

## **SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 3rd MARCH 2004**

### **DRAFT YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2002/03 – 2004/05** **2004-2005 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 2004/05 update of the Youth Justice Plan for Leicestershire and Rutland.

##### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. Last year's Plan was approved by Cabinet on 18 March 2003 and endorsed by the County Council on 9 July 2003. 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 2004. 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 8 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 3 March 2003 also considers the draft Plan. Following acceptance of the Plan by the YJB, final endorsement by the County Council will be required later in the year.

6. There are a number of changes to the Performance Measures set out in Section D of the Plan. When the Plan was considered by the Scrutiny Commission last year, concerns were raised about the lack of a drugs related Performance Measure and the Chief Executive subsequently wrote to the Youth Justice Board about this omission. It is pleasing to report therefore that one of the changes to the Performance Measures this year is the introduction of a drugs related Measure.

### **Resource Implications**

7. Section C of the Plan sets out the resourcing and funding arrangements for the Youth Offending Service. The introduction of Referral Orders in April 2002 and increased requirements to provide reparation work has resulted in very significant additional demands on the Service. Consequently, growth of £110,000 has been included in the 2004/05 budget proposals of the County Council. The figures in Tables 26 and 27 are subject, therefore, to the approval of the budget by the County Council on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2004.
8. The County Council is the major local funding partner, via the Social Services, Education and Chief Executive's Departments (Table 27, page 9). The County Council contributes just over £1m out of a total budget of £2,073,234. The Director of Resources 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 some 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.