's is the availability of providing ROTL for day release to link up learning in the community. Some YOI's only grant ROTL if the activity outside the establishment is something they could not provide. This proves difficult in effective resettlement.
- The problem with prison overcrowding is that offenders can be placed away from their community which inhibits effective resettlement
- The resettlement plan should be seamless and have etc at the heart
- Should the vision for prisons be that they become 'work based placement providers'
- embedding learning and skills in the prison regime
- If prisons are target driven then quality can be lost. there needs to be a focus on needs

- how will this prospectus be communicated to prison governors

2.1.3.5 Delivery through mainstream provision

In relation to community supervision, we do not believe that commissioning significant levels of offender-specific provision in the community would be beneficial. Is our intention to harness delivery through mainstream LSC-funded post-16 provision the most appropriate route? How can we best take this forward?

- provision should be through mainstream existing services but with support from a 'mentor' or 'keeping young people engaged worker'
- buddy systems with employers to support offenders or train ex offenders to support learners
- education needed for those existing services into the needs of offenders
- admission dates are often not matched to release dates

2.1.4 Table 5 - WSNCUS

2.1.4.1 Objectives

Do you consider that our proposed four broad objectives, as contained in paragraph 30 of the Prospectus, are appropriate? Should there be any other considerations?

- Define "historical arrangements".
- There are concerns about moving away from purposeful activity and the affect it will have upon prison stability and security.
- Build upon good practice
- We would like a definition of "employability" and consideration given to the nature of the offence
- The consideration that FE colleges will need to move to a 52 week year for continuity.
- Ensuring learning is linked with other services- this depends on NOMS being commissioned for this
- Consideration needs to be given to the accessibility of provision of external services

2.1.4.2 Priority groups

Do you consider our proposed priority groups for offender learning in custody at Annex B to be appropriate? What might be the impact on different groups?

- What consideration has been given to remand prisoners?
- Consideration for foreign nations.
- There is concern regarding the time bound target groups. It is felt that they are not necessary as teaching professionals are in the best position to decide.
- There was concern that anything over L2 was low priority for funding, which is in conflict with employability.
- Cat 5 learners with learning difficulties have the highest need of intervention to reduce reoffending and therefore should not be a medium priority for funding, but high.
- Cat 1 Basic Skills not to be undertaken where time is not available. This needs clarification as learners can achieve something within a short period of time. Was the intention to stop them being put onto programmes they cannot finish or to stop them going onto any programme.

2.1.4.3 Additional support

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a formal method of supporting offender learners in custody and in the community with additional learning support needs? This will have significant budgetary implications on a finite resource. How can the varying learning needs be most appropriately supported within that finite resource?

- Yes, providing there is additional funding
- Section 96: This implies decisions have already been made and our comments are not required.
- Find funding for one or two peripatetic advisors to visit establishments and support.

2.1.4.4 Clarifying the role of learning and skills

In relation to custodial provision, do you agree that the role of learning and skills as part of purposeful activity within prison regimes needs urgent clarification? How can learning and skills work in harmony with other interventions?

- Further urgent clarification needed
- There is deep rooted problem with officer's attitudes. In order to change attitudes and develop harmonisation the Governor and SMT must have a effective strategy that fully supports harmonisation of learning and skills.
- The prospectus needs to specifically state that learning and skills can be classed as purposeful activity for PSO reasons, but that prisoners should not be allocated to a classroom just to increase purposeful activity figures. This would need to be supported by NOMS, ROMS and Governors to ensure good and appropriate use of funding.

2.1.4.5 Delivery through mainstream provision

In relation to community supervision, we do not believe that commissioning significant levels of offender-specific provision in the community would be beneficial. Is our intention to harness delivery through mainstream LSC-funded post-16 provision the most appropriate route? How can we best take this forward?

- Discreet provision is not well attended and is not the way forward. Offenders should be encouraged to access current provision and any additional funding used to introduce a mentoring programme to support them.

2.1.5 Table 6 - Reg

2.1.5.1 Delivery through mainstream provision

In relation to community supervision, we do not believe that commissioning significant levels of offender-specific provision in the community would be beneficial. Is our intention to harness delivery through mainstream LSC-funded post-16 provision the most appropriate route? How can we best take this forward?

- Mainstream providers to be more flexible in relation to offenders as well as other difficult learner groups and the provision on offer. Should the funding be more flexible to meet this need?

2.1.5.2 Clarifying the role of learning and skills

In relation to custodial provision, do you agree that the role of learning and skills as part of purposeful activity within prison regimes needs urgent clarification? How can learning and skills work in harmony with other interventions?

- coming up with a common objective surrounding purposeful activity

2.1.5.3 Objectives

Do you consider that our proposed four broad objectives, as contained in paragraph 30 of the Prospectus, are appropriate? Should there be any other considerations?

