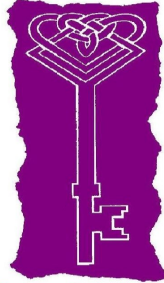


OPEN
SECRET



*Services for individuals
and families affected by
childhood sexual abuse*

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OPEN SECRET

Strategy

2008—2011



Conclusion

Open Secret have developed at a rapid pace from its inception in 1994. Demand for our services continues to grow both in delivery to service users and in providing training. We have developed a new structure to meet the growing demand with a model that can be utilised in any area.

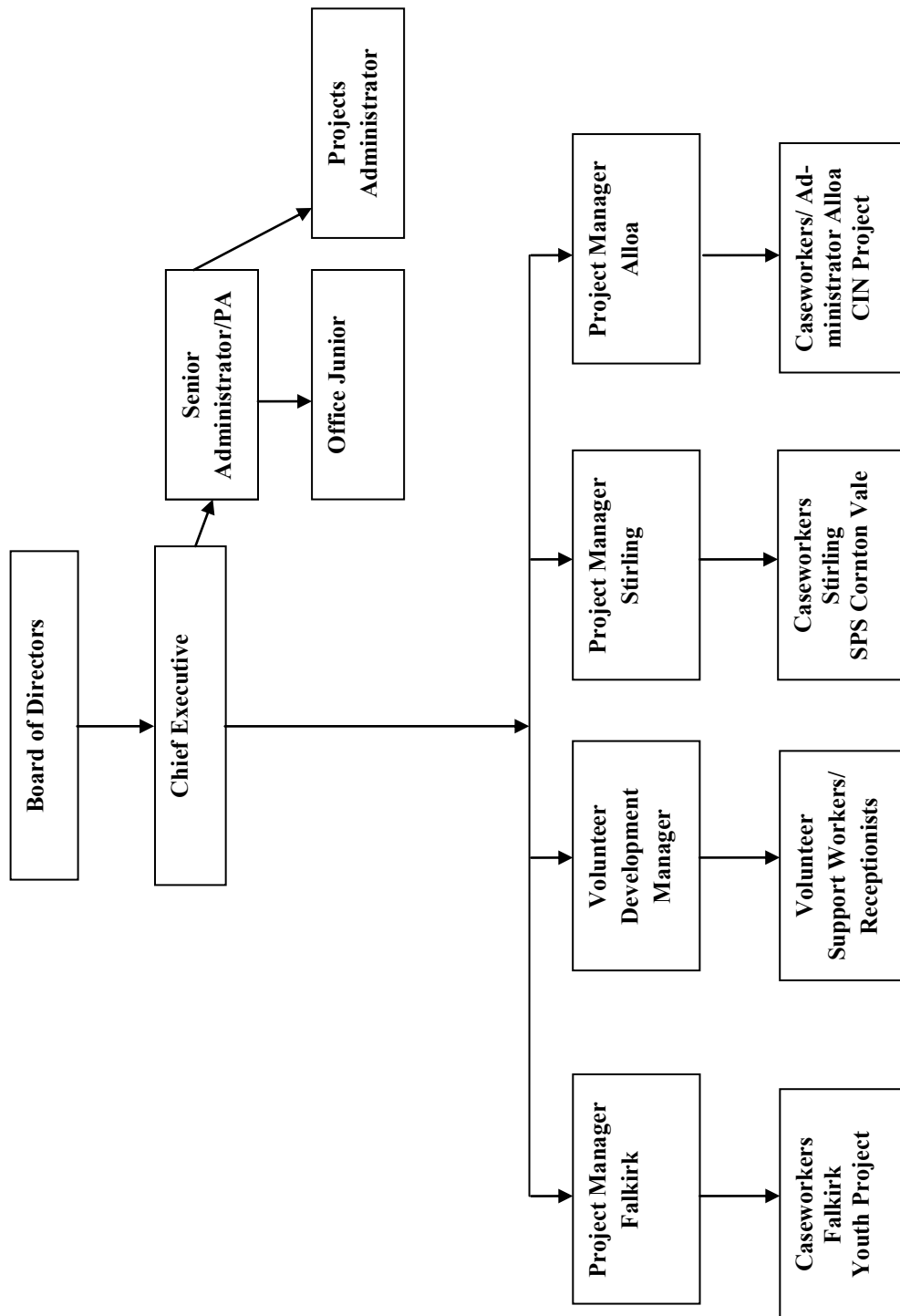
We are aligning our service delivery to the National Strategy for survivors of childhood sexual abuse. The strategy closely matches our values and aspirations.

Within our culture childhood sexual abuse is still a subject that society avoids addressing with the focus on perpetrators of abuse and lack of awareness of the long term effects on survivors.

We have a responsibility to raise awareness and to offer high quality services to individuals that range from practical support to long term therapeutic work dependant on client need.

Effective evaluation will be central to our work to ensure that we hear the views of our service users and further develop services accordingly. We plan to become further involved in research to inform the debate on survivor experiences.

To ensure that we can provide long term sustainable services we will develop our funding strategy to look at more secure funding arrangements.



