

REPORT OF THE CABINET

A. YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2014/15

Introduction

1. This report concerns the proposed Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2014/15.

Background

2. The Youth Justice Strategic Plan is identified in the Constitution as forming part of the Policy Framework and therefore requires the approval of the County Council.
3. Youth Justice Plans have been produced on an annual basis since the Youth Offending Service was established in April 2000. The County Council has a statutory duty under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prepare and submit an annual Youth Justice Plan to the Youth Justice Board (YJB).
4. There is a requirement for the Plan to be approved by the statutory partners that make up the Youth Offending Service (YOS) partnership. The draft Plan was approved for consultation by the Youth Offending Service's Management Board on 24 February 2012. The draft Plan was then submitted to the following bodies as part of the consultation process:-
 - The Scrutiny Commission on 26th March;
 - The Cabinet on 1st April.
5. The final draft of the Plan was then considered and approved by the Youth Offending Service Management Board at its meeting on 23rd May and has now been submitted to the Youth Justice Board. A copy of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2014/15 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

The Plan

6. The Plan highlights the continuing high performance of the YOS in 2012/13 and sets out the priorities and objectives for the Service in 2013/14. Performance has continued to improve year on year.
7. The work of the Youth Offending Service is set against a background of previous significant reductions in external grant. The two year transitional funding previously agreed has helped to mitigate the impact. During 2013/14 the Service undertook a review of its structure and operations to

enable it to meet the reductions in its annual budget whilst at the same time maintaining performance against the national performance indicators. Details are set out in Section 6 of the Plan.

8. The Ministry of Justice has three indicators relating to Youth Justice:
 - Reduce first time entrants to the justice system (10-17 year olds receiving a reprimand, final warning or conviction);
 - Reduce re-offending (frequency and rate of re-offending);
 - Reduce use of custody.
9. In addition to the national indicators, the Leicestershire Youth Offending Service has adopted the following local education target:
 - The number of young people known to the Youth Offending Service engaged in Education, Training and Employment at the end of their Order.
10. Section 7 of the Plan sets out the agreed priorities aimed at meeting the National and Local Targets.

Resource implications

11. Section 5 of the Plan 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 Department and Children and Family Services. Effective from 6th January 2014 the Youth Offending Service transferred from the Chief Executives Department to Children and Family Services.
12. In 2013/14 there was a 6.1% reduction in funding. The 2014/15 budget represents a standstill.

Relevant Impact Assessments

Equal Opportunities Implications

13. Inequality is inherent within the criminal justice system. An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHIA) has been completed on the Plan. The EHRIA 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.

Risk Assessment

14. Section 8 of the Plan identifies the most critical risks facing the Leicestershire Youth Service and its partners in meeting national and local objectives. There are two major changes and areas of concern. First, the changes in the adult rehabilitation service which came into force in June. This involves replacing Probation Trusts nationally with privately owned Community rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) and reforming and re-introducing a National Probation Service. The second concern relates to arrangements to extend probation supervision to cases where offenders are sentenced to periods of less than 12 months custody.

Consideration by Cabinet and Scrutiny

15. The Plan was presented to the Scrutiny Commission for comment at its meeting on 26 March 2014. The comments made and decisions taken are set out in Appendix 2 to this report.
16. The Cabinet considered this matter at its meeting on 1 April 2014 and authorised the Director of Children and Family Services, following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member, to make any necessary adjustments that may arise from final consideration of the Plan by the Youth Offending Service Management Board.

(Motion to be moved:-

That the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2014/15, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, be approved.)

This page is intentionally left blank