

Date: 13 August 2020

My Ref SS/CYP/AEJ/YJS1



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APPENDIX E

Councillor Graham Hinchey
Cabinet Member for Children and Families
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
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CF10 4UW

Dear Graham,

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 30 JULY 2020 – YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank you for attending Committee on 30 July 2020. I would also like to thank officers and partners for attending and answering Members' questions in relation to the Youth Justice Service.

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to be updated on progress following the HMIP Inspection of the Service. Members have requested that I feed back the following comments, observations and recommendations to you, structured by theme for ease of reference.

Review and Challenge/Role of Scrutiny

Members were assured that HMIP will be undertaking a follow-up inspection in December 2020, followed by further sessions in 2021. The Committee commend that the further letter from Mike Lane had given reassurance that progress had been made, and that a copy of this letter would be distributed to Members of this Committee for information.

Members were also encouraged by plans to undertake a further Silver Bullet review, and a number of "internal inspections" to be undertaken by the Youth Justice Board itself in terms of annual development planning; bi-annual reviews; consideration and agreement of "where we want to be"; board self-evaluation; and partner analysis of their procedures and processes.

As stated by the Independent Chair, bringing the Service towards an "outstanding" level is going to be a long journey, and whilst it is anticipated that, in two years, problems identified in this HMIP report will have been addressed, there will be further planning and work in subsequent years to achieve an 'outstanding' HMIP level. We

would **strongly recommend** that this Scrutiny Committee be involved in this process.

Whilst Members agreed that it was important to focus on looking forward, we felt disappointed that, having had a presentation on Youth Offending in December 2019, one month before the HMIP Inspection, we were not made aware of the fundamental issues that were happening within the Service, which only came to light on publication of the Inspection Report. We feel that a fundamental breakdown in trust has resulted from this, hence our desire to take a more proactive role in this work going forward.

As a Scrutiny Committee, one of our fundamental roles is that of “critical friend” to Council Services and our aim is always to assist Services towards improvement. There were a number of suggestions made by the Committee during the consideration of this Item, and during our Way Forward. This included:

- Receiving an update in January 2021, following HMIP’s follow-up visit in December 2020;
- An observation seat on YJ Board;
- A Task & Finish Group to be established;
- Information on current outputs and, critically, outcomes to use these as baseline from which to measure progress and distance travelled; and
- Critical importance of Scrutiny being provided with good quality information about outcomes, not only activity levels.

Therefore, we have agreed that the following steps need to be taken:

- That this Scrutiny Committee make YJ Services a priority in our work programming during 2020/21. This will be discussed at our next meeting of the Committee in September;
- As Chair of the Committee, I meet with Graham Robb to discuss future scrutiny involvement and what this should look like. This could include:
 - An observation seat on YJ Board;
 - A Task & Finish Group to be established;
 - A relationship building exercise between CYPSC and YJS/Social Services/Independent Chair, to build trust and understanding;
 - Some “closed door” meetings be held between this Scrutiny Committee and the YJ Services/Board, which will enable both to discuss more sensitive issues;
 - External review timetable be supplied to enable us to dovetail work and invite Inspectors to future Scrutiny Committees as witnesses; and
 - Schedule of meetings/timetable where YJS report to Scrutiny – agreed with all parties to ensure clarity and timely consideration of issues.

I will task the Committee’s Scrutiny Officer to make contact with Graham Robb to arrange this meeting.

Youth Justice Board

Members felt that progress had been made in relation to the governance of the Youth Justice Service and its Board. Members welcomed your responses in relation to the following:

- Membership – right people at the right level;
- Revised Governance and Reporting;
- Escalation Process in place;
- New arrangements are open and transparent;
- Meeting the commitments of “All Our Futures” Strategy;
- Developing a further 2 year strategy from 2022;
- A 12 month review of effectiveness to take place in Spring 2021;
- Annual Training Plan – including pairing with operational staff;
- Members Handbook;
- Practice Input at every meeting.

