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An Evaluation Proposal of Clear Track

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1 Summary

- 1.1 Prisons play an important role in serving and protecting the public by securely holding the most serious and dangerous of prisoners and by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Current research has indicated that as a custodial sentencing option, prison can be ineffective in the rehabilitation and reparation of those offenders given a short-term prison sentence. In light of this, the government has called for a rethink on crime and punishment in a bid to identify feasible sentencing options which could bridge the gap between community penalties and current custodial sentences.
- 1.2 The primary triggers to rethinking crime and punishment included a steep increase in the prison population and overcrowded prisons; the high conviction rates of offenders; the increasing workload of the Probation Service and the expense of running the prison system, as outlined below:
 - Over the past decade the prison population in England and Wales has been rising steeply. In September 2005 the prison population was recorded at over 77,000, the highest rate of imprisonment in the European Union (Home Office 2003a). The cost of each prison place currently averages about twelve times more expensive than a community sentence per year (Rethinking Crime and Punishment 2003). The prison system as a whole has been overcrowded in every year since 1994 (National Advisory Council of Board of Visitors 2002, Home Office 1999a).
 - Alongside the rise in the prison population, the Probation Service has also witnessed an unmanageable increase in their caseload with low-risk offenders largely due to the growth in the use of community orders for summary offences (Morgan 2003, Rethinking Crime and Punishment 2003).
 - The Home Office reconviction figures indicate that the majority (77%) of all offenders under 21 years of age were reconvicted within two years of being discharged from prison. Similarly, 71% of all offenders under 21 years of age were reconvicted within two years of being discharged from a community penalty¹ (Home Office 1999b).
 - In light of these findings the Home Office argued that prison ‘can be an expensive way of making bad people worse’ (Home Office 1990), subsequently triggering the need to rethink crime and punishment (see The Coulsfield Inquiry 2004).
- 1.3 In his speech to the Prison Reform Trust, the Home Secretary called for ‘community custody’ as a ‘third’ sentencing option. By developing ‘working partnerships’ inter-agency organisations would be able to provide a realistic support package for offenders in a bid to reduce re-offending. In introducing a

¹ This figure is the percentage for all community penalties during 1995.

third option CSV and Springboard Sunderland are to launch an innovative pilot-intervention known as Clear Track.

- 1.4 Clear Track aims to work closely with probation, magistrates and other relevant organisations in order to address the needs of low-risk young adult offenders by delivering a holistic regime in a residential setting in a bid to fulfil their potential as citizens. Throughout the three year pilot period Clear Track will be independently evaluated by the University of Newcastle. The evaluation will assess the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the pilot.

2 From 'Alternatives to Custody' to 'Community Custody'

- 2.1 Throughout the 1960's and 1970's, rehabilitation had been the dominant principle of criminal justice. During the 1980's and 1990's, various critiques of rehabilitation argued that prisons were wholly inappropriate environments in which to attempt to reform deviant behaviour; consequently this led to the replacement of the 'rehabilitative ideal' with the concept of 'alternatives to custody'. The impact of 'alternatives to custody' failed to have the desired effect on the prison population, which continued an upward trend (see Bottoms 1987, Pease 1985). Thus bringing into effect 'punishment in the community' in the late 1980's, with the introduction of the combination order and the curfew order with electronic monitoring (Home Office 1988).
- 2.2 Essentially, the government realised that judges and magistrates needed to be offered realistic options if the judiciary were to be persuaded to make less use of custody (Home Office 1988): *'the government believes that more offenders should be punished in the community.....a new approach is needed if the use of custody is to be reduced. Punishment in the community should be an effective way of dealing with many offenders, particularly those convicted of property crimes and less serious offences of violence, when financial penalties are insufficient'* (Home Office 1990).
- 2.3 Punishment in the community brought with it a new generation of community penalties². This emphasis of punishment in the community remains, and has intensified with an emphasis on the punitive aspect of community penalties, such as community punishment orders and unpaid work orders³.
- 2.4 Overall, the most effective community supervision programmes have been shown to reduce offending by 15% more than a prison sentence (Rethinking Crime and Punishment 2003). However, the majority of crime is committed by people who have already been through the criminal justice system; and the

² See Criminal Justice Act 1991 at http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1991/Ukpga_19910053_en_1.htm

³ See Criminal Justice Act 2003 at <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2003/20030044.htm>

prison population continues to increase despite falling crime rates⁴ (Home Office 2005a).

- 2.5 In an attempt to reduce re-offending rates and to ensure that the prison population of England and Wales does not rise above 80,000 (Home Office 2004), the then Home Secretary and the Lord Chancellor issued a joint press release calling for greater use of community sentences for non-violent offences (Lord Chancellor's Department 2002). The Home Office response to the Carter Review (Carter 2003) referred to '*diverting from prison minor offences for whom a very short stay in prison serves little purpose*' (Home Office 2004a).
- 2.6 This was supported by the Home Office White paper (2002) which mentioned: '*custody has an important role to play in punishing offenders and protecting the public. But it is an expensive resource which should be focused on dangerous, serious and seriously persistent offenders and those who have consistently breached community sentences...For those who are not serious, dangerous or seriously persistent offenders, we need to provide a genuine third option to sentencers in addition to custody and community punishment. For this reason we will introduce new and reformed sentences that combine community and custody sentences*' (Home Office 2002).
- 2.7 Part of this strategy was to introduce three new forms of short custodial sentences for those offenders whom 'short prison sentences will continue to be appropriate' – namely the suspended sentence, intermittent custody and custody plus (Home Office 2002). Another part of the strategy was to introduce a new 'customised community sentence' referred to by the Home Secretary⁵ this year as 'community prisons' with a focus on preventing re-offending.

3 The Prison Population and its Costs

- 3.1 Over the last decade the prison population has risen steeply from 40,606⁶ in December 1992 to 66,000 at the end of 1999. It continued to slowly rise to 75,000 in April 2004, to over 77,800 in September 2005⁷, four per cent more than the previous year (Home Office 2005a).
- 3.2 The male prison population was 72,696 and the female prison population was 4,611 at the end of September 2005. The young adult⁸ population in prison was 8,689 at the end of September 2005, an increase of two per cent.
- 3.3 The steep rise in the prison population since 1993 is mostly attributed to the increase in the numbers of sentenced prisoners held. There were 62,680

⁴ Overall crime has fallen by seven per cent according to the British Crime Survey. There has also been a fall of six per cent in the number of crimes recorded by the police in 2004/05 compared to 2003/04.

⁵ The Home Secretary, Charles Clarke's, speech to the Prison Reform Trust on 19th September 2005.

⁶ The lowest recorded prison population in the past 20 years for England and Wales.

⁷ The highest ever recorded prison population for England and Wales

⁸ These are prisoners aged 18 – 20, but include 21 year old prisoners who were aged 20 or under at conviction who have not been reclassified as part of the adult population.

sentenced prisoners in September 2005, two per cent more than the previous year.

- 3.4 The prison population was 111 per cent of the 'in use CNA'⁹ in September 2005, indicating that Prison Service establishments are over-capacity. The predicted prison population for the year 2010 is estimated to reach a high projection of 90,780 (Home Office 2005b)¹⁰.
- 3.5 England and Wales (with an estimated national population of 52.7 million) has the highest imprisonment rate amongst countries of the European Union at 141 per 100,000 of the national population. France has an estimated national population of 59.7 million, with an imprisonment rate of 93 per 100,000 of the national population and Germany (with an estimated national population of 82.56 million) has an imprisonment rate of 98 per 100,000 of the national population (Home Office 2003a). Both Germany and France have a larger population than the UK with proportionately less people in prison. The United States has the highest prison population in the world, with an imprisonment rate of 701 per 100,000 of the national population. The United Kingdom rate places it above the mid-point in the world list.
- 3.6 Since the early 1990's the government has substantially expanded the prison estate. By building 26 new prisons, extending institutions and contracting with private operators, the 'certified normal accommodation' of Prison Service establishments has increased from 40,000 to approximately 80,000¹¹ (House of Commons 2005a). The average cost of each prison place built since 2000 is £99,839 (House of Commons 2005b). However the rise in the number of prisoners has outgrown the supply of places.
- 3.7 At the same time spending on prisons has increased by more than 25% since 1997, with a current spending of £300 million per year on rehabilitative regimes in prisons (Prison Reform Trust 2005). It costs on average £37,500 to send one person to prison for one year, this increases to an average of £42,000 if the person is sent to a young offenders institution for one year.
- 3.8 The average annual unit cost of a prison place is more than twelve times that of a probation or community service order. Overall, community punishment deals with nearly four times as many people as the prison system, for 40% of the cost with little difference in the overall re-offending rates (Rethinking Crime and Punishment 2003).
- 3.9 Martin Narey, Director General of the Prison Service, argued that if you removed from prison *'those who get sentences of six months or less you would reduce the population at a stroke by 6,500'* (Magistrates 2002). Reducing the

⁹ Certified Normal Accommodation that is available for immediate use, excludes damaged cells, cells affected by building works and cells taken out of use due to staff shortages.

