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RESPONSE TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Event Report: Exploring the possibilities for collaboration to provide services to support victims of sexual violence in West Yorkshire

Prepared by
LimeCulture Community Interest Company (CIC)
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LimeCulture Community Interest Company
The Coach House
2a Carr Road
Hale
Cheshire
WA15 8DX
www.limeculture.co.uk



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Background to the Event

- 1.1. During an event held on 14 May 2014 to discuss the strategic development of support services for male victims of sexual violence across West Yorkshire, it was agreed that a number of service providers would be keen to explore the possibility of collaborative working arrangements in order to provide effective support services for victims of sexual violence.
- 1.2. Following that initial event and during email correspondence between some of the providers, it was suggested that a further meeting between interested stakeholders would be beneficial to provide them with the opportunity to explore the possibility of collaboration in further detail.
- 1.3. Survivors West Yorkshire, who have been successful in being awarded funding by the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire to explore the strategic development of support services for male victims, agreed to organise the event as part of this work and as a follow up to the meeting on 14 May 2014, which was also organised by them.
- 1.4. It was agreed amongst interested providers that an event that was facilitated by an independent organisation would be beneficial to the process of exploring collaboration. LimeCulture Community Interest Company (CIC), a specialist sexual violence training and development organisation, was commissioned by Survivors West Yorkshire to design and facilitate the event.
- 1.5. Having been commissioned to facilitate the initial event on 14 May, where collaboration was originally suggested, LimeCulture was considered by the providers to be in an excellent position to design a further interactive programme to enable discussions to take place amongst stakeholders to identify whether collaboration would be an effective or realistic solution to a local problem in service provision for victims of sexual violence across West Yorkshire.



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Delivering the Event

- 2.1. The event took place in Bradford on 6 June 2014, which was less than 3.5 weeks after the initial event had taken place (on 14 May) to discuss the strategic development of support services for male victims of sexual violence.
- 2.2. 9 representatives of a range of local provider organisations attended the event. There were a small number of other agencies (including 2 Rape Crisis organisations) that had expressed an interest in attending the event, but were unable to attend due to diary commitments and conflicting meetings.
- 2.3. All of the organisations that were represented at the event had expressed an interest in exploring the possibilities of collaborating with other providers to enable better service provision for victims of sexual violence following the initial event on 14 May 2014.
- 2.4. A consultant from Crellin Consulting had also been invited to attend the event to present to the attendees the various options for collaboration and explain the differing legal formations of such collaborations.

Welcome, Introductions & Aims

- 2.5. Bob Balfour, founder of Survivors West Yorkshire opened the event and gave a warm welcome to the attendees. He explained that this event was being organised as an action falling out from the event on 14 May where the idea of collaborative working was raised as a possibility and it was requested that space and time was provided for the interested organisations to come together and explore the opportunities for collaboration in more detail.
- 2.6. Bob introduced Kim Doyle and Stephanie Reardon from LimeCulture and explained why he felt independent facilitation for this additional event was



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important to provide the opportunity for honest discussions and supportive challenge as well as to support the need for transparency.

- 2.7. Kim Doyle explained the overall aim of the event was to 'work with interested stakeholders to identify and agree how best to collaborate to provide services for male victims of sexual violence'. In order to achieve this, Kim explained that the day had been designed to allow interactive discussion amongst stakeholders to aid collaborative working to achieve the intended outcome for the day.
- 2.8. Kim asked each attendee to introduce themselves and identify which organisation they represented.

Setting the Scene

- 2.9. Stephanie Reardon explained by way of background to this event that there had been consensus amongst attendees of the 14 May event that the current state of service provision for male victims of sexual violence was patchy and ad hoc across West Yorkshire. There was also clear agreement with both provider and commissioners in attendance feeling that there was not one single service provider who could adequately provide the services for all victims of sexual violence across the West Yorkshire area. This being due to a range of issues such as capacity, scale and size of the geographical areas.
- 2.10. Stephanie went on to re-cap the findings from the 14 May event and the desire amongst some providers to explore the possibility of collaboration to enable better service provision across the area. Stephanie explained that there was an overwhelming willing and commitment to 'get things right for victims' in the area (and surrounding areas) and that organisations had wanted to capitalise on this and have another event quickly to maintain the momentum and make progress as rapidly as possible.



