

Scrutiny Committee report 9th December 2021

This report is an update on current progress within Cardiff Youth Justice Service, primarily around staffing and service re-structure as well as recent findings and next steps regarding Quality Assurance work and developing our next two year strategy

Inspection update

Committee will be aware of the 'de-escalation' of concern of Cardiff Youth Justice Service from Stage 3 to Stage 1 by the Youth Justice Board; and whilst the service has not yet received notification of further Inspection, we continue to build on the good work so far in anticipation that HMIP will return before the end of the financial year. Relevant plans are in place.

Meanwhile we are learning from recent inspections on new additions to the Inspection framework. This includes Resettlement from secure estate and analysis of any overrepresentation of identified groups of children in the youth justice system by heritage or ethnicity.

Staff updates

All will be aware that over the past 12 months there has been a focus on re-designing the management structure of the Youth Justice Service to provide a clear line of sight from management board to practice and ensuring clear management oversight of casework in relation to risk and safeguarding practices.

Over recent weeks, the Youth Justice Service has been primarily relying on two agency Team Managers to support the service as previous Youth Justice Service Managers have left the service and whilst this will remain the case over the Christmas period, appointment of the new management team is now nearly complete, and we expect all three successful candidates to be in position at the beginning of February.

The Youth Justice Service Practice Manager has been appointed and will start with the YJS on Monday 7th February – coming to the team with extensive experience in a number of other Youth Justice and Safeguarding teams as well as the Secure estate.

Interviews are being held on 7th and 9th December for the two Senior Officer posts – Planning and Intervention and Prevention and Partnerships. There were a strong field of applicants with a wide variety of experiences and backgrounds, so a robust shortlisting process had to be adhered to, therefore we anticipate a high standard during the interviews.

We have recently recruited into a Prevention case manager vacancy and a Court case manager vacancy with further Prevention vacancies to hopefully be filled before Christmas.

The previous Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Co-ordinator post has been re-written to incorporate intensive interventions across the service recognising the changing landscape and

breadth of Youth Justice Service work and is currently out to advert. Again, we are anticipating a lot of interest in this post.

Serious Cases immediate partnership learning

As reported to last committee, Board held a partnership review of three cases – all on remand for serious offences. All statutory partners shared their understanding about the children and then proposed immediate or long-term actions. This also recognised that some of the very recent improvements in services may have had preventative impact.

The outcome will be signed off at Cardiff Youth Justice Board on 14 December.

“All Our Futures” 2

In January - March 2022 we will start consultation on the successor two-year strategy to All Our Futures to ensure we sustain the progress since 2020 and reflect new strands. This will all be informed by the learning we have done on how youth justice services need to respond to “Child Friendly City” principles.

Estyn

The YJS have been consulted as part of the current Estyn inspection. A workplan is already underway via the Youth Justice Service sub-committee to provide staff with more training around Additional Learning Needs and how recognition and understanding of Additional Learning Needs is integral to providing our children and young people with the right support and intervention.

Going forward Quarterly reports to Youth Justice Service Management Board will also include details around school attendance – not just hours offered to further understand the Youth Justice cohort

Quality Assurance work

Since March, the Youth Justice Service Management team has undertaken a number of case audits – a summary of results is tabled below.

A target of 1-2 cases per team manager per month to be reviewed after case has closed

All young people presenting with high risks have been reviewed at Risk Management Panel and shared with relevant agencies.

All necessary actions have been taken to safeguard young person where required.

Management oversight is being increasingly noted on cases

Panel and court reports were not consistently being shared with the young person and their family prior to attendance – the importance of this has been highlighted now during individual supervisions and at team meetings

Although there has been an increase in completing parent/carer self-assessments relatively low numbers of parents provided feedback at the end of an intervention – again there has been a push in team meetings to involve parents in feedback processes

As a result of findings from case audits

Case planning meetings and reviews are now implemented involving young person and parent/carer to ensure priorities are focussed and sequenced to build upon positive and protective factors procedure. This ensures plans are adjusted to account for changing circumstances and feedback.

Due to significant management pressures as detailed above; Quality Assurance processes have not been as robust over recent weeks as they were during the Spring/Summer period. However, Cardiff have been in discussions with the management team from Dudley Youth Offending Team – Service Manager, Advanced Social Work practitioner and Youth Justice practice lead who will be offering us a day of Quality Assurance work to 'dip-sample' approximately 10 cases and give some feedback around what's going well and further areas for development. We anticipate the report will be available in January where feedback and next steps can then be shared.