- Objective 1. Needs to incorporate the issue of risk and protection of the public
- Objective 1. Would like to see mention of re-offending
- Objective 2. Require more evidence/data, especially from community to inform scope
- Obj 2. From a commissioning point of view, need to identify needs first in either custody or community to allocate finite resources appropriately
- Obj 2 - Through the gate aspect. Flow of information, assessments etc, avoiding duplication, management of the information.
- Obj 2. Balance between general and specific provision in the community to meet the needs of the individual. What to address first - motivational / behavioural issues?
- obj 3. development of mentoring in the community
- Holistic approach to reducing re-offending: continuous learning
- Prison planning - impact on curriculum

- misgivings re priority groups
- Are offenders on short sentences excluded from vocational courses?
- Some of the priority groups are too prescriptive, excludes too many offenders
- Require flexibility of provision and therefore flexibility of funding

2.1.6 Table 7 - ECUS

2.1.6.1 Delivery through mainstream provision

In relation to community supervision, we do not believe that commissioning significant levels of offender-specific provision in the community would be beneficial. Is our intention to harness delivery through mainstream LSC-funded post-16 provision the most appropriate route? How can we best take this forward?

- We need to see a linear movement from custodial learning to mainstream learning - due mainstream colleges following the academic year offenders often have to wait months (or a full year) to enter learning - this long waiting time often leads to disengagement.
- Whilst it appears that mainstream providers offer a wide range of learning - the reality is that there is very few mainstream courses that offenders can engage in - meaning a large proportion of offenders cannot access mainstream learning... and if they do, many of the offenders all seem to enter the same course anyway with a tutor who is inexperienced and unprepared for dealing with these students with specific needs - so why not provide specialist provision in the community that is geared up to work with this client group?

2.1.6.2 Clarifying the role of learning and skills

In relation to custodial provision, do you agree that the role of learning and skills as part of purposeful activity within prison regimes needs urgent clarification? How can learning and skills work in harmony with other interventions?

- Not Sure

2.1.6.3 Additional support

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a formal method of supporting offender learners in custody and in the community with additional learning support needs? This will have significant budgetary implications on a finite resource. How can the varying learning needs be most appropriately supported within that finite resource?

- Yes we welcome the introduction to additional learning support; but we are unsure how the LSC can support the varied learning needs with small resources. Maybe more of an emphasis should be made on young people as they, in our view, seem to react better to learning support. Additional learning support could be maximised by utilising learning mentors further with appropriate training - however it is difficult to find and retain potential learning mentors.

2.1.6.4 Priority groups

Do you consider our proposed priority groups for offender learning in custody at Annex B to be appropriate? What might be the impact on different groups?

- We are concerned that category 5 'Learning for Living/Work' is given less of a priority than some other categories. There is a fear that providers will; either through financial or contractual means be pressured to reduce the provision that they offer in this area in the future.
- We are also concerned that given the emphasis to devalue 'learning for living and work' that efforts to provide screening and action for offenders with learning difficulties will never come to fruition as providing such a service can be costly.
- As higher learning levels have been deprioritised, there is a concern that long term offenders - who are more likely to take up this provision will be 'phased out' of offender learning - isn't this a form of discrimination?

2.1.6.5 Objectives

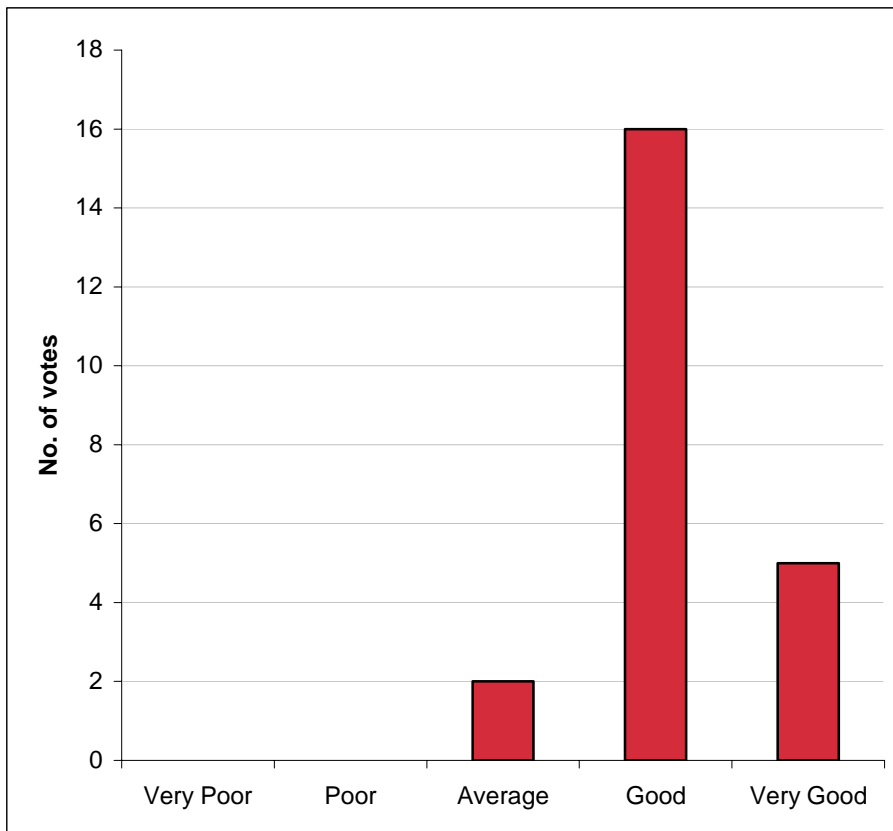
Do you consider that our proposed four broad objectives, as contained in paragraph 30 of the Prospectus, are appropriate? Should there be any other considerations?