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2.11. Stephanie went on to identify some of the drivers for change that were underpinning the willingness of providers to improve service provision. The attendees agreed with that these were some of the key issues that they were keen to progress and develop solutions for. The key drivers for change included:

- Inequitable access for male victims of sexual violence
- Multiple providers
- Variation of standards in service provision
- Complex services to navigate
- Lack of clear pathways between services
- Service overlap and duplication
- Gaps in provision in some areas
- Growing number of victims coming forward

Mechanisms for collaborations

2.12. For the first interactive session of the event, LimeCulture asked the attendees to work together to identify what they hoped a collaboration of providers might look like in reality. Specifically, LimeCulture asked delegates to identify what the goals, outcomes and operating principles might be for a collaboration.

2.13. The attendees were given the choice of working as one big group or as a number smaller groups and they collectively agreed that one big group would be helpful to enable them to hear all of the views and suggestions. Therefore, LimeCulture facilitated the discussion from the outset of the session.

2.14. This session raised a number of important points and key issues in relation to what the remit for such a collaboration might be. The initial question that was raised was whether the collaboration would be to look at providing services for male victims only or whether the collaboration would include supporting all victims of sexual violence (and include women and children).



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- 2.15. LimeCulture facilitated a lively discussion about the remit of the collaboration and there were some strong views expressed about inclusion and exclusion criteria. For example, a number of organisations were concerned that male victims are currently left without comprehensive services and therefore it should be the priority of the collaboration to fill that gap while others felt that the collaboration should not be narrow in focus.
- 2.16. LimeCulture encouraged the attendees to consider the opportunities for collaboration in the context of the commissioning landscape as this may in fact influence what collaboration arrangements are put in place or required. For example, if specific contracts are put out to tender, the collaboration may wish to bid for these and therefore there may be a need to be flexible to enable an effective response. The attendees discussed this point in detail and it was concluded that it would be very unlikely for commissioners to put out a tender for male only (or indeed female only) services. There was an acknowledgement amongst the delegates that the collaboration would probably need to be inclusive if it was to be successful in bidding for tenders.
- 2.17. The attendees discussed whether the collaboration should include domestic abuse as part of the service provision. The attendees discussed this with strong views expressed as to why the collaboration should and should not include domestic abuse. The attendees did acknowledge that there was an overlap between domestic abuse and sexual violence and there is a need to address this. However, the needs of the victims of domestic abuse and the victims of sexual violence may be quite different depending on the circumstances and therefore the skills of the service providers would need be different. Furthermore, the attendees felt that some of the bigger domestic abuse organisations would not be suitable to collaborate with.
- 2.18. LimeCulture asked whether it might be helpful for the collaboration to develop short, medium and long term plans and that certain aspects of service delivery may form different plans at different timescales. The attendees discussed this



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and agreed that could be a possible solution and would consider this at the next stage of development.

Creating a Shared Vision

- 2.19. After the mid-morning break, LimeCulture started the next session by asking the attendees to think about developing what a shared vision might look like for the collaboration. Stephanie Reardon explained that developing a shared vision would be important for all organisations within the collaboration to ensure that they can all agree and align their interests and aspirations to commit to making the partnership work. Stephanie explained that a shared vision can provide the overarching framework for the collaboration to work within and it can be used by organisations to check that the collaboration is achieving what it originally agreed to achieve and set out to do.
- 2.20. The remaining time of that session was spent exploring what the collaboration should be aiming to achieve and how to go about it as a way of supporting the development of that shared vision. The attendees discussed whether the right organisations had been consulted about collaboration and whether there were any others that may be wanted to needed to be part of the collaboration. The group acknowledged that there had not been a comprehensive mapping or scoping of services across the area but they did feel that the majority of the main local players who were interested in collaboration had been approached.
- 2.21. LimeCulture asked the delegates whether the organisations who were interested in collaboration had the necessary skill mix to actually collaborate. The attendees discussed the different skill mix required to set up the collaboration and then continue to make it work. For example, there would be the need for strategists, completer/finishers, challengers etc to get the collaboration off the ground. The attendees acknowledged that there would be different skill sets required at different times and it was not yet known or



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understood what each organisation could bring in terms of skills and knowledge to enable to collaboration to work.