¹⁰ The Home Office had to withdraw the long term prison population projections released in January 2005 because growth had exceeded them. The current prison population already exceeds the revised high projection.

¹¹ The exact figure is 78,217. The government plans to increase this by a further 3,800 to around 80,400 in 2007 (House of Commons 2005a)

prison population in this way by approximately 8% would save around £223 million.

- 3.10 Prison has a poor record of reducing re-offending, with 77% of young adult prisoners reconvicted within two years of being released (Home Office 1999b). Reconviction rates do vary by type of order, however prisoners released after short-term sentences of up to 12 months tend to have proportionately higher reconviction rates than longer-term prisoners (Rethinking Crime and Punishment 2002). The Social Exclusion Unit has concluded that re-offending by ex-prisoners cost society around £11 billion per year. Ex-prisoners are responsible for about one in five of all recorded crimes (Social Exclusion Unit 2002).
- 3.11 With this in mind the 2004 Coulsfield Inquiry into Rethinking Crime and Punishment asks does prison offer the best value for money? and would it be better to spend less on prisons and more on treatment centres? (Coulsfield Inquiry 2004).

4 The Effects of Prison Overcrowding

- 4.1 Prison overcrowding is defined by the Prison Service as a prison containing more prisoners than the establishments certified normal accommodation. The limit to overcrowding in a prison is called the operational capacity.
- 4.2 At the end of September 2005, 90 prisons (63%) of the estate were overcrowded. Fourteen were at more than 150% of their CNA and seventeen had populations over their operational capacity (Prison Service 2005). At the end of December 2004 almost 16,000¹² prisoners were held two to a cell designed for one person, the equivalent of 22% of the prison population at that time (House of Commons 2005c).
- 4.3 Many of the problems which face the prison system stem from over-crowding. The Chief Inspector of Prisons mentioned that *'the levelling off of the prison population is, in reality, the difference between a manageable crisis and an unmanageable one'* (HMCIP 2004). Some establishments have been operating at well over their CNA for several years, resulting in a strain on officers, prisoners and the regime itself.
- 4.4 A study by the Prison Reform Trust and the National Council of Independent Monitoring Boards in September 2002 examined the impact of overcrowding. They expressed concern that overcrowding was threatening prison safety, leading to prisoners being held in inhumane, degrading and unsafe conditions and damaging attempts to maintain family support and reduce re-offending by prisoners (National Advisory Council of Board of Visitors 2002).
- 4.5 The effect of overcrowding on inmate activity is also troubling. The Chief Inspector of Prisons commented in the HMCIP 2003-2004 report *'no local prison that we inspected was able to offer enough proper work and training for*

¹² The exact figure was 15,786 prisoners

its population' (HMCIP 2004). The reasons included lack of funding, and lack of space and infrastructure. *'Two-thirds of prisoners at Brixton, and a third at Lincoln, had no work at all; and many of the remainder were under-occupied in routine domestic tasks'* (HMCIP 2004). The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (CPT) also commented adversely on the poor provisions of constructive activities for prisoners in its 2001 report (CPT 2001).

- 4.6 The current climate of prison conditions in England and Wales raises doubt about the rehabilitative potential of custodial sentences, particularly custodial sentences of 6 months or less. In 2002, the then Home Secretary mentioned that *'short custodial sentences provide little or no opportunity for rehabilitation, reparation to the victim, or to change the behaviour or problems which put offenders in prison in the first place.'* Similarly the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Woolf mentioned that *'courts have to accept the reality of the situation.....taking into account the impact of overcrowding'* (Magistrate 2002).
- 4.7 Overcrowding could be removed by a massive programme of prison building, however, this does not advocate the government message of moving away from custody as a 'last resort' towards using custody for the more serious of offences and offenders (United Nations 1990). Sentencers interviewed by Hough et al (2003) complained about 'mixed messages' from politicians and the senior judiciary. Martin Narey tackled this by stating *'magistrates tell me they are not sure what the message is. It seems pretty clear. We should not be using prison if there is another option'* (Magistrate 2002).
- 4.8 By providing 'community custody' (Prison Reform Trust 2005) as 'a genuine third option to sentencers (Home Office 2002), not only helps to tackle the issue of overcrowding, but could also provide effective rehabilitation and reparation for those 'minor offenders for whom a very short stay in prison serves little purpose' (Home Office 2004b).

5 The Courts and Custodial Sentencing

- 5.1 In addition to the increased rate of imprisonment there have been increases in the average length of sentences for those given immediate custody for most types of offences. To establish why this has happened it is necessary to look to changes in sentencing patterns.
- 5.2 The total number of offenders sentenced at magistrates' courts in 2004 was 1,471,100 while the Crown Court sentenced 76,300. The total number of male offenders sentenced was 1,257,300, and the total number of female offenders sentenced was 279,500. The total number of young adults sentenced (aged 18-20) was 156,400 and for adults (aged 21 and over) this was 1,284,200 (Home Office 2005c).
- 5.3 Overall the total number of offenders sentenced to custody increased by 53% from 1994 to 2004. However, there had been a decrease in custodial sentences at magistrates' courts from 2003 to 2004 by around 3%. The average custodial

sentence length in the Crown Court increased by 32% from 1994 to 2004; in magistrates' courts during this period, they remained between 2.7 months and 3.2 months (Home Office 2005c).

- 5.4 In the fourth quarter of 2004¹³ the magistrates' courts sentenced 56,574 offenders of which 14.6% were sentenced to immediate custody, 38.2% were given a community sentence and 24.7% were fined. The average custodial sentence length was 3.0 months (12 weeks). In the first quarter of 2005 the Crown Court sentenced 17,020 offenders, of which 60.1% were sentenced to custody, 30.2% were given a community sentence and 2.5% were fined. The average custodial length was 26.2 months (Home Office 2005d).
- 5.5 Within the same time period, the magistrates' courts sentenced 6,718 young¹⁴ adult males, of which 12.6% were sentenced to custody, 36.5% were given a community sentences and 30% were fined. The average custodial sentence was 2.8 months (11.5 weeks). The Crown Court sentenced 2,324 young adult males, of which 59% were sentenced to custody and 35.6% were given a community sentence. The average custodial sentence length was 22.5 months (Home Office 2005d).
- 5.6 For young adult females (within the same time period) the magistrates' courts sentenced 1,027 offenders, of which 5.3% were sentenced to custody, 35.9% were given a community sentence and 20.8% were fined. The average custodial length was 2.4 months (9.8 weeks). The Crown Court sentenced 231 females, of which 36.4% received a custodial sentence and 55% were given a community sentence (Home Office 2005d).
- 5.7 Overall, both courts favoured community sentencing for young adult female offenders. However, the magistrates' courts favoured community sentencing for both male and female young adult offenders when compared to the Crown Court. Given the regional focus of the pilot-intervention it is worth noting that sentencing trends are inconsistent at regional levels.
- 5.8 Within the Northumbria region, Newcastle upon Tyne District magistrates' courts, the largest sentencing bench in the region, sentenced 818 young adult offenders in 2002, of which 8.4 % were sentenced to immediate custody, 25.4% received a community sentence and 36.5% were fined. The average custodial sentence length was 2.8 months (11.5 weeks). Sunderland Magistrates' courts sentenced 465 young adult offenders in the same year, of which 22.9% were sentenced to immediate custody, 22.9% received a community sentence and 26.1% were fined. The average custodial sentence length was 3.5 months (14.2 weeks). Whereas Houghton-le-Spring magistrates' courts sentenced 244 offenders in 2002, of which 5.1% were sentenced to immediate custody, 26.5% were given a community sentence and 30.9% were fined. The average custodial sentence length was 2.7 months (11.1 weeks). Overall Sunderland magistrates' courts sentenced proportionately more young adults to custody than their

¹³ These figures represent October to December 2004 for magistrates' courts and January to March 2005 for the Crown Court.