At the meeting, it was agreed that the Membership details of the YJ Board be circulated to this Committee. In addition to this, Members of the Committee would also request that following information be supplied:

- Detailed Governance arrangements – who is on what Board, Panel etc. that feeds into the governance arrangements;
- Calendar of meetings for key Boards, to dovetail work with Scrutiny;
- Advocacy Panel to report to this Scrutiny Committee re its role and progress.

Performance Measures

Members were interested in your updates regarding performance measures at the meeting. These can be summarised as follows:

- Outputs – picture emerging – being discussed at YJB 8th and 30th September;
- Outputs – distance travelled – performance; number of interventions; number of those in education, training, or employment;
- Outputs – information re health of service and improved interfaces ready;
- Input of young people in developing performance measures;
- Outcomes – measures are some way off but recognise that these are critical and will work to establish meaningful measures;
- Looking at Best Practice Information;
- Benchmarking/Comparison with National KPIs;
- Consideration in introducing Children’s Commissioner Wales – 5 Steps Programme;
- Training in September going to involve discussing cohort and out of court disposals;
- Looking at locality area data; live tracker of reoffending; lived experiences;
- More intelligent local Indicators required; and

- Issues in relation to workforce and service are going to take longer to resolve

A key consideration for this Scrutiny Committee is for Members to ensure they get the right quality of information, both outputs and outcomes, to ensure they are able to monitor performance effectively. Members believe it is key that we establish a clear baseline for current performance for outputs and outcomes, in order that the future direction of travel is clear and demonstrable.

Therefore, we **recommend** the following:

- The Committee receive the output from the Staff Board Partner Survey, which will be published by March 2021;
- Scrutiny reviews of performance be established to look at the 4 priority areas, particularly longer term issues around Workforce and Service;
- Update on the Action Plan is reported to this Scrutiny Committee towards the end of 2020, or in January 2021, following the HMIP visit in December;
- Receive results on KPIs. We were informed that results would soon be available and this should include how we compare with others;
- Available results be used to establish an agreed baseline; and
- An update is provided, arising from the training taking place in September on cohort and out of court disposals.

Young People and their Families/Carers

Central to any work going forward is the input of young people (and their families/carers) in this Service. We support the “**child first, offender second**” approach. During the presentation and Q&A session, you provided us with a raft of information, at varying stages of progress, including:

- Working with those at highest risk of reoffending or exploitation was the key priority;
- There had been an improved join up of services – YJS/MASH/Education (PRU) etc.;
- Risk Assessments in place;
- Weekly Scorecards introduced;
- Data Sharing across services and partners improved;
- Effective interface between services and partners;
- Arrangements for low-medium risk YP monitored;
- Opportunities for education, training and employment;
- Addressing specific needs – speech and language, ALN; and
- Responses to locality based issues (e.g. South Riverside) being developed.

In addition, the Committee questioned you on consultation and engagement with young people and their families/carers, where the following responses were received:

- Consultation was only in the early stages of development;
- Developing Services and direction is being improved;
- Some consultation and engagement had already taken place – workshops for Strategy etc.;
- External organisations would be part of work going forward – C3SC; Cardiff City Foundation; NYAS; Voices for Care Cymru; Action for Children; Youth Council etc;
- Involvement and discussion in secondary schools; and
- The role of Youth Services in preventative measures.

At the meeting you also suggested the following, which we will welcome and programme into our work:

- Bringing a small group of young people to a future scrutiny Committee to inform Members of their experiences; and
- Cardiff Family Advice and Support Network – 1 year on to come to CYP. We would seek clarity from you whether this is the same as Early Intervention & Prevention update you asked to bring in September/ October 2020.

Ultimately, this Scrutiny Committee must satisfy itself that the following measures are being addressed:

- There is progression and achievement for young people;
- That young people's voices (and those of their families/carers) are at the heart of work going forward, including service improvement and development;
- That the interventions in young people's lives are really making a difference;
- That the service can join up all the "strands" and work towards a solution for improving the lives of young people. For example, case workers would be receiving weekly feedback via the scorecards – how will this escalate and be considered at right levels?; and
- That governance and escalation are in place and understood by all – High Risk Panel; Fair Access Panel; Hard to Place Panel etc.; and that these too are part of the "strands" mentioned in the previous point.