- 2.22. LimeCulture put forward a suggested shared vision that they had created based on the discussions of the attendees. The suggested shared vision was:

'To provide a partnership approach to supporting victims of sexual violence, that is strategically-led, transparently commissioned, funded and accountable, offering sustainable and consistent services that are evidence-informed in relation to equity, need, accessibility and cost effectiveness, and that is visible, person-centred and meets the needs of all victims'.

- 2.23. The attendees said the vision statement was helpful and had broadly captured what they wanted to achieve as part of working collaboratively. The attendees said that some of the wording may well need to be tweaked, but generally they agreed that the suggested shared vision would be helpful to guide the collaboration at this stage.

Barriers to Overcome

- 2.24. The next session was used as a forum to discuss the potential barriers that might stop or slow progress. Kim Doyle asked the attendees to think about some of the potential pitfalls to collaborating with the aim of trying to mitigate or reduce the risk of them occurring before they actually happen. The attendees discussed a range of issues that could be potential barriers, including:

- Trust of other organisations
- Respect for other organisations
- Knowledge and skills of other organisations (specialism)
- Own organisational cultures/identities
- Authority to make decisions
- Effectiveness of services
- Communications



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- Time
- Money

2.25. LimeCulture facilitated the discussions about barriers and although a number of important potential barriers were identified, they were discussed in a positive manner and all agreed that none of them were insurmountable if considered in detail before any agreement was made.

2.26. The attendees also discussed the sizes of the organisations that would be part of the collaboration and it was generally agreed that the collaboration was intended for the smaller specialist agencies to come together in the first instance. There was a general consensus that the bigger organisations did not really need to collaborate and that they could potentially swamp the smaller organisations if the input/expectations were not agreed or managed effectively.

2.27. The support and the infrastructure that could be provided by some of the bigger organisations was discussed and it recognised that there could be some benefit from having partnership arrangements in place with them at a later stage. Representatives from some of the bigger organisations attending the meeting agreed with this and said that it may be sensible for the smaller organisations to have discussions about collaborating first and then involve bigger organisations at a later stage if this was appropriate.

Social Enterprise Collaborations

2.28. The next session was lead by Debbie Crellin of Crellin Consulting who provided an overview of the different models of collaboration and the legal formations that might be appropriate for the collaboration to consider. Debbie provided advances and disadvantages of a range of models that may be appropriate ranging from an informal collaboration through to a Community Interest Company.



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- 2.29. The attendees agreed this session had been helpful to hear about the different options but that further consideration would be required. The key message that came from Debbie's presentation was that it would be relatively straightforward to adopt the required formation/model once the organisations willing to collaborate have considered further how they wish to take the collaboration forward.

Next steps

- 2.30. Just before the afternoon coffee break it was suggested that the last session of the day would be for the organisations that were still keen to collaborate to consider the practical next steps.
- 2.31. Following the discussions about the remit of the collaboration, some of the attendees felt that it was more appropriate for them to leave the event and allow space and time for the smaller specialist sexual violence organisations to discuss how they might collaborate and the practicalities involved in that.
- 2.32. It was agreed and understood that those attendees who left the event before the last session were not saying that their organisations were not willing to be involved in the collaboration. In fact, some of the attendees that chose to leave said they were still keen to be involved but that they recognised the need to provide the space and time for the smaller organisations to consider their options without them being present to allow for them to have honest discussions about what how they wanted to proceed.
- 2.33. For the final session, LimeCulture articulated the need for real progress to be made if the collaboration is to be successful. They said that interested organisations would need to go back to their own organisations to discuss the options internally before any action could reasonably be taken.