¹⁴ Offenders aged 18-20 at sentence.

counterparts; these young adults were more likely to receive a longer custodial sentence (Home Office 2003b).

- 5.9 Nationally, those serving sentences of six months or under make up over half of the 93,500 received into prison under sentence in 2003, the majority of which committed less serious offences such as theft, handling and motoring offences. This was an increase of 111 per cent since 1993 (Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004).
- 5.10 A large proportion of government literature in the UK suggests that the increasing severity of sentences is largely owed to judges and magistrates sentencing more harshly. However, it could be argued that the government sends out mixed messages to the public and the courts about sentencing. In aiming to reduce the prison population the government introduces policies and legislations which play a clear part in the upward pressure on sentencers. The last ten years has witnessed the introduction of tough legislation which has implemented mandatory custodial sentences for drink driving offences, drivers who have three previous disqualifications in the past ten years, life for some sex and violent offences and a mandatory three years for a third burglary conviction.
- 5.11 The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Woolf said *'there is a continuous upward pressure and very rarely any downward pressure on the level of sentences. The upward pressure comes from public opinion and the media, the government of the day and parliament.'* (Rethinking Crime and Punishment 2003).
- 5.12 Still, one particular problem which faces the prison system has been the increase in the use of short-term custodial sentences. It is widely accepted that such sentences are too short to have any impact upon offenders and prison interventions are not long enough to meaningfully address offending behaviour. The Home Secretary and Lord Chancellor in 2002 criticised short custodial sentences on the grounds that they *'provide little opportunity to tackle re-offending and indeed can often make things worse – disrupting family and work life while putting offenders who have committed relatively minor crimes in the company of more serious offenders'* (Lord Chancellor's Department 2002).
- 5.13 Overall, prisons exclude offenders from society, they are taken away from their homes, family and friends. One in four prisoners serving a short custodial sentence who previously had stable accommodation lose their homes whilst in prison (Prison Reform Trust 2005); two-thirds lose their jobs and around 40% of prisoners lose contact with their families. All of these factors significantly increase the likelihood of re-offending (Coultsfield Inquiry 2004).
- 5.14 In light of this, offenders who would otherwise be sentenced to a short-term prison sentence could benefit from a community custodial sentence. Where a prison sentence focuses on 'exclusion', the focus of a community custodial sentence would be 'inclusion'. Whilst subject to a community custodial sentence, offenders would receive a realistic package of support and intervention which make up the five key areas in preventing re-offending as outlined by the Home Secretary (Prison Reform Trust 2005) – namely health,

education, employment, social and family links, and housing. The Home Secretary goes on to state that *'each of these five areas which make up the support package for each individual can only develop through a full and vital external partnership'* (Prison Reform Trust 2005).

6 'Partnership Working'¹⁵

- 6.1 There has been a 'managerial revolution' in the Probation Service over the last two decades. One strategy favoured in this new approach has been the development of partnerships. Firstly there is the concept of 'inter-agency co-operation', whereby different parts of the public sector are encouraged or required to work collaboratively, in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness (see Faulkner 1989, Carter 2003). This approach has perhaps been taken to its full potential in relation to young offenders with the establishment of the multi-agency YOT's¹⁶.
- 6.2 The second form of partnership, sometimes described as a multi-agency partnership, is a partnership between the Probation Service and another body as part of the contracting-out/joint working basis, involving non-profit making organisations (Nellis 2002, Rungay 2003). This approach enables the Probation Service to work closely with voluntary agencies that are deeply embedded within local communities in particular areas. Creatively mixing different kinds of interventions and provisions in this way enables inter-agency partnership providers to offer an individualised support package. The Home Secretary advocated this approach in his speech to the Prison Reform Trust (2005), he states *'I believe that the further development of organisational partnerships to deliver these measures is essential.....there is still a massive potential which we can and should draw upon so that we benefit from the knowledge and experience of a range of different organisations as we seek to intervene successfully'* (Prison Reform Trust 2005).
- 6.3 Clear Track as a non-profit making organisation falls into the latter category. By working together as a multi-agency partnership, both Clear Track and the Probation Service will be able to deliver a comprehensive innovative package aimed at reducing re-offending through inclusion. As a pilot-intervention and a non-profit making organisation, Clear Track will be aiming to provide a cost-efficient and effective service at no additional cost to the Probation Service.

¹⁵ Prison Reform Trust 2005.

¹⁶ By statute under the Crime and Disorder Act 1988, section 39, YOT's must co-operate between the local authority, the police, the probation service and the health service.

7 What Works? Clear Track as a Community Custodial Sentencing Option

- 7.1 Increases in the use of imprisonment often reflect policy changes rather than represent direct responses to increases in crime rates. In England and Wales these official policies are somewhat diverse. Recent years have seen a complete reversal of the ‘nothing works’ argument (Martinson 1974, Raynor and Vanstone 2002) which was influential at the end of the 1970’s to the ‘what works’ hypothesis, firmly committed to the view that some treatments *do* work and are more effective than others.
- 7.2 During 1993 the then Home Secretary Michael Howard pronounced that ‘prison works’ and his successors Jack Straw and David Blunkett continued to expand upon this maxim by translating it into policy (see Windlesham 1996).
- 7.3 In 1998, Underdown’s inspection report (Underdown 1998) advocated once again the ‘what works’ agenda, which became the underlying approach for the newly created National Offenders Management Service (NOMs). Underdown’s recommendations for effectiveness emphasised the need for evidence-based practice, inviting more research, measurement and evaluation to facilitate future decisions about the direction of sentencing and probation practice.
- 7.4 Still, in the government’s pursuit of restraint in the use of custody in some less serious cases, but more substantial use of custody in more serious cases, it becomes apparent that sentencers are receiving ‘mixed messages’ from policy and policy-makers and often feel that there are ‘no real alternatives’ to custody (Magistrate 2002).
- 7.5 In identifying ‘*what works*’, community custody could become a genuine option to sentencers. By offering a realistic alternative to prison, community custody could bridge the gap between prison sentences and community sentencing. In doing so, this form of custody could tackle several of the issues currently facing the prison system. The overall aim essentially, is to reduce re-offending by providing an effective rehabilitative regime in the community for those low-risk offenders who would have otherwise received a short-term prison sentence.
- 7.6 Where a prison sentence ‘excludes’ an individual from society (primarily to protect the public) through removing them from their family and friends, and home and work environment, a community custodial sentence represents a more ‘inclusive’ approach towards rehabilitation and reparation. Overall, offenders would be subjected to an intensive regime aimed at addressing offending behavioural patterns and strengthening pro-social links. However, for community custody to be effective as a deterrent away from crime and in protecting the public, it needs to enforce some of the punitive features of custody. Community custody prisoners should be subjected to important restrictions, particularly in relation to their freedom of movement, within a residential setting. Similarly steps need to be put in place to ensure that non-compliance of the sentence is dealt with appropriately. A breach of this

sentence could result in returning to court to be re-sentenced; the next point of entry within the sentencing framework being a prison sentence.

- 7.7 Over the past 10 years, models of community custody have been adapted to suit the sentencing framework of several countries, including Canada, Finland and New Zealand in an attempt to reduce the use of imprisonment. In 1996, Canada introduced a ‘conditional sentence of imprisonment’ as a community custody sentencing option. This conditional sentence is a form of imprisonment within the community which attracts statutory – compulsory and optional – conditions. This sentencing option extends its application to offenders convicted of the most serious offences, including manslaughter and sexual assault, provided the sentencers are ‘*satisfied that serving the sentence in the community would not endanger the safety of the community*’ as according to the Canadian Criminal Code¹⁷.
- 7.8 Similarly, Finland adopted the use of community custody in the form of a ‘conditional imprisonment’ sentencing option. Whereas serious offenders are liable for a conditional sentence of imprisonment in Canada, sentencers in Finland must ensure that they are satisfied that the severity of the crime does not warrant a prison sentence. Both sentencing regimes have been successful in reducing the use of prison as a form of imprisonment. Roberts (2004) argues that the effectiveness of community custody in reducing the use of prison may be due to the large catchments of crimes which include more serious offences.
- 7.9 New South Wales however, ‘screens out’ offenders convicted of the most serious offences (taking into consideration offences and the criminal history of the offender) when using an approach to community custody known as the ‘home detention order’. The success of the ‘home detention order’ not only lies in the reduction of the use of imprisonment, but also lies in its general acceptance by the community (see Roberts 2004).
- 7.10 The overall introduction of these new sanctions has largely impacted upon the sentencing decisions of sentencers, thus reducing the number of offenders sentenced to prison; and upon offenders and their rehabilitative experiences. It has also helped to challenge professional and community views of the way in which offenders may be punished.
- 7.11 Whilst aspiring to these effective interventions employed within the current framework of statutory sentencing. Community Service Volunteers (CSV), through its Springboard Sunderland project, will launch an innovative pilot-intervention called Clear Track to explore the full scope and potential of community custody as a realistic, viable and effective sentencing option. Clear Track as an intervention aims to come between young people and their offending behaviour by providing an intensive, interactive regime which is essentially designed to reduce the negative outcomes, such as loss of employment, accommodation and family, which can accompany short-term prison sentences. As a community custodial sentence it is designed to be used only when custody is required.