Vision:

Ending the hurt and pain caused by childhood sexual abuse

Mission:

To lead the battle against the hurt caused by childhood sexual abuse by providing hope and life enhancing support services to survivors and their families; and lead a societal campaign to end such pain.

Background

Open Secret was established in 1994 to work with survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Our work has expanded over the years to three offices in Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire and a number of projects as follows:

- Violence Against Women Services
- Homeless Services
- Choose Life Men's and Women's
- Young Person's Services
- Parent Support
- Volunteer Development Service
- Prison Services

Open Secret offer a range of interventions within the services offered and as part of our core delivery. They are:

- Counselling
- Support work
- Group work
- Befriending
- Advocacy
- Training to other organisations
- Campaigning
- Awareness raising

Context

The Scottish Government devised a National Strategy for survivors of childhood sexual abuse in 2005.

This sets out a strategic way forward to improve services for survivors, to ensure greater priority and joined-up working in national and local mainstream services, and improve the lives of all who have suffered childhood trauma.

It also aims to:

- Raise public awareness
- Improve knowledge and awareness
- Develop training and skills for frontline workers

www.survivorscotland.org.uk

Organisational Alignment

It will be important to establish an Open Secret model of working that can be utilised in any local office. Part of this process will be in policy development (with regular review built in).

For recruitment and selection it is important to also consider a strategic view. For example our recent skills audit highlighted gaps in staff skills within the organisation as a whole. Recruitment should give consideration to filling those gaps.

Structure

We have developed a structure that will enable effective and efficient delivery of services, giving a local perspective.

This structure will enable growth of services and it will support new and innovative projects. Each area will have a Project Manager with responsibility for developing services in that area.

The Volunteer Development Manager will support volunteers across the organisation.

The strategic goals set are as follows:

- Develop a fundraising strategy to ensure donations and earned income to reduce reliance on external funding
- Develop joined up working with other agencies to improve the experiences of survivors
- Further develop youth services towards employability/ moving on
- Develop a new organisational structure to ensure success with functional strategies
- Devise a performance management system based on Investors in People
- Develop a new database and more effective evaluation
- Develop the volunteer training programme and external training programme
- Develop campaigning aspect of Open Secret
- Further development of prison services
- Devise a training strategy to ensure that we have the skills to compete in the market
- Revise Job Descriptions to better match funder requirements
- Develop marketing strategy and awareness raising campaign
- Develop website
- Develop services in other areas
- Develop new and innovative services

The strategy drew attention to the scale of the long-term effects on an individual, their experiences of being moved from one service to another without having their needs satisfactorily addressed, and their need for “*sensitive handling by committed and caring services which understand the trauma*”.

The five recommendations for future action from the strategy reflect the key elements of the context within which Open Secret operates. Two are particularly significant as they match our aspirations:

“Local demonstration projects to develop and disseminate good practice nationally”

the strategy seeks more evaluation and quality assurance, plus local partnerships making connections between voluntary and statutory providers of care and health services.

“Identification of adult survivors in the prison population”

seeking more work on the effects of abuse, on prisoners’ mental health problems and their impact on changing behaviour; again with partnership with the voluntary sector being a significant factor.

The other three recommendations are concerned with research, data collection and inclusion of the issues of adults who have experienced childhood sexual abuse in mainstream policies. The style and nature of approach to service users adopted by Open Secret is promoted in the national strategy as a model of good practice:

“A positive climate of discussion, honesty and safe space for letting go of and working through feelings is essential.”

Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse

“A survivor-centred strategic approach” (Scottish Executive 2005)

The Scottish Executive has raised the profile of care and treatment for people who have experienced childhood sexual abuse. It now wants action to be taken to shift cultural and service barriers to change. Open Secret has campaigned tirelessly to raise public awareness and achieve social justice. This strategy provides a platform from which to build upon and we will continue to support this work through our ongoing involvement with the Cross Party group and other partnerships.

Future Strategy

To enable us to compete in the market it is important to consider the distinctive competence of Open Secret and also to consider diversification. One area where Open Secret have offered added value is in terms of offering long term support utilising qualified and well trained therapists/counsellors/support workers. Another is the quality training that Open Secret offer to other organisations.

In terms of diversification we have worked in the field of domestic abuse recently and Falkirk Council have asked us to consider working with all types of abuse.

Functional Strategies

Marketing: A key part of how we compete will be in production of a comprehensive marketing plan. Part of the marketing plan will involve awareness raising which is at the heart of the National Strategy for survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Project Delivery: Project design should include realistic goals and outcomes. Outcomes should be SMART. Job descriptions should match the outcomes to be achieved and evaluation should be built into every project. There should be at least one individual with direct responsibility for ensuring the success of the project.

Finance/ HR: This function is of great importance to the success of the organisation. It is the overall responsibility of the Manager but day-to-day management of these functions will be the responsibility of the Senior Administrator.

Key Success Factors

This is where we must set the goals and objectives to work towards (reviewed on an annual basis). Individual projects will have specific goals outlined in Service Level Agreements but we need to set goals for the organisation as a whole with priorities set, timescales given and review built in.