Improved/Joined up working – Internal

During the meeting, there was reference to developments and improvements being made internally, and that building capacity and specialist knowledge were priorities. We welcomed that improved interface between MASH, Education etc were in place; and that there is a process for identifying and addressing risk.

In terms of the Operational Managers in Adolescence and Youth Justice, whilst we welcome the appointment of the latter, and the commitment for close joint working, we would like to flag that we will be looking to ensure that there is a line of sight

between the operational and strategic within this area; plus we would be looking to ensure that these officers are well supported and monitored closely to ensure their well-being and performance, as it had been flagged by officers that this had been a major contributory factor in the past.

In relation to staff more generally, we welcomed the news that in relation to recruitment, you are filling vacancies and there appeared to be a demand for posts, though we would wish to monitor numbers of agency staff and long-term sickness absence. We also welcome the improved measures in relation to induction; mentoring and coaching; improved management and supervision; monitoring workloads; and additional training for new and existing staff. We would welcome a staff structure chart setting this out.

Improved/Joined Working across the Partnership

We appreciated the attendance by Partners at the meeting, and note their commitment to improving the Service. We would welcome their further input at future scrutiny Committee meetings to inform us of their own progress, particularly in relation to reviews of pathways and processes.

Way Forward

The **key recommendation** arising from this letter is for this Scrutiny Committee to establish an ongoing, open and transparent working relationship with the Youth Justice Board and Service.

As highlighted above, I will contact Graham Robb to arrange to meet him with regard to this Scrutiny Committee's future involvement in monitoring and reviewing the Youth Justice Service and effectiveness of its Board and other governance arrangements. Crucial to this will be the commitment from the Board and Service to work openly and transparently with us. We in turn will commit to work with you, not only to monitor and review the recommendations set out in the HMIP Inspection and longer term developments, but also to assist in the development and improvement work required to bring the Service to an "outstanding" level in the next few years.

This letter highlights a number of commitments from yourselves and requests from Members of the Committee. These will form a baseline of information going forward. Therefore, please could you supply the following:

- A copy of the recent letter from Mike Lane, HMIP
- Membership details of the YJ Board;
- Detailed Governance arrangements – a diagram/map of who is on what Board, Panel etc that feeds into the governance arrangements;
- Calendar of meetings for key Boards, to dovetail work with Scrutiny;
- Advocacy Panel to report to this Scrutiny Committee re its role and progress;
- The Committee receive the output from the Staff Board Partner Survey, which will be published by March 2021;
- Update on the Action Plan is reported to this Scrutiny Committee towards the end of 2020 or in January 2021, following the HMIP visit in December;

- Receive results on KPIs. We were assured that results would soon be available and this should include how we compare with others;
- An update is provided, arising from the training taking place in September on cohort and out of court disposals;
- Bringing a small group of young people to a future scrutiny Committee to inform Members of their experiences;
- Cardiff Family Advice and Support Network – 1 year on to come to CYP. We would seek clarity from you whether this is the same as Early Intervention & Prevention update that you asked to bring in September/ October 2020.
- Staff structure chart

I look forward to hearing from you, with a response to the **above recommendation** and supplying the information requested.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. BRIDGEMAN', written over a light grey rectangular background.

COUNCILLOR LEE BRIDGEMAN

Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Huw Thomas, Leader, Cardiff Council
Paul Orders, Chief Executive
Claire Marchant, Director of Social Services
Deborah Driffield, Assistant Director of Children's Services
Graham Robb, Independent Chair, Cardiff Youth Justice Board
Mike Tate, Assistant Director, Education & Lifelong Learning
Jane Thomas, Assistant Director, Housing and Communities
Abigail Harris, Executive Director of Strategic Planning, Cardiff & Vale UHB
Temp Supt Tim Morgan, South Wales Police
Cabinet Support Office