¹⁷ See the department of justice Canada, the criminal code: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/C-46/>

8 Clear Track: Aims and Purpose

8.1 The overall purpose of Clear Track is to establish whether young adult offenders (aged 18-21), who would have otherwise received a custodial sentence, have a better chance of developing themselves as effective and productive citizens by attending Clear Track as a community custodial sentence.

8.2 Clear Track aims to achieve this by:

- engaging with low-risk young adult offenders, aged 18-21, who at the time of sentence would have otherwise received a prison custodial sentence.
- developing a holistic approach to support young adult offenders, addressing accommodation, employment, training and education and other needs such as social support.
- supporting offenders in a community setting.
- developing a partnership approach to the delivery of service for the participants of Clear Track.
- establishing whether Clear Track effectively addresses the offending behaviour of its participants.
- demonstrating a cost-effective and efficient community custodial sentencing option.

8.3 This will be measured by the following targets:

- to engage with up to 50 young adult offenders, aged 18-21, per year, over three years.
- to provide an average length of stay of up to 16 weeks.
- to provide a range of work-based learning activities, interventions and unpaid voluntary work for participants at Clear Track.
- to measure and compare the cost of Clear Track with the estimated cost of a prison establishment holding young adult offenders aged 18-21.
- to provide participants with the opportunity to engage in constructive activities, such as voluntary work, education and training upon leaving Clear Track.

- to measure change in behaviour and attitudes which occur throughout the treatment period.
- to measure and compare the reconviction rates of participants leaving Clear Track with the estimated reconviction rates of offenders leaving prison.
- to network with stakeholders and other organisations.

8.4 Throughout the three year pilot-period Clear Track will be evaluated to assess its effectiveness and efficiency and to establish ‘what works’ in providing a realistic community custodial sentencing option. The evaluation framework is as outlined below.

9 Evaluation for and as Evidence-Based Practice

9.1 In modern scientific communities (Stehr 1991) there is a growing need for a scientifically underpinned proof of effectiveness, efficiency, quality and acceptance of innovations, interventions, policy and practice; this is partly due to the scarce resources of public budgets which lead to intensified monitoring of efficiency and costs; and partly due to the increasing awareness of quality and ‘value for money’ on the part of a critical public. Thus, a major commitment on the part of the government in continuing to improve the delivery of public services is in ensuring that public funds are spent on activities that provide the greatest benefits to society, and that they are spent in the most efficient way.

9.2 In achieving this the HM Treasury suggests that all new policies, programmes and projects, whether revenue, capital or regulatory, should be subject to comprehensive but proportionate assessments, so as best to promote the public interest (HM Treasury 2003) as well as the interests and concerns of the commissioning bodies and stakeholders – namely the Home Office, CSV, the Helen Hamlyn Trust, Springboard and NOMs, including those responsible for administering and delivering the programme, the participants and citizens generally. In the political arena of penal policy, especially given the innovative nature of Clear Track and its uniqueness in the UK context, a comprehensive, independent evaluation of this pilot intervention is necessitated.

9.3 This is achieved through a principled and systematic evaluation process which has the following aims and objectives:

- to undertake an evaluation of the Clear Track project at four levels of analysis: theories of change; process and structure; impact assessment; and efficiency analysis.

- to assess and monitor desired behavioural, social and intra-organisational changes and learning processes (Torres et al 1996).
- to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and goal-attainment of Clear Track and the organisational changes from the earliest stages.
- to assess and monitor the effectiveness and impact of Clear Track as a project designed to reduce re-offending behaviour of young adult offenders.
- wherever feasible the evaluation results are expected to offer a greater understanding and an improved quality of service (Rossi and Freeman 1993, Weis 1998).

10 Evaluating Clear Track

10.1 The overall aim of this evaluation is to measure *how far* and *how effectively* Clear Track will meet its intended aims, objectives and targets whilst applying a scientific realistic framework (Pawson and Tilley 1994). That is, the purpose of the evaluation is to monitor the project's contribution to the landscape of community-based interventions through a conceptualisation of first, the theories of change which underpin changes in offending behaviour; second, project implementation through assessing the processes and structures of Clear Track's development and delivery; thirdly, project impact by assessing change which has occurred as a direct result of Clear Track's implementation; and finally, by measuring project efficiency through assessing the overall effectiveness of Clear Track. In doing so, the evaluation ensures a comprehensive assessment of Clear Track.

10.2 At the same time a further aim of the evaluation will be to monitor the replicability of Clear Tack, that is, to provide an assessment that would be unchanged if the evaluation were replicated.

10.3 This will be achieved by:

- designing an evaluation framework which will aim to provide an evidence-based response to 'what works' in relation to Clear Track's aims and objectives
- defining the issue of concern through a pre-empirical evaluation of the theoretical constructs.
- systematically and scientifically grounding the evaluation by applying a scientific realistic framework and a repertoire of social science research techniques which support this framework.

- ensuring means of openness, transparency and fairness through communicating the results of the evaluation and their implications to the stakeholders and decision-makers through progress team meetings and bi-annual reports.
- suggesting recommendations to enhance policy and practice.

11 Tailoring the Evaluation

11.1 Before the evaluation framework can be developed, careful consideration needs to be given to the direction of the evaluation i.e. what information should be gathered? The purpose of the evaluation is to a large extent fuelled by the evaluation questions. In other words, the evaluation is shaped by the kind of questions to which answers are sought, which are, in turn, largely driven by the interaction of the theory and purpose of the research (see table EP1.1).

11.2 Applying a scientific realistic framework (Young and Mathews 1992, Pawson and Tilley 1997), which is widely appreciated as particularly appropriate for evaluation research in practice- and value-based professions, allows the evaluation to develop a deeper understanding of the mechanism through which an action causes an outcome, and about the context which provides the ideal conditions to trigger the mechanism (Duguid and Pawson 1998). Thus, in identifying ‘what works’ the evaluation will also be able to investigate which *processes* and *mechanisms* are effective, under *what conditions*, in *what setting* and for *which participants*.

