

YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE BRIEFING TO CHILDEN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – DECEMBER 2019

OVERVIEW OF THE YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE IN CARDIFF:

The Youth Offending Service is a statutory, multi-agency partnership established under the Crime And Disorder Act 1998 to work with 10 to 17 year olds with the remit of preventing offending/re-offending. YOS workers manage young people who have been sentenced to a community penalty or custody, but an increasing amount of the work of the YOS is in the area of prevention and diversion, to try and steer young people away from entering the youth criminal justice system at all. The service sits under the Operational Manager for Restorative, Edge of care and Leaving Care. There are a plans to work towards an adolescent strategy to form a cohesive approach and response to this specific cohort.

Local Picture – Re-Offending Cohort – July to September 2019:

The cohort for the above period contains all young people that have received a substantive outcome or have been released from custody. The cohort has then been tracked for 6 months

- ▶ 49 young people have committed 119 offences during Quarter 2. 5 young people committed 30% of offences. Approximately 30% of offences convicted had a gravity of 5+
- ▶ 9 robberies were committed by 6 males aged between 11 and 15
- ▶ 20 drug offences were convicted being the highest offence type for the quarter. 40% (8) were for possession with intent to supply Class A drugs.
- ▶ Violence against the person offences included a manslaughter conviction with 11 offences involving offensive weapons.
- ▶ Motoring offences remain high as there are usually 2 or 3 motoring offences per conviction, this period has seen 3 driving whilst disqualified offences.

In response to the high levels of re-offending, panels have been initiated that take place monthly to review cases to ensure risks and planning are appropriate and to identify relevant resource availability.

Local Picture – First Time Entrants Into the Youth Criminal Justice System July to September 2019:

- ▶ Despite the national decrease in the number of FTE's Cardiff shows an upward trend in the number of FTEs since 2017/18. Quarter 2 shows a return to the overall average of 25 since 2017/18.
- ▶ The top 3 offences committed by FTE's are
- ▶ Motoring Offences 11
- ▶ Violence Against The Person 10
- ▶ Robbery 5
- ▶ 80% of FTE's were not eligible to be diverted from the criminal justice system due to the seriousness of offence or committing offences that preclude them from being diverted from the criminal justice system.
- ▶ ***Local procedures are currently being reviewed for out of court disposals.***

Local Picture – Offence Trends – July to September 2019:

- ▶ There has been a significant increase in the amount of drug-related offences..
- ▶ Theft and handling stolen goods also indicate a significant rise on the previous two years.
- ▶ There have been 9 robberies in this quarter which is unusually high and will skew the forecasted figures for this offence type.

Local Picture – Use Of Custody – July to September 2019:

When compared to last year there were fewer nights spent sentenced but more spent on remand. This is due to a number of serious cases remanded into custody that were committed to Crown Court. Cases dealt with in Crown Court most often take longer to conclude.

During Quarter 2 8 young people have been serving a custodial sentence and 12 young people have been remanded into custody.

Local Picture – Prevention – July to September 2019 (Welsh Government Funded Projects):

Divert:

The project is delivering according to expectations and is going well. As added value, the contractor providing this service offers a number of programmes that the YOS can refer into such as knife-crime and interventions dealing with violence i.e. Cerridwen and Parallel Lives.

Restorative Interventions & Victim Engagement (RIVE):

The 2 RIVE Officers are delivering the service as per the overall plan, there has been a significant increase in victim participation since the last reporting period (increase of 225%).

Part of this increase is due to filling the Reparation Co-ordinator post and establishing a Restorative Interventions Group (RIG) to look at best practices in delivering bespoke reparation based on both the needs of the victim and the young person.

Prevention (ASB) Team:

The number of referrals to the project have significantly increased due to a number of factors, the impact of risks now facing young people which have changed dramatically since the project first started in 2008/2009. Risk factors young people are now facing include knife crime and other weapons, child sexual and criminal exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour and mental health. Appropriate referrals are made in these circumstances, either to services in-house in the YOS or to relevant external agencies. There has been increased partnership working/ collaboration and

joint planning with Children's Services, Education and Health where needed. The project is delivering successfully against the overall plan.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour:

The project is still in its first year of operation and the practitioner appointed has built up strong partnership links with Children's Services, the Youth Service, Education and Health among others. The practitioner sits on the Exploitation Professional Interest Group and regularly attends meetings with partners to develop the service and to raise awareness of the service in order for partners to be able to refer in. The practitioner also takes part in multi-agency case discussions and undertakes awareness raising session in schools, which is something we are looking to build upon further. The practitioner has also developed a number of resources to be used as part of the range of interventions offered, via group and one-to-one sessions.

Neighbourhood Resolutions Panels (NRPs):

The NRP Co-Ordinator is delivering the project as per the overall plan and due to the successful recruitment and training of a new cohort of volunteers are looking to increase further the number of NRPs which are held going forward. The number of young people who have gone on to re-offend following an NRP remains low due to appropriate referrals being made to internal and external partners to address identified issues, for example substance misuse, health/mental health, accommodation and education/training/employment.

