

## **CS30: HMP WOLDS DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY: DICE**

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### **Context**

In 2009 the G4S Diversity and Inclusion Manager who had responsibility for the delivery of Diversity and Inclusion across all the G4S sites was concerned that HMP Wolds was not performing as well as the other prisons in relation to managing Diversity. G4S, a private company, was at that time contracted to run five prisons in the UK. In particular there had been a number of complaints that prisoners were not being treated equally or respectfully at HMP Wolds, and the Senior Management Team (SMT) at the prison recognised that they needed support to address this concern.

They also knew that the prison was not compliant with Prison Service Orders in terms of completing Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) which are designed to ensure that prison policies and procedures do not have the unintended consequences of discriminating against any groups. They require consultation with representatives of all the strands of Diversity including Age, Belief, Disability (Mental and Physical Health), Learning Disability, Faith, Gender, Sexual Orientation and Transgender.

Prison Dialogue (PD) had worked with the Diversity and Inclusion Manager in previous roles and had introduced her to participatory change and Dialogic engagement skills, which she had used effectively to develop various pieces of work for Industries, Families and Equality & Diversity across the G4S prison system. PD had also introduced Dialogue for consultation at another G4S prison, HMP Rye Hill.

### **Aims and Objectives**

PD worked with the G4S Diversity and Inclusion Manager G4S to design a week-long event for HMP Wolds that was named DICE (Diversity and Inclusion Consultation Event). The aims of the DICE were to:

- Establish best practice at HMP Wolds in relation to Diversity & Inclusivity through development of an Implementation Plan that would cover all the diversity strands (now known as Protected Characteristics, that are

the individual characteristics that are protected by law from discrimination)

- Review a minimum of 10 policies, consult, review and update the EIAs
- Encourage greater stakeholder participation through consultation with staff and offenders
- Review the organisational structure in relation to Diversity & Inclusivity
- Identify staff training needs at the Wolds
- Raise staff awareness of Diversity and Inclusivity
- Demonstrate the value of using Dialogue Skills in consultation to Diversity Managers across all the G4S prisons
- Share the knowledge and experience to support the development of more effective meetings

### **Method: Activity, Participation and Duration**

Seven policies were identified by the Wolds SMT for inclusion in DICE and a week-long programme of Consultation Dialogues was designed and planned. PD was part of the DICE team with the G4S Diversity and Inclusion Manager, and the Diversity leads from the other G4S prisons. The Dialogues, facilitated by PD, enabled staff and prisoners to talk and think together about a series of policies that had an impact on the prisoners' time at the Wolds. Each Consultation Dialogue included the prisoners, staff and managers who were most likely to have been affected by the policy, including the Senior Manager who was responsible for the policy, and aimed to include representation from across the strands of Diversity.

42 staff and prisoners attended the Consultation Dialogues. Some attended more than once and there were additional discussions held outside of the Dialogues.

### **Outcomes**

The seven policies were reviewed, and the consultations and EIAs completed. Stakeholder engagement, awareness of EIAs and Diversity and Inclusivity were all increased by the energy, presence and participation provided by DICE. Best practice in engagement of staff and prisoners and representatives of the diversity strands was established as the foundation for the Diversity and Inclusivity Implementation Plan. The SMT developed more willingness to enquire into concerns that had been raised by prisoners. There was increased confidence in compliance procedures and the Race Equality Officer at the

Wolds developed a peer support network with her colleagues from the other prisons. One Senior Manager stated: "The event gave me a greater understanding of the need to seek out prisoner perceptions."

### **Learning**

When interviewed for this case study in 2013 a Senior Manager who was involved with DICE said: "After the experience of the consultation event I believe that I have better conversations with prisoners and staff. I gained the understanding that people may have different perceptions and reasons for these perceptions. Also the intention for people to do things correctly may not be always how it is seen by others".

Another senior manager admitted that following DICE e would consult on a more regular basis recognising the value of obtaining other voices when considering the introduction of change.

WORK IN PROGRESS