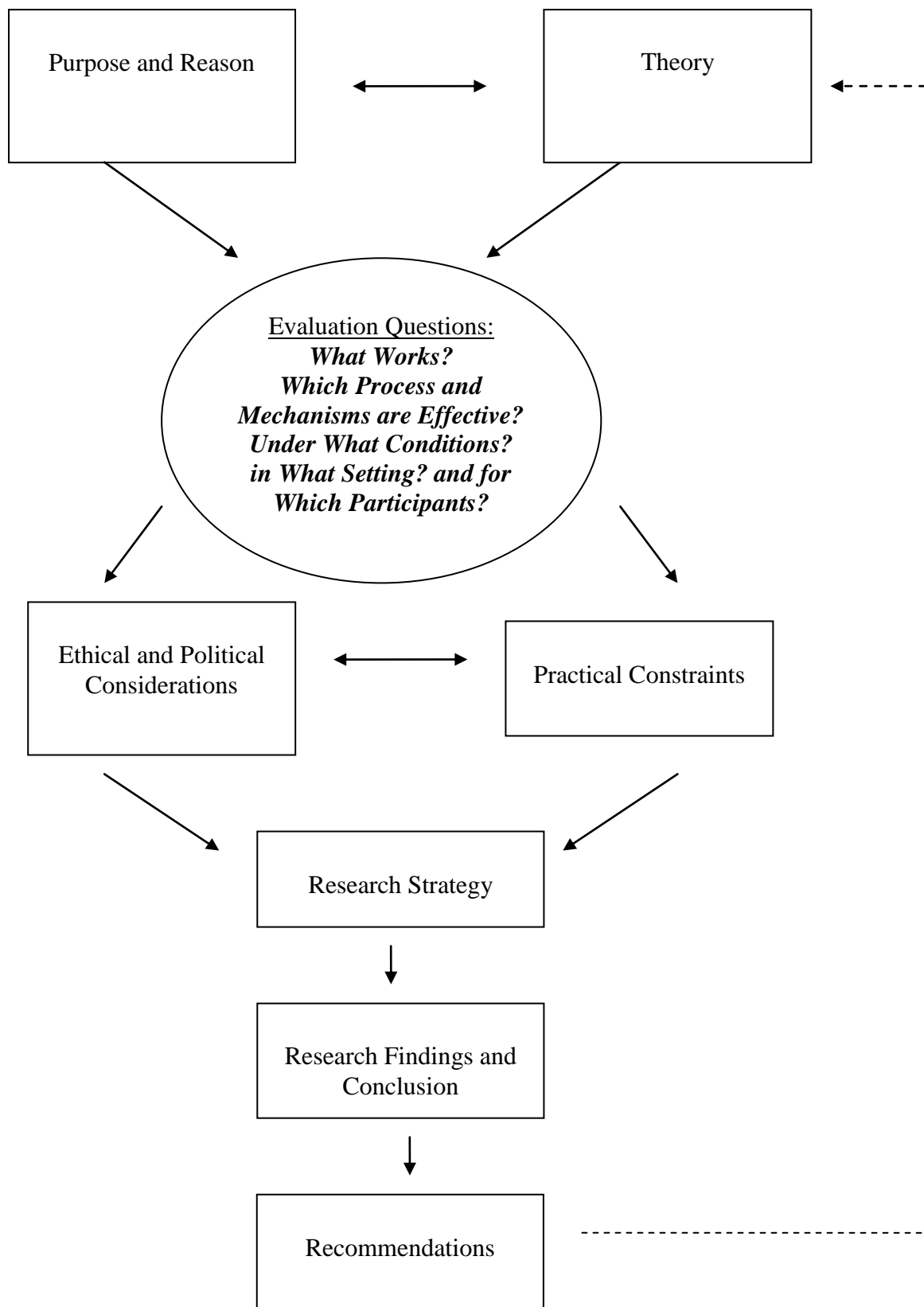
11.3 Table EP1.2 will attempt to simplify the complexities of these questions by providing a number of common questions relevant to the evaluation of Clear Track. These are by no means the only questions which might be asked. However, in simplifying the underlying concepts a structured and logical sequence can be adopted in identifying the relations between the theories of change, processes and structure, impact, and efficiency (see Rossi and Freeman 1993, Robson 2002). It is the interdependence of such concepts which will constitute a tailored assessment of Clear Track.

12 The Evaluation Structure

▪ **Theories of Change**

12.1 Proposals for policy changes and new innovations generally arise out of the realisation that a new social problem has been identified or is about to emerge. Thus, social intervention programmes such as Clear Track can be seen as responses to either perceived or incipient problems.

Table EP1.1: Framework for Evaluation Design



12.2 In the planning stages of social intervention programmes such as Clear Track, the evaluation will focus on assessing the extent and severity of the problems requiring social intervention and in understanding the processes which lead to this situation. It is in understanding the sources of these problems and processes that the potential for positive change, and any regularities and patterns which emerge from it, can be identified. In other words, the need to rethink current custodial provisions as an intervention in reducing re-offending behaviour has been the inspiration of the innovation of Clear Track, which in turn aims to create change through interactive interventions with young adult offenders, aged 18-21 (see table EP1.3).

12.3 Many interesting questions arise in relation to the underlying dynamics of change, which both overlap and impact upon the process, outcomes, and efficiency of Clear Track as a pilot-intervention. The identification of such undercurrents is essential in both monitoring the programme's implementation and in assessing how the programme may bring about change.

▪ **Process and Structure**

12.4 Documenting the operational effectiveness of Clear Track benefits the program sponsors, stakeholders and the overall management of Clear Track. By providing a systematic assessment in this way the Clear Track management team will be able to make informed decisions and choices particularly relating to the operational capacity of Clear Track in conformity to its design and in reaching its specified target population.

12.5 The Clear Track management team will be able to make informed decisions in relation to the necessary changes which may need to take place in defending the programme's performance. Monitoring the implementation of Clear Track will also benefit programme sponsors and stakeholders in providing evidence of the process through which a new initiative is introduced and embedded within a regional context. .

12.6 Overall, the process evaluation will provide a useful complement to the impact and outcome evaluation of Clear Track by providing a critique of the discrepancies which may occur between the aims of the project and the outcomes.

▪ **The Impact Assessment of Clear Track**

12.7 The impact assessment will measure to what extent Clear Track has created change in the desired direction when asking *what kind of effect or impact the project has had on those taking part?* The task here will be to measure how far

Table EP1.2: The Underlying Questions to the Evaluation Question ‘What Works and Why?’

<i>What Works? – Which Mechanisms and Processes are Effective? Under what Conditions? and for which Participants?</i>			
Theories of Change	Process and Structure	The Impact Assessment of Clear Track	Efficiency Analysis
<i>Why Should Clear Track Work?</i>	<i>How does Clear Track Work?</i>	<i>Why does Clear Track Work?</i>	<i>Is Clear Track Worth it?</i>
What social problem(s) brought the current need for Clear Track as a pilot-intervention in reducing re-offending behaviour?	How was Clear Track implemented?	What changes have Clear Track brought about which have impacted upon the outcomes and the participants?	Is Clear Track producing sufficient benefits in relation to the costs incurred?
What is needed to change within the realms of the social problem in order to improve the current situation?	Does Clear Track operate as planned and expected?	To what extent is Clear Track generating change in the desired direction?	Is it intended to produce a particular benefit at a lower cost per unit of outcome than other interventions designed to achieve the same goal? Has this been achieved?
What is needed to change within the constructs of Clear Track in order to improve the current situation?	Who participates within the project?	What kind of an effect or impact is Clear Track having upon those taking part in the pilot-intervention?	Does Clear Track reduce re-offending behaviour?
	Has change occurred within the process and implementation of Clear Track? If so why has this happened? What impact has this had?	What changes have occurred which have impacted upon Clear Track?	Are the benefits from reducing re-offending behaviour greater than the costs of implementing Clear Track?

Clear Track has met its pre-defined aims and targets of success in satisfying its overall criteria.

12.8 The impact assessment is a crucial part of Clear Track's evaluation, however without a systematic observation and study of the process and implementation of the project the nature of what is being evaluated may become obscure or misunderstood. In addition, impact evaluations are essential when there is an interest in comparing different projects and in testing the utility of new interventions in changing a specific social problem (Rossi and Freeman 1993). In this instance, there is a need to recognise the impact of Clear Track as an innovative pilot-intervention when compared to the Prison Service, in a bid to reducing re-offending behaviour, and in finding a feasible, cost-effective alternative to prison as a form of custody.

12.9 Whilst the study of impact in this comparative way is important, there are fundamental critiques of the use of control group methodology in evaluation research (see Pawson and Tilley 1997), particularly when considering the ethical implications of comparing the relative impact of imprisonment vis-à-vis community custody upon young offenders and their offending behaviour. The implications of randomised control trials (RCT) will be discussed in more detail within the methodology section. In light of this, the evaluation can still sensibly target other aspects relating to impact, such as whether the project meets the needs of those taking part in generating change which in turn can be argued against a wealth of pre-empirical observations alongside the research study's data. In providing a demonstrable impact assessment the project management team will be able to defend and maintain the implementation of the project.

