

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2015 - 2016

**REPORT OF:** David Bunce, Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the Annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2015 – 2016.

### **Background**

2. There is a requirement for Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) to produce an Annual Youth Justice Plan which is one of the grant conditions for Local Authorities. The Plan should cover:
  - the National and local context
  - resourcing and value for money
  - structure and governance
  - partnership arrangements
  - priorities for 2015/16
  - performance data
  - risk to future delivery
3. The plan should be endorsed by the YOT Board and requires signatories from Northumbria Police, Northumbria Probation Service, Public Health and the Strategic Director for Care, Wellbeing and Learning.

### **Proposal**

4. The Annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan has been updated following a Capacity and Capability self assessment undertaken by the YOT. The annual plan reports on performance and the work of the YOT during the previous year and identifies recommendations and priorities for the service in the coming year.

Key priorities for 2015/16 are:

- Implement Asset Plus which will require a cultural case management change across both Prevention and Statutory areas of business.
- Further develop unpaid work and develop trading opportunities within and external to Gateshead for delivery of community reparative activity.
- Maintain a low level of first time entrants by reviewing our relationship and data collection structures with Northumbria Police to ensure children are referred to Gateshead Youth Crime Prevention Services at the earliest opportunity.

- Ensure all service delivery is aligned to the requirements of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- Further develop consistent health provision for young people within YOT with a specific focus upon improving assessment of speech, language and communication needs.
- Increase the number of Families Gateshead cases where crime is a contributing factor to eligibility.
- Further development of the re-offending live tracker in order that Gateshead can track more up-to-date performance than is yet available from the Police National Computer. Allowing for more swift action to be taken to monitor and manage re-offending trends in line with the findings of the HMIP Joint Thematic Inspection of Resettlement Services to children by Youth Offending Teams and Partner Agencies.
- To be at the forefront of safeguarding those adolescents whose offending behaviour is heavily influenced by exploitation and abuse by others, for example those experiencing child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, child to adult abuse and those affected by cyber-enabled crimes.
- As a result of the findings of the HMIP Thematic Inspection of Girls in the Criminal Justice System Gateshead YOT is committed to further developing more specialist skills and resources when working with girls in order to improve outcomes, increase resilience, protect the public and reduce the risk of re-offending.
- Review the membership and attendance levels of the YOT Management Board.

5. Risks to future delivery include:

- The current review of Council Services within Gateshead to ensure we can meet the £60 million pound funding gap will provide Gateshead YOT with significant challenges in 2016/17 and the preparation for these cuts in 2015 will impact upon the current delivery model. There will be reductions to funding and this will impact upon services to young people, partners and communities. In order to mitigate this risk, during 2015, Gateshead YOT management team will be exploring any new opportunities and new ways of working to determine which model of delivery will be the most cost effective to ensure we can deliver more with less.
- Remands to the Local Authority provide a significant risk to the council budget. Actions to mitigate the risks will include robust monitoring and management oversight, dedicated weekend and bank holiday management cover whilst maintaining regular communication with the Youth Court Bench to ensure confidence in bail supervision and support programmes remains strong.
- Maintaining and improving our performance alongside delivering consistent and high quality interventions whilst facing challenging reductions in budgets will require Gateshead YOT to further develop performance monitoring systems that

will give more detailed local data. This is especially difficult in the context of reducing our re-offending rates as the relevant cohort of young people has reduced but the levels of complexity within their lives has not. With the development of Asset Plus alongside the re-offending toolkit we will continue to robustly audit ourselves using the HMIP Inspection Framework and investigate all possible new and innovative ways of working.

- Implementing new measures such as the Anti-Social Behaviour Tools and Powers and the new requirements of Anti-Terrorism for YOT Boards against a backdrop of efficiencies and loss of resources will require Gateshead YOT to maintain strong links with the Community Safety Partnership. Active inclusion within the joint agency Anti-Social Behaviour Panels and working within the Gateshead Community Tensions framework will give wider partnership opportunities to ensure we deliver against statutory requirements within a robust governance structure.
- There is a risk to the service linked to loss of expertise and skills due to potential redundancies. Recent resignations, including those of the management team, have resulted in staff vacancies being left unfilled. As well as losing skilled staff, Gateshead YOT is aware of the impact these gaps in service can have upon the staff that remain.
- There is a statutory requirement for YOT's to have a skilled volunteer workforce. Due to diminishing resources there is no longer the capacity to offer the volunteers a volunteer co-ordinator and this role has been absorbed into the YOT Management Team. Gateshead YOT will continue to monitor the impact of this change.
- Gateshead Local Authority Transformation Team is currently in discussions with staff across all areas of business to make informed decisions during September to December 2015 on how the authority will deliver services in the future. Depending upon the decisions made, it is envisaged that some of the specialist services the YOT currently delivers would no longer be viable beyond April 2016.

## Recommendations

6. Cabinet is asked to recommend the Council to endorse the Annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2015/16 as set out in appendix 2.

For the following reason:

To allow the Youth Offending Team to fulfil its strategic and operational responsibilities.

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**CONTACT:** Susan Butler

extension: 4596

## APPENDIX 1

### Policy Context

1. It is a requirement of grant funding from the Youth Justice Board that an annual strategic plan is produced for all Youth Offending Teams/Services. The annual plan contributes to the strategic priority of 'Safety' in the Council Plan 2012-17 and to the 'Reducing risk and promoting resilience' priority in Children Gateshead, the plan for children young people and families in Gateshead.

