



SCRUTINY COMMISSION: 7 MARCH 2018

DELIVERY REVIEW OF THE UPDATED THREE YEAR YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN: 2016 - 2019

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of report:

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan 2016 -2019. The Youth Justice Plan 2016-19 is attached as Appendix 1.

Policy Framework and Previous Decision(s)

2. There is a statutory requirement in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce an annual Youth Justice Plan. Following guidance issued by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) in 2015, subsequent plans will cover a three year period. Since that time the YJB has advised that the 3 year Youth Justice Plans need to be updated each year prior to re-submission to them.
3. The revised Leicestershire Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2016 – 2019 was approved by the County Council at its meeting on 6 December 2017.

Background:

4. In past years, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) provided the framework for the plan; along with considerable scrutiny and oversight. In recent years the YJB have issued guidance which allows Youth Offending Services the flexibility to streamline Youth Justice Plans.

Delivery of the Youth Justice Plan- Key Indicators:

5. The YJB monitor three key performance indicators, First Time Entrants into the criminal justice system (FTE) per 100,000 young people, reoffending binary and frequency rates, and custody rates per 100,000 young people. The YOS has continued to monitor young people not in Education Training or Employment (EET) at the end of supervision as a local performance indicator.
6. The latest FTE Ministry of Justice (MOJ) data for April 2016 to March 2017 indicates that there were 170 First Time Entrants (FTE) per 100,000 young people; this was a decrease of 13 % on the previous year. This compares favourably to National FTE figures of 313 and regional figures of 347; both well above the Leicestershire YOS levels.

7. The YOS case load is characterised by young people with more complex needs than ever before, a similar picture to youth offending services nationally. The YJB monitors the YOS re-offending performance by looking at the binary re-offending rate which is the percentage of young people who re-offend within 12 months and the frequency rate which measures the average number of offences committed within 12 months post an outcome.
8. The MOJ performance reporting is based on historic cohorts in order to record reoffending. The frequency of re-offending between October 2015 and December 2015 is 0.92 which is ahead of Regional (1.4) and National (1.6) performance. The binary re-offending rate for October 2015 to December 2015 is 33.3% ahead of regional (37.2%) and National (41.4%).
9. Custody performance has improved significantly over the last seven years. Between April 2016 and March 2017 two young people received a custodial sentence compared to 20 in 2009/10. From April 2017 to February 2018 six young people have received a custodial sentence.
10. 2017/18 has been exceptional as the YOS has seen two young people without any previous convictions (FTEs) sentenced to custody for serious offences.
11. EET performance has shown continued improvement during the course of 2017/18. The YOS target is to achieve 80% of young people in EET provision. Performance for April 2017 to December 2017 is 80.4%, which means the YOS is likely to perform above target for whole of 2017/18. Further detail on YOS EET performance is referred to later in the report.

Progress on the Delivery of Development Areas:

12. The 2017/18 updated Youth Justice Plan highlights the development areas related to Resettlement, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), user voice, disproportionality, desistance and Education Employment and Training.
13. The young people who receive custodial sentences are frequently the most challenging young people to work with and at significant risk of further offending. The YOS is working to ensure that two of the most critical resettlement issues (accommodation and EET support) are well managed. The Accommodation and EET strategy group focuses on all young people who have accommodation and EET issues and is key to ensuring effective resettlement post custody.
14. The YOS continues to benefit from the support of an accommodation worker who provides specialist support for this group, as well as others who experience accommodation issues. The YOS works closely with Prospects particularly, as most custody resettlement is in the 'above

school age' group. Prospects work to ensure that employment and training are available to young people on release. Both elements require close liaison with custodial intuitions. Increasingly the YOS is seeing young people turning 18 years old whilst in custody and require effective transition to the local Community Rehabilitation Company and the National Probation Service. The YOS continues to work effectively to facilitate these transitions with the assistance of the Probation seconded staff.

15. YOS continues to focus on ensuring it identifies those children experiencing (and at risk of) Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The 2017 annual audit of cases identifies that the YOS was identifying all young people who were experiencing CSE, but needs to do more to pass on information about young people at risk of CSE to the multi-agency CSE team. Case audits additionally confirmed that the exploitation of young people was not limited to sexual exploitation and was increasingly linked to young people being exploited to deal and transport drugs. In some cases they are transported across county lines to undertake this activity. The YOS continues to work closely with partners to ensure that there is an effective response to this issue.
16. The YOS supports a disproportionate number of Looked After Children (LAC). The YOS has continued to work with the Children in Care teams in the department to identify those LAC young people most at risk of re-offending and to jointly problem solve the most critical cases. Carrying out this work has resulted in more effective working between teams. The publication of the Lammy report in Autumn 2017 has refocused the Youth Justice System on this issue. The YOS is currently looking at the findings of the report to see if there is work it needs to undertake.
17. The publication of the HMIP report on desistance (i.e. the process of abstaining from crime amongst those who previously had engaged in a sustained pattern of offending) highlighted the need to focus practice on eight key areas. The YOS strengths are that it does build effective professional relationships, is good at motivating young people, uses restorative approaches, and works hard to overcome structural barriers. The outcomes achieved by YOS supports this view. The YOS is planning during 2018 to provide staff with further training on developing the use of Signs of Safety; a strengths based approach, which will ensure that its practice meets HMIP expectations.
18. Ensuring effective engagement in education, training and employment (EET) by young people is essential to reducing re-offending. At the end of 2016/17 64.5% of young people were in EET. This was made up of school age performance at 69.4% and above school age 61.1%. As a result of the work undertaken by the YOS Accommodation and EET Strategy group (chaired by YOS and including representation from Education Psychology, Prospects, Education and Accommodation) we have seen a marked improvement with overall performance. Between April 2017 and December 2017, 80.4% of young people were in EET at the end of their order, therefore achieving the 80% target. School age

performance was at 83.7% and above School age performance at 76.7%.

Resource implications:

19. Over the last three years YOS funding has reduced due to reductions in local, national and partnership funding. Funding for the YOS has benefited from the Transition Fund provided for YOS in 2012/13 to support the changes to the YJB grant and partner contributions.
20. The YOS has continued to ensure that prevention remains a core focus and this work has been supported by the work of SLF and the Police. This has enabled the YOS to continue to reduce FTEs and to deliver high performing and effective services during a period of reduced resources. The YOS has continued to manage its vacancies effectively preventing the need for any a formal service review.
21. The YOS is now part of the Early Help Service review which will require savings of £3.8 million out of a £12.4 million budget. This plan will see the integration of YOS within the proposed Early Help 0 – 19 Family Wellbeing Service.

Timetable for decisions

22. None

Background papers:

23. Report to the County Council on 6 December 2017 on the Youth Justice Plan
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=5104&Ver=4>

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure:

24. None.

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Appendices:

Appendix A: Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2016 - 2019