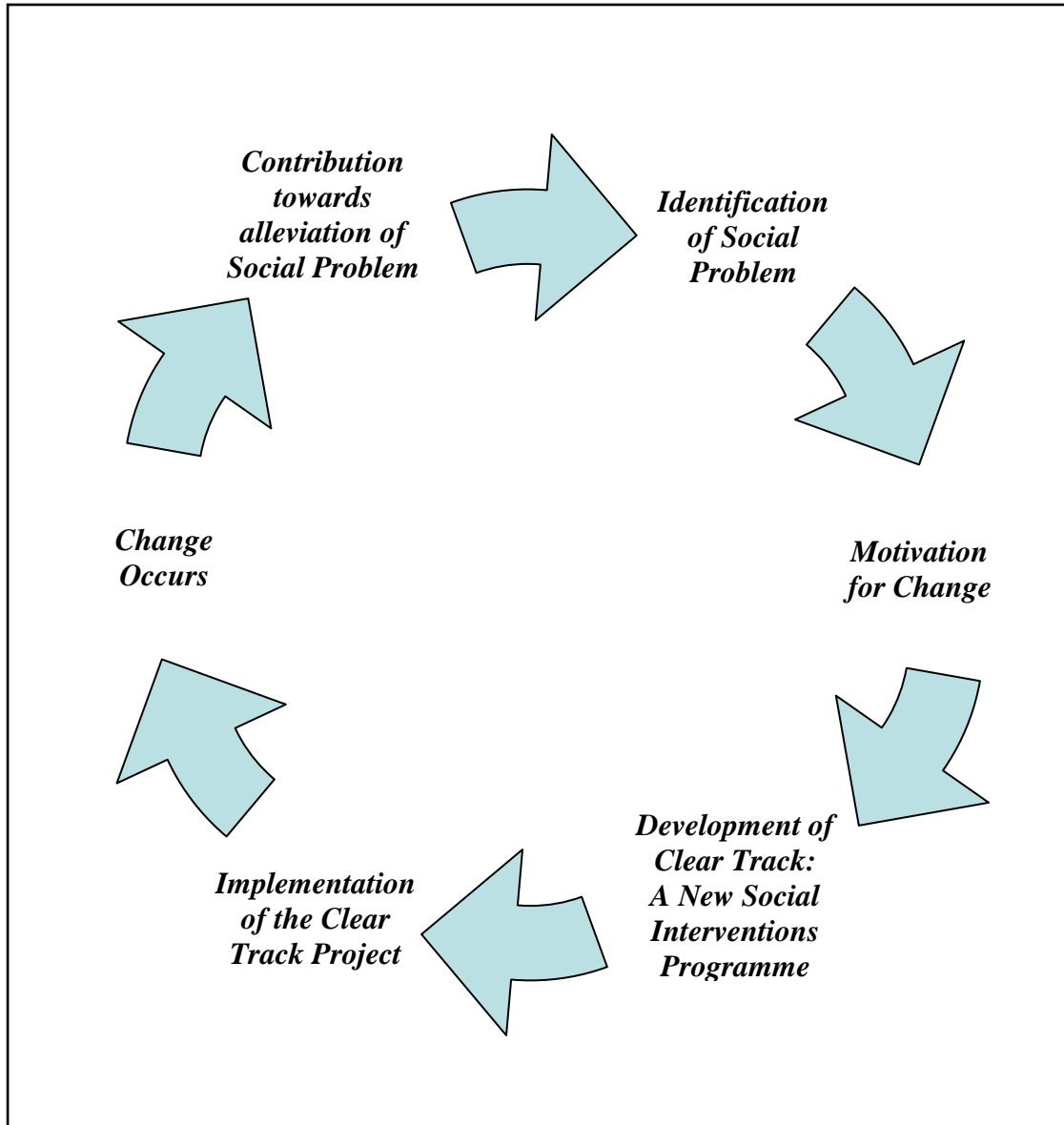
▪ ***Efficiency Analysis***

12.10 The requirement of a systematic approach to measuring the costs¹⁸ and benefits¹⁹ of different projects and pilots seems reasonable when considering the allocation of government resources. The issue of costs is becoming increasingly relevant; partly because resources and funding present a constant and growing concern for public sector organisations; and partly because of the competitive allocation of funds and resources by foundations, international organisations and various levels of government. Subsequently, cost-benefit analysis and project evaluation techniques, which have been widely used in areas such as transport and health, are being increasingly applied in the criminal justice area. This is supported by HM Treasury (2003) and the Home Office (1991) who express the need for an adequate assessment of both the effectiveness and the cost-effectiveness of new initiatives.

¹⁸ Costs are the various inputs, direct and indirect, required to set up and run a project or maintain an intervention.

¹⁹ Benefits are the various outputs, both tangible and intangible, which accrue as a result of implementing the pilot-intervention and in having a positive impact upon its participants.

Table EP 1.3: Clear Track: Cycle of Change



- 12.11 The starting point for cost-effective and cost-benefit analyses of a crime reduction intervention such as Clear Track, is just the same as the starting point for the project's evaluation as to whether the intervention 'works' in achieving the overall aim (Sherman et al 1998, Petrosini et al 2001).
- 12.12 If an intervention does not work it cannot be cost-effective or cost-beneficial since it will show no benefits. However, an intervention is not cost-effective simply because it 'works' in reducing the re-offending behaviour of those young adult offenders who were involved in the project. It is also possible that interventions that offer the greatest impact in reducing re-offending behaviour are not necessarily those offering the most cost-effective way of utilising their resources. At the same time, an intervention that 'works' may not be implemented if a more cost-effective way can be found for delivering the same outcomes.
- 12.13 It is for this purpose that the evaluation should comprise of a combination of the effectiveness of Clear Track – *how effective is Clear Track in reducing offending behaviour?* – with an analysis of its costs. Stakeholders and decision-makers can use such conclusions when comparing Clear Track's impact with other kinds of regimes designed to reduce re-offending behaviour such as community sentences or rehabilitation schemes; or for the purposes of this evaluation it could be used to compare the returns from spending on Clear Track with the returns from spending on the Prison Service as interventions in reducing re-offending behaviour.
- 12.14 Many evaluations have concentrated primarily on the question of effectiveness (does Clear Track reduce re-offending behaviour?) (see Home Office 2001, The Women's Policy Research Unit 2001); rather than on cost-effectiveness (which is the cheapest means of reducing re-offending behaviour?); or cost benefit analysis (are the benefits from reducing re-offending behaviour greater than the costs of implementing Clear Track?). This may be because it is not an easy task to quantify the costs of a pilot or because it is regarded more as the role of the auditor or the project's finance department, than that of the evaluator. Still, while some procedures used in cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses are highly technical this does not justify omission of information directly relevant to the evaluation process. In most cases, the benefits of the impact of the intervention alone are insufficient in defending or justifying the accountability and implementation of Clear Track. However, in this evaluation, matters of cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis are seen as integral to assessing the overall effectiveness of Clear Track (Perkins 1994).

13 The Research Strategy

13.1 As has previously been discussed, this comprehensive, independent evaluation based on a framework of scientific realism, will adopt an evidence-based structured approach in assessing and supporting the focus, aims and targets of Clear Track, whilst measuring its efficiency and impact as a pilot-intervention. In order to achieve this it is necessary for the evaluation to adopt a systematic application of social science research procedures to demonstrate persuasively that observed changes are a function of the intervention and to ensure that this cannot be accounted for in other ways.

13.2 This will be achieved by:

- designing, collecting and analysing primary quantitative data in the form of an Interrupted Time Series Design, which will be conducted at pre-determined time intervals in order to observe and compare changes which occur over time.
- designing, collecting and analysing primary qualitative data in the form of video diaries in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the quantitative findings and to provide valuable data in recording changes which may occur within the intervention treatment period.
- designing, collecting and analysing quantitative data in the form of evaluation sheets to gain an understanding of the effectiveness and impact of the intervention activities conducted within Clear Track from the perspective of the participant.
- analysing secondary data in the form of Clear Track assessment documents to gain a detailed understanding of the participants offending behaviour to establish and compare changes in severity and frequency of offending behaviour pre- and post-treatment.
- to compare a series of outcomes which emerge from the findings against the Prison Service in order to evaluate and measure the efficiency and effectiveness of Clear Track.
- communicating the results of the research to sponsors, stakeholders and decision-makers through progress team meetings and bi-annual reports in order to provide a greater understanding and an improved quality of service.
- making recommendation to support policy and practice development and in suggesting the direction for future research.

13.3 Overall the evaluation team has designed a research strategy which rigorously and robustly underpins the four levels of analysis which encompass the evaluation approach. The benefits of this are unveiled in the designs flexibility in evaluating the pilot-intervention given the various stages and processes associated with the implementation of new projects and interventions.

