

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 12TH MARCH 2003

DRAFT YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2002/03 – 2004/05
2003-2004 UPDATE

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Scrutiny Commission on the attached draft 2003/04 update of the Youth Justice Plan for Leicestershire and Rutland.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. This is the fourth Youth Justice Plan to be produced. Last year's Plan was approved by Cabinet on 26 February 2002 and endorsed by the County Council on 22 May 2002. The establishment and operation of the Youth Offending Service is a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Background

3. The County Council has a statutory duty under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prepare and submit to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales an annual Youth Justice Plan. The draft is presented for consideration prior to approval by the Cabinet of the final Plan for submission to the Youth Justice Board (YJB).
4. The Plan has to be submitted to the YJB by 31 March 2003. However, there is also a requirement for the Plan to be considered and approved by the statutory partner agencies of the Police, Probation Service and the Health Authority, as well as consult with other appropriate bodies such the Crime Reduction partnerships.
5. A final draft will be submitted to the Cabinet on 18 March 2003 in order to approve submission to the YJB by 31 March 2003. It is proposed that the Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 12 March 2003 also considers the draft Plan.

6. Following acceptance of the Plan by the YJB, final endorsement by the County Council will be required later in the year. Depending on the timing of the YJB's approval process this is likely to be on 21 May 2003.

Resource Implications

7. Section C of the Plan sets out the resourcing and funding arrangements for the Youth Offending Service. The County Council is the major funding partner, via the Social Services, Education and Chief Executive's Departments (Table 27 page 5). The County Council contributes £688,630 (44%) out of a total budget of £1,555,828. Excluding YJB grants and Rutland's contribution, the proportion is 64% of the partner agencies total contribution.
8. The Youth Offending Services Management Board, the partnership body that oversees the work of the Youth Offending Service, has agreed a revised budget, subject to approval of the Plan and finalisation of each agency's budget process. The County Treasurer has been consulted on the draft Plan, including the resource implications.

Equal Opportunities Implications

9. It is well established that young black males are over-represented in the criminal justice system nationally, although there is no evidence that this is happening locally. Data is routinely collected in respect of the ethnic backgrounds of the youth offending population. In addition although young women are very under-represented in the criminal justice system, there is evidence that they tend to be more harshly dealt with by the courts.

Recommendations

10. The Commission is asked to consider and comment on the draft Youth Justice Plan.

Circulation under Sensitive Issues Procedures

11. None.

Officer to Contact

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Background Papers

Attached draft Youth Justice Plan Update.