

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2016/17

REPORT OF: Sheila Lock, Interim Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for the Annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2017.

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 YJB has produced new guidelines on what should be incorporated, however this is not restrictive – contents as follows:
 - Introduction
 - Performance (including Restraints in Custody)
 - Structure and Governance
 - Innovation and Promising Practice
 - Partnership Arrangements
 - Resources and Value for Money
 - Staffing Structure
 - Key Priorities
 - Risks to Future Delivery
 - What do People Say
 - Work with Victims
 - Awards received for our Young People's Artwork
3. The Plan should be endorsed by Cabinet, Council and the YOT Board and requires signatories from Northumbria Police, Northumbria Probation Service, Public Health and the Interim Strategic Director for Care, Wellbeing and Learning.

Proposal

4. The Annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan has been prepared following a Capacity and Capability self-assessment undertaken by the YOT Management Team. The Plan takes account of the recent HMIP Short Quality Screening (SQS) inspection - May 2016 and also any actions from the Community Safeguarding and Public Protection Incidents that have occurred during 2016. The annual plan reports on performance, financial management and the work of the YOT during the previous year and identifies recommendations, priorities and risks for the service in the coming year.

5. Key priorities for 2016/17 are:

- Implement Charlie Taylor Review recommendations which are likely to include legislative, financial and structural reviews across all areas of youth justice service delivery.
- Continue to monitor the implementation of AssetPlus across both Prevention and Statutory areas of business.
- Improve access to general health assessments for young people who enter the Criminal Justice System.
- Increase the number of Families Gateshead cases where crime is a contributing factor.
- To be at the forefront of protecting children from sexual exploitation specifically linked to internet use and online abuse.
- Continue improvements in Restorative Justice (RJ) specifically to create more opportunities for victims to receive direct reparation.
- Explore alternative methods of funding to enable development of emerging areas of concern.

6. Risks to Future Delivery

- The Charlie Taylor Review of the Youth Justice System in England and Wales will be published in September 2016 and early indicators suggest that this will provide both opportunities as well as challenges for Gateshead Youth Offending Team. At the present time we are unable to say how much of a risk to service delivery this will create. The interim report findings (February 2016) advocated that a separate youth justice system should be maintained; a smaller education led custodial estate to be created; investment in targeted prevention work and potential devolution of funding to local areas alongside changes to legislation. Gateshead YOT will be required to undertake a review of their current delivery model once the final report is published.
- Remand episodes remain a significant financial risk to Gateshead Local Authority. Contingencies for reducing remands are in place including robust monitoring systems; dedicated weekend court cover; bail supervision and support programmes alongside regular reviews of current remand cases. However, the nature of remands are that there are occasions where a young person requires a longer term remand and with the current remand budget allocation being set at £2.6k, which would fund only 15 nights in a Young Offenders institution or 5 nights in a Secure Training Centre, the financial risk to the Local Authority is high and is identified as a risk on the Corporate Risk Register.
- Potential future budget efficiencies, reductions in partner contributions and changes in future YJB funding linked to Business Rates. There is currently a consultation running up to the 26th September, which is proposing that Local Authorities can retain 100% of their business rates they raise to fund local public services. Part of the consultation invites the views on existing central government grants that could in future be replaced by retained business rates. This includes local authorities' responsibilities for the operation and provision of youth justice services.

- Maintaining and improving performance in the face of on-going budget reductions.
- Implementation of the planned Early Intervention Model of Children Services across Gateshead could provide challenges for Youth Justice Services.
- Heightened threats and perception of the rise of radicalisation and extremism linked to terrorism amongst communities.

Recommendations

7. Cabinet is asked to recommend the Council to endorse the Annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2016/17.

For the following reason:

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

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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 Council Plan aspirations 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 will be circulated to the YOT Board members for comments as the YOT Board meeting cycle has recently changed and the Plan has to be submitted prior to the next Board meeting in October. The Strategic Plan is to be submitted by 30 September 2016 and covers the following sections:
 - (i) Introduction
 - (ii) Performance (including Restraints in Custody)
 - (iii) Structure and Governance
 - (iv) Innovation and Promising Practice
 - (v) Partnership Arrangements
 - (vi) Resources and Value for Money
 - (vii) Staffing Structure
 - (viii) Key Priorities
 - (ix) Risks to Future Delivery
 - (x) What do People Say
 - (xi) Work with Victims
 - (xii) Awards received for our Young People's Artwork.
3. Once approved by Cabinet and Council, 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.
4. The Plan will be used by HMIP along with performance data, information from the YJB etc., to determine whether or not Gateshead YOT will be subject to either a Short Quality Screening or Full Joint Inspection – both are unannounced.

Consultation

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

Alternative Options

6. There are no alternative options. An Annual Report and Business Plan requires updating on an annual basis and is a statutory requirement for YOT's.

Implications of Recommended Option

7. Resources:

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms there could be financial implications – depending on the Review of Youth Justice Services due in September 2016, consultation on the use of retained business rates to replace the Youth Justice Board grant funding and any further reductions from the Local Authority or statutory partners.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – There could be human resource implications – this will be dependent on any further cuts to grant funding – see financial section above as any changes in funding could result in reductions in posts.
- c) **Property Implications** - There are no property Implications.

8. **Risk Management Implication** - The risks in future external funding has been identified within the Plan, the further reduction in the grant for Secure Remand is identified as a Corporate Risk and the consultation on the use of Retained Rates to fund public services eg Youth Offending Teams.

9. **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.

10. **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. Over the last two years the YOT has developed areas of business which include: Child to Parent Violence work; worrying sexualised behaviour worker linked to NSPCC; and staff have benefitted from Extremism and Anti Radicalisation Training which does not feature highly in our work, but remains an area of work which we regularly review.

11. **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. The YOT is working with the Children's Health Commissioner to try and identify resources that will enable young people known to YOT to access a general health nurse – which is identified as a gap in service provision.

12. **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

13. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

14. **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.

Background Information

15. See attached copy of Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2016/17.