▪ ***The Classic Experimental Design versus Scientific Realism***

- 13.4 The classic randomised control trial experimental design involves randomly allocating subjects into two groups, the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group is then subjected to the manipulation or stimulus, known as the independent variable i.e. the treatment programme, while the control group is not subjected to the stimulus. Pre-test and post-test observations of both groups are then compared and analysed²⁰ (Shepperd et al 1997, Black 1999).
- 13.5 In social science research it is difficult to conduct experimental trials like this (Seale 2004, David and Sutton 2004). For the most part, it is difficult to manipulate a person's social world to the extent required in a full experiment; at the same time it goes against social science principles which advocate the exploration of a person's social world in order to gain a true understanding of the participant and their experiences. Such experimental designs often changes a person's social reality to such an extent that the setting involved becomes artificial, so that generalising results from the experiment setting to the real world becomes difficult (see Campbell and Stanley 1963, LeCompte and Goetz 1982, Maxwell 1992). Another limitation in the use of RCT experiments lies in the potential harm of depriving control groups of positive benefits. For example, if Clear Track is likely to help in reducing re-offending behaviour of those who partake in the project it becomes a 'positive harm' to withhold potentially helpful services from those who are held in prison and to do so is therefore unethical (Pawson and Tilley 1997). Alongside these limitations there also needs to be careful consideration of the 'Hawthorne Effect'²¹ and its impact upon the study's validity (Cook and Campbell 1979, Maxwell 1992).
- 13.6 Adopting a scientific realist approach enables the evaluation team to investigate both the theory and practice of project delivery. Theory at this level offers an understanding of how *mechanisms* operate in *contexts* to produce *outcomes*, in other words understanding the ideas behind Clear Track offers an additional insight into *why the programme works, for whom, and in what circumstances*. Mechanisms are at the centre of this approach; it is not the programme's activities themselves which constitute the mechanisms but the response they generate in the participants in contributing towards outcomes, i.e. regular attendance, gaining useful skills, gaining appropriate job behaviours and so on, which in turn impacts upon offending behaviour. It may be that some mechanisms work with some young adult offenders but not with others, or perhaps they work for specific characteristic groups i.e. types of offence, age

²⁰ This approach matches people with certain characteristics into 'matched pairs', which should be representative of the general population. These are then randomly allocated, one of each pair to an 'experimental group' and one to a 'control group'. This is intended to make the two groups as similar as possible by removing any differences between the groups that might 'bias' or distort the outcome of the experiment (see Payne and Payne 2004).

²¹ The 'Hawthorne Effect' is the tendency, particularly in social experiments, for people to modify their behaviour because they know they are being studied, and so distort (usually unwittingly) the research findings.

and so on. Still, the overall basic idea of thinking in terms of mechanisms and contexts to find out how Clear Track operates can be widely applied.

- 13.7 Thus, this evaluation benefits from employing a scientific realist framework by avoiding many of the practical and ethical problems which can occur when using experimental group designs for small-scale evaluations.
- 13.8 A mixed-method approach will be employed to establish whether such links can be supported by the research findings. This will take the form of an interrupted time series which will observe and compare changes which occur over time and the use of diaries which will provide valuable data in recording these changes as they occur within the intervention treatment period. These will be complimented by self-evaluation forms which will monitor the activities which take place as part of the intervention treatment period and their impact.

▪ ***Interrupted Time Series Design***

- 13.9 In the simplest form of this design there is just one sample group and a series of observations or tests before and after involvement with Clear Track. The literature covering this field suggests that 50 or more data points are needed in the before or after time series. This extent of data collection is outside the scope of this evaluation; however it is feasible to carry out several pre- and post-tests. Overall, data collection conducted in such a time orderly way as is carried out here, enables the researcher to observe and compare trends which have been established over time, particularly in the field of behavioural change where the intention is to reduce the frequency of offending behaviour.
- 13.10 Within the interrupted time series approach the principle source of information will be a series of questions, open and closed (David and Sutton 2004), carried out with the participants of Clear Track. Selecting a reliable and valid outcome measure such as a structured question format, which can be used repeatedly on a substantial number of occasions, will help in countering several of the threats to the internal validity of the study. Relevant literature on young offenders, crime, restorative justice, the criminal justice system and so on will be consulted; acting as a catalyst for brain storming the subject to help identify the direction of the question structure in a bid to compliment both the aims of the evaluation and the aims and targets of Clear Track (Thomas 1996, Merten 1998, Watson and Richardson 1999).
- 13.11 In other words, at each data point the same method will be used for sampling from the population and the same questions will be asked of each sample identified at each of the data points. Adopting this approach will help reduce poor response rates which are often associated with longitudinal studies, as people may drop out at the later follow-up points; and in reducing the problem of reactivity (see Cook and Campbell 1979, Maxwell 1992) when the subject starts to feel special in some way because they are taking part in a research project and therefore act differently. Overall, the key characteristics of this method will be that the same information will be collected from all cases in the

sample at predetermined intervals so variations between cases can be measured, whilst increasing the validity of the study.

▪ **Video Diaries**

13.12 The additional use of diaries as a data collection method will be employed in a complementary fusion to enhance the interpretability of the research findings. For example, the interpretation of the statistical analysis of the interrupted time series data may be enhanced by the narrative accounts of video diaries. The argument here is that the particular pattern of findings and context of the interrupted times series design may leave any statistical analysis open to particular ‘threats’. Thus, the mixed-method approach is used to counter, validate and qualify the quantitative data collected through the interrupted time series method.

13.13 The majority of literature which discusses the use of diaries explores this in the form of textual data (see David and Sutton 2004) or as written documentary methods (see Payne and Payne 2004). There is evidence of some discussion of the use of visual data within the field of social science, however the literature tends to focus on the use of photographs, films, sculptures, buildings and so on as existing archives of visual material (see Emmison and Smith 2000, Banks 2001, Pink 2001). Yet, visual images are becoming increasingly incorporated into our daily lives and our responses to visual spectacles are becoming central to our understanding of who we are and where we belong. Thus, it becomes a natural advancement in progressing beyond the more traditional approaches of the use of the diary as a written documentary method, towards an approach which fits more readily into our experiences of a visual culture²² when exploring the social world of the participants of Clear Track (see Lee 2000).

13.14 Video diaries provide the researcher with ‘mediated access’ into the lives of the participant (Scott 1990), in situations where it would be difficult or impossible for direct observation to take place (see Coxon 1988). The contents of a diary may provide an accurate portrayal of the life and world, emotions and meaning of the participant, opening a window to parts of ‘life’ that the researcher would otherwise not have access to. This is so especially in the case of young adult offenders who may be reluctant to openly discuss sensitive topics like their offending behaviour. In this instance, the video diary offers the young person an opportunity to express themselves by verbalising and visualising their thoughts and opinions without criticism or ridicule, when they otherwise might not have had such an opportunity.

13.15 Where participants react to the fact of being researched, the video diary offers less reaction as a non-intrusive data collection method. However, diary completion places a great deal of responsibility on the respondent (Robson

²² The Internet, Email, chat rooms, mobile phone picture messaging, video messaging and so on all leave a trail which the researcher can follow and record when employing visual data as a social science method.

2003) and unstructured video diaries leave the interpretation of the task very much with the respondents. There is evidence in favour of using a specific set of questions, but structuring the task in this way produces the risk of introducing 'bias' to the data set (see Bourgue and Back 1982). Adopting a semi-structured approach which provides participants with some guidance and prompts to aid the direction of the diary task, is the preferred model for this research.

13.16 Overall, the video diary offers a set of images which are the participants interpretation of the 'real'. The 'real', or the slice of reality that is captured, can never be reproduced as an authentic experience; but it does provide a representational snapshot of that reality (Barthes 1981). Thus, in offering a young adult offender an opportunity to keep a video diary the researcher is provided with a visual record of the young person's views, attitudes and opinions in relation to their offending behaviour and in relation to their involvement in Clear Track. In a bid to identify a progressive move away from offending behaviour the video diary may help capture the subtle occurrence of change that occurs which the young person is unaware of.

▪ ***The Evaluation Questionnaire: Measures of Client Satisfaction***

13.17 Evaluation sheets are an effective method in measuring the 'satisfaction' of the participants of Clear Track. This method will be employed to assess the participant's satisfaction as a contribution to outcome measures. In asking participants to complete a simple, single-sided questionnaire, the evaluation team will be able to gain a detailed understanding of the effectiveness of the interventions' activities and potential areas of improvement.

