

The Third Sector in Criminal Justice: feedback from the seminar series

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Historical presence of TSOs in criminal justice

- Long history as service providers, advocates and reformers
- Diversity of providers
- Traditional roles
 - Supplementary services
 - Filling gaps
 - Not involved in the serious/difficult end of process
- Funding
 - Diversity of sources
 - Government /statutory sector funding including in-kind payments
 - Trusts/Foundations/Lottery
 - Membership/individuals

Unanswered questions about TSO service provision

- How many services provided by TSOs?
- How many TSOs are involved overall and in different sectors/localities?
- What services are they providing?
- Are the services provided what are needed?
- Is the most appropriate organisation providing the services?
- Do the services 'work'?

Broad policy agenda

- Civil Society, voluntarism
- Open Public Services (2012)
 - Diversity and choice
 - Transparency
 - Accountability
 - Decentralisation
 - Value for money

Marketisation, competition and commissioning

- Competition Strategy for Offender Services (2011); Commissioning intentions (2011); Probation Review (2012)
- Pilots of different funding mechanisms
- Resulted in a great deal of uncertainty
- Policies relate to *government* funding of services
- Encroachment of government funded services on Third Sector areas of expertise

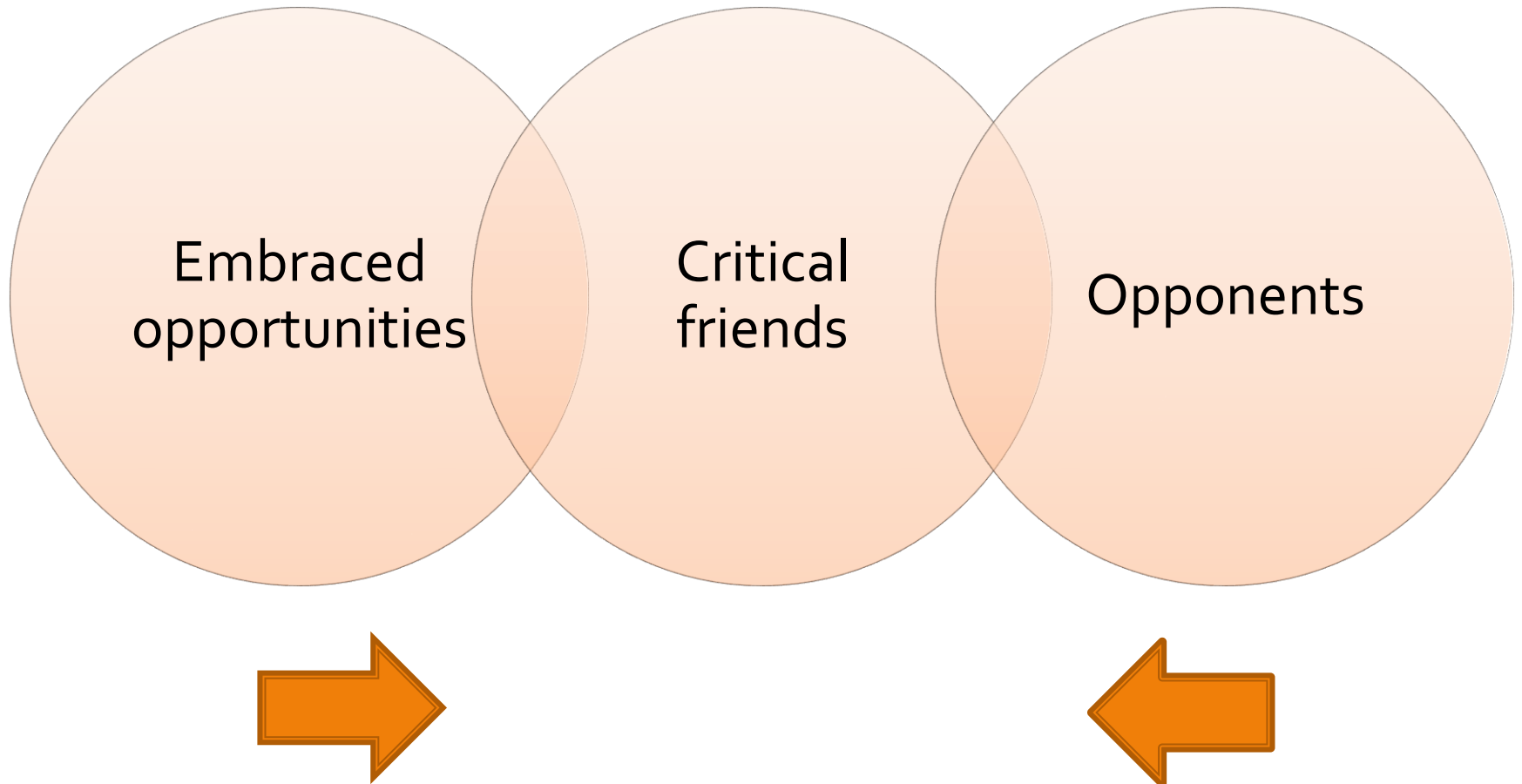
Strengths and weaknesses of Third Sector

- Strengths
 - Independence
 - Innovative
 - Flexible
 - Diversity of clients – hard to reach groups
 - Commitment/altruism
 - Alternative to statutory sector
- Weaknesses
 - Infrastructure
 - Systems
 - Coverage
 - Evidence of success
 - Amateur
 - Coordination

Opportunities and threats

- Opportunities
 - Secure funding regimes and services
 - Access to infrastructure
 - Partnerships
 - Innovation
 - Scaling up/mainstreaming of innovative approaches
- Threats
 - Not evenly spread
 - Competition from the private sector
 - 'Bid candy'
 - Funding
 - Takeovers/amalgamations
 - Loss of flexibility and autonomy
 - Capture
 - Mission drift
 - Evidence of success – Payment by Results

Third Sector responses



Potential outcomes

- Better organised and more responsive services
- Improved quality of services where required
- Fragmentation of the sector
- 'Turf' wars
- Lack of trust/exchange between organisations
- Blurring of boundaries between statutory/third/private sectors
- Increased tensions between reform/advocacy functions and service provision
- Much of the Third sector continues as before?

Potential pitfalls

- Risks – financial and operational
- Engaging volunteers
- Fail to work with minority populations and hard to reach groups
- Evidence of success
- In kind contributions withdrawn
- Third Sector organisations become akin to statutory sector