- We agree that the first objective is appropriate and necessary to drive the aims of offender learning and more widely reducing reoffending through skills forward. However, the practicalities of offering needs based learning is problematic as there is no direct access to reliable geographically LMI relevant to our beneficiaries.
- On a second note moving funding to an outcome based format may constrain the capacity to change provision to compliment and track the geographical skills needs where our beneficiaries reside.

3 End of day feedback

The group was invited to give their feedback by answering a number of questions. The questions together with the responses are shown below.

Q1: Overall how did you rate the event?



Q2: What did you like about this event?

- Good info available important issues by a relaxed and supportive environment
- Be able to feed into the system immediately. Fast response - excellent!
- range of views and ideas
- The event included a good mix of group work and informative speakers.

- good input from a wide range of stakeholders
- mix of audience, openness of debate & catering
- Opportunity for discussion with other partners.
- Well organised and good venue.
- opportunity to network and to share concerns
- Excellent organization. Appreciate the thorough and genuine attempt to welcome collaboration with the production of the Prospectus. Very important to hear all views at this stage.
- very professional and not too long spent on any one section
- well organised, clear structure of prospectus, good honest answers to questions
- well structured
- networking
- networking
- the speeches at the beginning setting out the context
- Useful for networking with prison staff
- Being involved in the consultation process.
- well balanced format, broad stakeholder participation

Q3: What could be done differently and/or better?

- Community Lead providers should be invited
- Timings
- room for direct samples of working practice
- It would have been better if more representatives were present
- Nothing
- More interaction between delegates encouraged
- more opportunity for discussion with other agencies and more time for feedback
- Shorter lunch
- better organisation beforehand
- organisation of event through World Events more info before hand
- was ok
- Shorter dinner break
- Nothing
- Advanced briefing about the round table discussion - ability to prep

Q4: What is the one thing you would like us to bear in mind going forwards?

- Please ensure that prison governors and Area Managers are fully involved at each step of the way.
- You need to ensure HMPS are 'on board' with NOMS ROMS etc. If this is lost we will never move forward.
- keep up the energy
- look at all the issues raised
- sensible costing of the provision
- the holistic approach to the learning process
- Don't underestimate the difficulties in co-ordinating custody and community
- Bear in mind the importance of the resource and skills needed by staff doing the initial assessment of offenders-their input will be key to the whole process.
- Larger participation or smaller venues to reduce unused space
- The over arching thing to consider is the linking learning in custody to provision in community which can lead to effective resettlement
- Continue to work at communication with Governors and HoLS to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities especially during times of change.
- every client is an individual

- consideration of tender for OLASS in 09
- There is a lot to take on board. I would like to see an Idiots Guide to Olass produced giving basics as have missed a lot
- Clarification of annex B.
- Annexe B
- In depth scoping. Closer links with County Councils and what they could bring to the table
- The importance of scoping and the need to continuously review the value of the provision on offer
- please keep me informed of other events (Stoke college - Jeremy Clay 01782 603603) as we are eager to continue to work with our local gaols
- Consultation with all bodies
- focus on transition between custody and community

4 Warm-up Activity

The group was introduced to the crystal technology by inputting their answer to the question:
 “If this meeting was a book, film or TV series, what would it be and why?”

- Big Brother
- As Good As It Gets
- The Long And Winding Road That Lead Me To Your Door
- The Matrix
- Animal Farm
- Groundhog Day
- Great Expectations
- The Jungle Book
- Day Of The Triffids
- Good The Bad And The Ugly
- For A Few Dollars More
- Reaching For The Star
- One Flew Over The Cuckoos Nest