13.18 This can be achieved by covering:

- what the participants have actually done on the programme – overall, this will contribute towards assessing the implementation of the project and in identifying possible discrepancies between what was planned and what was delivered.
- what the participants have gained from the programme of activities – this will contribute towards assessing the perceived changes from the participants' perspective; it will also contribute towards assessing the extent to which these activities meet the participants' needs.
- ways in which the programmes' activities might be improved – this will contribute towards identifying future recommendations.

13.19 Collecting quantitative data in this way, not only offers a detailed understanding into the effectiveness and impact of the interventions' activities, it also increases the validity of the research findings.

13.20 In addition to the data collection method, SPSS will be used to analyse and validate the quantitative findings of the study and NUD*IST6 and NVivo will be used for the input and analysis of the qualitative data.

14 Timetable, Reports and Dissemination

14.1 The evaluation will take three years to complete, from September 2005 to August 2008 (see Table EP 1.4).

- **Phase I** (September 2005 – August 2006): to draw together a detailed evaluation proposal; to observe the ‘decision-making process’ during the implantation stage of Clear Track; to design and implement the quantitative data collection tool – the interrupted time series, before and after design; to design the qualitative data collection tool – the video diary; and to carry out the first stage follow-up data collection of the interrupted time series of participants six months after leaving Clear Track.
- **Phase I Reports:**
 - Evaluation proposal report – December 2005
 - Bi-annual Report – March 2006
 - End of Year Annual Report – August 2006
- **Phase II** (September 2006 – August 2007): to implement the qualitative data collection tool – the video diary; to carry out the second stage follow-up data collection of the interrupted time series of participants 12 months after their completion of the Clear Track programme; to design and implement quantitative data collection tool – the evaluation sheet; to explore secondary data; and to begin analysis of the data
- **Phase II Reports:**
 - Bi-annual report – February 2007
 - End of Second Year Annual Report – August 2007
- **Phase III** (September 2007 – August 2008): to analyse data; to prepare final report; and to feedback results to stakeholders.
- **Phase III Reports:**
 - Bi-annual report – February 2008
 - Final Report – August 2008

14.2 **Phase IV:** Dissemination of the evaluation findings will be fed back to the stakeholders and decision-makers through regular operational and progress team meetings, quarterly evaluation meetings and the reporting schedule. In addition, dissemination will be pursued through the following routes:

- CSV Intranet web site
- CSV Internet web site
- University of Newcastle web site
- Conferences papers




- Articles for publication
- In consultation with Springboard Sunderland and CSV, the organisation of day seminars and/or conferences at appropriate stages of the evaluation.

These dissemination methods will ensure that the progress and findings of the evaluation research are made available to as wide an audience as possible.

15 Evaluation Team

- 15.1 **Elaine Campbell** (BA, Cert Ed, PhD) is a Senior Lecturer in Criminology in the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, University of Newcastle. She has researched extensively in the field of criminal justice, youth justice and policing, and has recently completed a number of evaluation studies including Youth Inclusion (Northern Region), Pathways into Crime Reduction, Substance Misuse Amongst High Risk Populations of Young People, South Tyneside Mentoring Scheme, and Gateshead Bail Support Scheme. She is also the Review Editor for the *International Journal of Crime Prevention and Community Safety*.
- 15.2 Relevant recent publications: Campbell E (2005) 'Theorising the evidence on discretionary decision-making: alternative perspectives' *Evidence and Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice* 1/1: 33-60; Campbell E (2004) 'Police narrativity and the risk society' *British Journal of Criminology* 44/5: 236-279; Campbell E (2003) 'Police narrativity and discretionary power' *International Journal of the Sociology of Law* Volume 31/4: 295-322; Campbell E (2003) 'Interviewing men in uniform: a feminist approach?' *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, Theory and Practice* Volume 6/4: 285-304
- 15.3 **Danna-Mechelle Lewis** (BSc, MSc, MA [distinction]) is an experienced researcher in the field of criminal justice and penal policy. She has previously worked for HM Inspectorate of Prisons at the Home Office on a number of projects within various prison establishments. She was Research Assistant for the Youth Inclusion (Northern Region) Evaluation undertaken by Newcastle University. Miss Lewis is also a serving Justice of the Peace and is a member of the bench at Newcastle Magistrates' Courts.
- 15.4 Relevant recent publications: Lewis D-M (2002) 'Responding to a violent incident – control and restraint or anger management as a therapeutic intervention' *British Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* 19/1: 57-63; Lewis D-M (2003) 'Changing face of crime' *The Magistrates' Association Journal* 59/1: 12-13; Lewis D-M (2005) 'How important are prisons as locality within the community?' *The Prison Service Journal* Issue 162, 59-62.

Table EP 1.4 Research Timetable by Months

	0 to 12 Months	13 to 24 Months	25 to 36 Months	
Phase I				
Phase I Reports				
Phase II				
Phase II Reports				
Phase III				
Phase III Reports				
Phase IV				

16 Project Management

- 16.1 The evaluation study will be managed by Dr Elaine Campbell who is responsible for ensuring the intellectual direction and coherence of the research process, exercising cost control over the overall budget, and managing the research team. Monthly team meetings, supplemented by quarterly meetings with the project's stakeholders, will ensure that the proposed timetable of work is adhered to and will allow input into research design, advice on research progress, the identification of cross-cutting research themes, and the development of formative feedback structures and methods of dissemination. The Researcher (RA), Danna-Mechelle Lewis, will have overall responsibility for the operation and day to day running of the project and will be responsible to Dr Campbell. Miss Lewis will be primarily responsible for establishing liaison, negotiating access, developing materials and schedules for data collection, and will manage, undertake and oversee the data collection phase of the research including the supervision of temporary field researchers. All members of the research team will contribute to the interim analyses, the final stage of analysis, report-writing and dissemination. In addition, Miss Lewis will be undertaking the evaluation study in fulfillment of a doctorate, for which she will be registered at the University of Newcastle.
- 16.2 Sociology at Newcastle University has a long history of undertaking qualitative and quantitative evaluation research, and we maintain a pool of qualified and experienced researchers. As both Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator, Dr Campbell has recently completed a comparative evaluation of Gateshead and Sunderland Youth Offending Teams' 'Pathways Projects' (2000-2003), which included *inter alia*, a formative Youth Crime Audit and a process and impact evaluation of a Youth Impact Programme, Early Intervention Scheme, Springboard Solutions, Parenting Support Programme, Mentoring Programme, Arson Task Force, Persistent Young Offender Scheme and Restorative Justice Schemes. In addition to this work, Dr Campbell and Miss Lewis were engaged on both the first and second Youth Inclusion (Northern Region) Evaluation funded by the Youth Justice Board (2000 -2003). This body of research work has enabled the evaluation team to develop good research relationships with relevant professional groups in the region, and it has also facilitated an excellent working knowledge of database software in current use within the public sector of criminal justice, such as ASSET, MCS, YOIS and YIPMIS. Importantly, our recent evaluation commissions will assist in the identification of the lines of connection and evidence of 'what works' across and within the Clear Track initiative.

17 Financial Summary

Staff Costs

Miss Danna-Mechelle Lewis: RA/Doctoral Student (FT for 36 months)	
Year 1	£ 24,482
Year 2	£ 25,847
Year 3	£ 27,580

Dr Elaine Campbell: Principal Investigator (30 days @ University academic rates)	£ 15,000
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Temporary Field Researcher(s) (to be employed on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis over the period of the study for assistance with, for example, focus group recordings, data inputting and other appropriate field activities identified by the Principal Investigator)	£ 10,000
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Consumables

Telephone, postage, disks and stationary costs to cover basic project needs, including contact/liaison with research participants and stakeholders, costs of interview/questionnaires, interim and final reports, photocopying, and dissemination costs associated with feedback to the identified professional and user groups	£ 5,000
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Travel Costs

3 @ Annual All Zones Tyne and Wear Metro	£ 1,800
12 @ Weekly All Zones Tyne and Wear Metro	£ 684

Technical Equipment

2 Mini-disc recorders (qualitative data collection)	£ 160
1 laptop (quantitative data collection)	£ 1,500

Other

University Transcription Services	£ 7,000
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GRAND TOTAL	£119,053
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▪ Abbreviations

CNA	Certified Normal Accommodation
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment.
CSV	Community Service Volunteers
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspectorate of Prisons
NOMs	National Offenders Management Service
RCT	Randomised Control Trials
YOT's	Youth Offending Teams

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