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- 2.34. The remaining attendees discussed and recognised the importance of on-going transparent discussions that can support and lead to the commitment of individual organisations to commit to working with others in collaboration. The attendees recognises the need to be very clear about what the expectations are of each organisation in terms of what they hope to achieve but also what they expect to invest in the collaboration.
- 2.35. LimeCulture suggested that the attendees go back to their organisations with a view to discussing and answering the following questions:
- Is there agreement from the organisation to collaborate?
 - What model of collaboration would be suitable?
 - What is the process to make the collaboration work?
 - What does the service look like that the collaboration should deliver?
- 2.36. LimeCulture thanked the attendees for their time and contribution to the event. They added that they had once again been extremely impressed by the discussions held at the event, particularly when some tricky issues were identified that needed to be discussed and worked through properly.



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3 Recommendations/Comments from Independent Facilitators

- 3.1. LimeCulture Community Interest Company (CIC) was extremely impressed by the level of commitment of the providers who attended the first meeting to look at the strategic development of services for male victims across West Yorkshire. Therefore, we were very pleased to be invited back to the next meeting to discuss the opportunities for establishing a collaboration of providers with a view to support and improve service provision across West Yorkshire.
- 3.2. LimeCulture recognise the inherent difficulties and complexities involved where two or more organisations come together to work in collaboration. There are a range of challenges that could be potential barriers to both establishing and maintaining the collaboration. Broadly, these challenges can be categorised under the following headings:
 - People/Organisations
 - Structures
 - Processes
 - Resources
- 3.3. However, these categories also underpin the characteristics of a strong partnership. Where these areas can be properly worked through, planned and agreed, it is likely that the partnership will work successfully as a consequence. It is, therefore the view of LimeCulture that if the organisations who truly wish to collaborate can focus on these areas with a view to overcoming and halting the potential challenges from occurring, then a successful collaboration could emerge.
- 3.4. LimeCulture can see that the collaboration here is still at the planning stage, with lots of unanswered questions remaining and practical issues that are yet to be explored in detail. However, there appears to be a real appetite amongst some of the organisations to make progress quickly and tackle some of the issues with due consideration.
- 3.5. It will be the responsibility of the organisations who are committed to working in partnership to make the collaboration work and therefore, it is recommended that



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those organisations should carefully consider what they themselves expect to achieve from any collaboration. LimeCulture also recommends that the organisations also consider what they themselves expect to input into any collaboration (including time, staff, money etc) and what they themselves expect to receive from the collaboration (money, development opportunities, information etc). Once the organisations have considered their position from an independent stand point, they then should be better placed to agree on the direction of the collaboration with more clarity about their collective roles and responsibilities.

- 3.6. Once the organisations that are willing to collaborate have identified themselves or been identified (this may possibly include through selection by other organisations), the next steps will be to develop an action plan to support progress and keep track of required action. This should include agreeing a collaboration model (that suits a shared vision for the collaboration) and delivery model, as part of that plan.

- 3.7. It remains clear to LimeCulture that there is merit in providers working together to design and deliver high-quality services for victims of sexual violence, not least where there can be economies of scale in doing so. Following the event on 6 June and having considered the discussions that took place, LimeCulture still believes that with a clear vision, transparency, commitment and agreement to a set of overarching aims and principles by the willing organisations, a successful collaboration is achievable.



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Annex A Event Agenda

**The Strategic Development of Services to Support Male
Victims of Sexual Violence - West Yorkshire/Yorkshire
6 June 2014**

| Time | Agenda Item | Lead Presenter |
|---------------|---|----------------------------|
| 9.30am | Coffee and Registration | |
| 10.00am | Welcome and Opening Introduction | Bob Balfour/LimeCulture |
| 10.10 | Setting the scene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Where are we now • Drivers for change | LimeCulture |
| 10.30 | Mechanisms for Collaboration - Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals • Outcome • Operating Principles | LimeCulture |
| 11.15 | Tea and Coffee Break | |
| 11.30 | Barriers to Overcome | LimeCulture |
| 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch and networking opportunity | |
| 13.30 – 14.15 | Creating a shared vision | LimeCulture |
| 14.15 – 15.00 | Presentation – Social Enterprise collaborations | Crellin Consulting |
| 15.00 – 15.15 | Tea and Coffee Break | |
| 15.15 -16.00 | Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Requirements • Business Plans • Funding | LimeCulture |
| 16.00 | Close | LimeCulture |



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