### Background

2. The Annual Strategic Plan was discussed at the YOT Board on 11 August 2015 and Board members had the opportunity to discuss and agree the content. The Strategic Plan covers the following sections:

National and local context  
Resourcing and Value for Money  
Structure and Governance  
Partnership Arrangements  
Key Priorities for 2015/16  
Performance Data  
Risks to Future Delivery.

3. There has been an additional two sections created in this plan as follows:

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4. Once approved by Cabinet, the Plan will be submitted to the Youth Justice Board (YJB). The YJB will forward the Plan to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) and Ministers.
5. The Plan will be used by HMIP along with performance data and information from the YJB to determine whether or not Gateshead YOT will be subject to either a Short Quality Screening or Full Joint Inspection – both are unannounced.
6. First-Time Entrants (FTE) – This indicator has shown a consistent reduction since 2008, and has generally achieved target. The large reduction in numbers of first-time entrants over recent years has been as a result of evidence-based early intervention and diversion, delivered through multi-agency partnerships.
7. Gateshead reported 67 FTE's during 2014/15, 13.0% reduction from the previous year's FTE of 77, continuing the downward trend experienced locally and nationally since 2010. The YJB data for this target is gathered from the Police National Computer, as well as reported by YOT's to the YJB, and stated per 100,000 of 10- 17 year old population.
8. The latest YJB published data for January 2014-December 2014 shows the rate of FTE's for Gateshead at 464, below the regional average (472), demonstrating the

effectiveness of the local initiatives in reducing the number of young people becoming FTE's.

9. Gateshead YOT have delivered a significant number of triage and prevention interventions since the re-organisation of the team, which was to promote joined-up youth crime prevention and work with partners, due to the introduction of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act, both of which will have a significant and on-going impact on the number of FTE's in Gateshead. During April 2014 and March 2015 there were 59 prevention interventions, and 109 triage Interventions delivered in the period. The reoffending rate for triage to date is 8.25%, and the current rate for prevention interventions is 8.47%, demonstrating the effectiveness of both these referral processes.
10. Use of Custody – Reducing the use of custodial sentences has been a focus for the YOT. Gateshead introduced compliance panels in 2013 alongside robust community interventions to manage offenders in the community, which have provided good results overall.
11. The latest YJB published data for April 2014-March 2015 shows the rate of custody for Gateshead at 0.28 (per 1,000 of 10-17 population) this represents 5 custodial sentences during the period which is a decrease of -0.34 year on year. This is lower than the regional average (0.46) and the national average (0.42) for the period.
12. Rate of Reoffending – Reducing reoffending has been highlighted as a priority by the YJB Board and the Secretary of State for Justice. Gateshead committed last year to undertake targeted work to reduce reoffending, improve outcomes in the team, and developed local reporting to highlight prolific offenders for targeted work. The frequency of reoffending by some young people in the service is not reducing, and this reflects the national picture and the complexity of the young people we are working with.
13. The latest YJB published data from PNC for the rate of re-offending is for the period, July 2012 – June 2013. The percentage rate of re-offending is 37.4% - this is the number of young people who go on to re-offend in the year, which is a 0.1% increase year on year. The frequency rate of re-offending is 0.99 – this is the number of offences committed by those who re-offend, this is a -0.09 decrease year on year.
14. Gateshead YOT have developed a local re-offending report which looks at live data and through the use of the re-offending Live Tracker Toolkit, which was provided by the Youth Justice Board, we measure current reoffending rates, and analyse the re-offending data on current cohorts as they go through the year, which helps to develop bespoke plans for young people. This tracking tool can help to inform any required remedial action to be taken by the YOT during the 12 month tracking period.
15. The current Live Tracker re-offending cohort takes the 160 young people who were in the service during Jan-Dec 2014 and measures their re-offending rates for 12 months. To date we know that of the 160 offenders within the cohort only 48 offenders have so far gone on to re-offend, committing 133 offences. This gives a percentage rate of re-offending for the group at 30%, and the frequency rate of reoffending currently as 0.83.

16. Gateshead has compared current re-offending performance taken from the Re-offending Live Tracker, against PNC data and it is encouraging to note that since 2008 there has been a 77% reduction in cohort size which equates to a reduction from 689 young people in the service to 160 young people. There is also a 78% reduction of re-offenders, which equates from 230 re-offenders to 48 re-offenders.

### **Consultation**

17. The Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and the YOT Board have been consulted.

### **Alternative Options**

18. There are no alternative options. An Annual Report and Business Plan is updated is a statutory requirement for YOT's.

### **Implications of Recommended Option**

19. **Resources:**

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources, confirms that there are no financial implications arising from this report
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no immediate implications arising from the report.
- c) **Property Implications** - There are no immediate implications arising from the report.

9. **Risk Management Implication** - The risks in future external funding has been identified on the Council's Corporate Risk Register for example Secure Remand costs.

10. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - The work of the YOT contributes to: the Families Gateshead Programme and the improved emotional health and well being for children, young people and their families.

11. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – The YOT includes professionals who specialise in parenting, drug and alcohol use, emotional mental health, education and offending behaviour work. The YOT supports multi agency interventions and will work with families where issues around anti social behaviour and those young people on the cusp of offending have been identified or where there is a potential risk that there may be in the future.

12. **Health Implications** – The YOT works to improve and minimise the potential for substance misuse and emotional mental health of all of the young people where this is identified as an issue.

13. **Sustainability Implications** - The YOT model delivers a responsive and flexible support to young people and their families to ensure that we provide effective interventions and intervene as early as possible.

14. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising from this report.
15. **Area and Ward Implications** - Gateshead YOT covers all areas and wards within Gateshead and YOT staff regularly see young people and their families within their homes or local community settings. Reparation projects cover all areas and wards.