UPDATE ON PROGRESS SINCE PREVIOUS REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE:

Quarter 1 Actions:

Existing Interventions Offered Across Both Statutory and Non-Statutory Work Reviewed

Due to two Senior Practitioners retiring in the year to date, and the time it has taken to recruit two replacements, this work has not yet begun. However, now that new

Senior Practitioners have been recruited this will form part of their role going forward and it is anticipated that this work will begin in the new year and will be completed by the end of Quarter 1 2020/2021.

New initiatives this financial year include:

- A resource to support group sessions with young people on such topics as offending behaviour and substance misuse awareness;
- An overhaul of the provision of reparation activities for young people. Opportunities now include the potential for young people, following reparation activity, to access apprenticeships, work experience placements and employment opportunities.
- A forthcoming review of the Junior Attendance Centre provision.

Plan To Deliver A Range Of Preventative Interventions To Schools Developed

The Harmful Sexual Behaviour Practitioner has been delivering interventions in schools to those young people identified at risk of offending in this area, for example in terms of sexting, healthy relationships, issues of consent and the law and sexual health.

The Prevention Team has delivered sessions in schools across Cardiff towards the end of the summer term 2019. Topics include anti-social behaviour, knife crime, internet safety and substance misuse/County Lines. Sessions have also been delivered in St Mellons Hub.

The Prevention Team has also been invited into Mount Stuart Primary and St Mary's Primary Schools in the new year to deliver awareness sessions on anti-social behaviour and knife crime. The Team has also been invited into Radyr High School to deliver sessions on anti-social behaviour, knife crime, internet safety and substance misuse. The presentations will be tailored to the appropriate age group,.

Draft Youth Offending Service (YOS) Annual Work Plan Shared With The YOS Management Board

The 2019/2020 Youth Justice Plan was submitted to the YOS Management Board at its meeting on 30 July 2019 and subsequently submitted to the Youth Justice Board in time for the 5 August 2019 deadline.

Policies And Procedures Reviewed And Updated

The YOS and the Management Board have recently begun work on a statutory self-assessment audit of how the new National Standards for Youth Justice Services are being met. Part of this process includes the review of current policies and procedures and how these need to be updated in line with the priorities of the New Standards. A Quality Assurance tool is being developed to provide evidence to the Youth Justice Board about Cardiff's compliance with the New National Standards which will be presented to the YOS Management Board at its March 2020 meeting prior to submission to the Youth Justice Board in April 2020.

YOS Benchmarked Against Youth Offending Services Recently Inspected

Managers at Cardiff YOS have met with a representative from the Youth Justice Board to look at lessons learnt from recent inspections, both in terms of good practice to emulate and poor practice to learn from. Action going forward will link into the National Standards self-assessment audit and quality assurance processes.

In addition, an external consultant was commissioned to undertake an audit of a case from each case manager and evaluate the quality of assessment, decision making, risk management, appropriateness of intervention and overall management of the case. Some areas of good practice were identified, along with an action plan going forward to implement improvements.

The YOS Management Board has commissioned one of its members from South Wales Police to benchmark the Board and we are awaiting feedback on this.

Quarter 2 Actions:

Existing Resources Reviewed In Line With Demand On The Services

A Re-Offending Panel has been instigated which scrutinises individual cases brought before it to assess whether the risks have been identified and managed appropriately and that the interventions are tailored to meet the young person's needs. In addition, this Panel identifies any resource gaps or gaps in provision and also identifies where resources are available which could be added to support the young person and family.

Research Undertaken Regarding National Best Practice For A Range Of Interventions

Once the review of interventions mentioned above is completed, then research will take place regarding best practice for those interventions.

Prevention Service Promoted Across The City

Sexual Harmful Behaviour Practitioner has undertaken a presentation at the Professional Interest Group (PING) which comprises Children's Services, Police, Education, Youth Service and Third Sector. This generated a number of referrals to the service. In addition, the service was promoted via the Health Schools E-Bulletin, which in turn is being promoted throughout the Council, which has also generated additional referrals. The Practitioner has also given a presentation at Ely Police Station and will be undertaking a presentation at the next meeting of the YOS Management Board, which is comprised of senior members of staff from the statutory and non-statutory partners of the YOS.

The Prevention Service has undertaken a presentation to the YOS Management Board at its September meeting to raise the profile of the team and the work that is

being undertaken. The Prevention Team is also due to attend a service-wide meeting on 2 December to raise the profile of the team more widely within Children's Services and encourage multi-agency working/co-operation where there are cross over cases amongst teams.

Going forward there is an intention for the Prevention Team to undertake further presentations to the Neighbourhood Policing Teams as there is a high turnover of staff in those teams and they may no longer be aware of the work the Prevention Team undertakes. It is anticipated that once this is done this will generate further referrals to the service.

Information Sharing Protocols Reviewed With YOS Management Board Members

Following a session with Darren Trollope at the June Management Board meeting, there has been a refresh of the YOS Management Board, with membership increasing to include an Elected Member, the Early Help Service, Families First, Housing, Operational Manager for Looked After Children and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Youth Bench.

As part of this refresh, the Terms of Reference and Information Sharing Protocols for the Board are in the process of being reviewed. In addition, the Board is establishing an Out of Court Disposals scrutiny sub group, which will dip sample Out of Court Disposal case management decisions to give the Management Board and the Youth Bench assurance that Out of Court Disposals are appropriately applied.

Finn Madell
Operational Manager
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