

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 27 MARCH 2013**DRAFT YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2013/14****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 Draft Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2013/14, attached as Appendix 1. The draft Plan will be presented to the Cabinet on 9th April 2013 along with any comments from the Commission.

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.

Background

3. In past years, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) provided the framework for the Plan, along with considerable scrutiny and oversight. Two years ago, in line with the Government's agenda to reduce the burden, Youth Offending Services were given the freedom and flexibility to produce a Youth Justice Strategic Plan to their own timetable and format. The Plan still has to be submitted to the YJB, but there is no deadline or additional YJB scrutiny.

Consultations

4. There is a requirement for the Plan to be approved by the statutory partners that make up the Youth Offending Service partnership. The draft Plan has therefore been submitted to the YOSMB which considered the matter on 22 February 2013. It is also being submitted to the Children and Young People's Executive Commissioning Board on 10 May 2013.

Resource implications

5. Section 5 of the Plan (pages 8 - 10) sets out the resourcing and funding arrangements for the Youth Offending Service. The County Council remains the major funding partner via the Chief Executive's and the Children and Young People's Service.

6. In 2012/13, there was a 6.4% reduction in the overall funding to the Youth offending Service. In 2013/14 there will be a further 6.1% reduction in funding.
7. The Home Office element of the Youth Justice grant is being transferred to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in 13/14. The YOS has had confirmation from the Office of the PCC that 50% of this funding £39,845 is being transferred back to the YOS in 13/14.
8. Fortunately, the partners have largely maintained current levels or relatively small reductions in YOS funding. In addition, in February 2011, the County Council agreed £500,000 of transitional funding over two years for Youth Justice and Safer Communities in view of the significant losses in external grant funding. £200,000 of this funding was used in 2012/13 to mitigate against the reductions in grant funding, enable a phased reduction in services and maximise the continuation of service delivery. The remaining amount will be used in 2013/14.
9. A whole Service review commenced in June 2009 to enable the required savings to be made whilst maintaining service delivery to a high standard. As a result of the first stage of the review, two management posts were removed and the Service was restructured. In addition to this, savings were made by reducing the number of administrative posts.
10. Stage two of the Service review removed the Basic Skills team as from 1 April 2012 and has achieved the savings that are known to be required for 2012/13.
11. Stage three of the Service review will make the savings required for 2013/14 and is also restructuring the Service in order to create more flexibility, retain service delivery levels and manage the reductions in funding.
12. Corporate HR Services are fully involved in the Service Review and the relevant Trade Unions will be consulted.

Timetable for decisions

13. The draft Plan will be considered by the Cabinet on 9 April 2013, prior to submission to the YJB.
14. The final Plan will be considered by the County Council on 26 June 2013.

Conclusions

15. The draft Plan highlights the continuing high performance of the YOS in 2012/13 and sets out the key priorities, objectives and outcomes for the work of the Youth Offending Service during 2013/14.

Background papers

Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2012/13

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2013/14

Relevant Impact Assessments

16. Inequality is inherent within the criminal justice system and an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed on the Plan. The EIA indicates that the plan presents no adverse impact to young people at risk of offending and re-offending, but identifies the need to continue to monitor YOS performance in relation to diversity and to continue to take account of the results of the participation survey completed by young people and their parents/carers.

Environmental Implications

17. There are no particular environmental implications arising out of the Plan.