

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

7th September 2016

Report of the Director of Social Services Health and Housing– Nick Jarman

Wards Affected:

All wards

Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Annual Plan 2016-2017

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The report has been considered by the Children Young People Cabinet Board/ Scrutiny Committee on 28th July 2016. They were supportive of the proposal to commend to council for approval.

1.2 The report is seeking Council approval for the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention draft annual Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 to be commended to Council. After approval the WBYJ&EIS Management Board will sign off the plan prior to submission to the Youth Justice Board.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The production of a Youth Justice Plan is a statutory duty of the Local Authority under Part 3, Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The plan sets out:

- how youth justice services are to be provided and funded, and
- how the Youth Offending Service established by the Local Authority is to be composed and funded, how it will operate and what function it is to carry out.

2.2 The youth justice plan contains information relating to:

- a summary of achievements
- structure and governance
- resources and value for money
- partnership arrangements
- actions for meeting KPI's and improving performance
- risks to delivery

3. Background

- 3.1 Youth Offending Services/Teams (YOS/Ts) are statutory multi-agency partnerships who have a legal duty to co-operate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area funded from a variety of sources including UK Government, Welsh Government and the statutory partners. (i.e. the Local Authority, Police, the National Probation Service and Health).
- 3.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 39(1) placed a duty on each Local Authority, acting with its statutory partners (Police, Probation and Health) to establish Youth Offending Teams in their local area to deliver youth justice services. Section 38(3) of the Act placed a duty on the Local Authority and its statutory partners to make payment towards the expenditure incurred in providing youth justice services. The purpose of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service is to ensure that youth justice services are available across the Western Bay area of Bridgend, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.
- 3.3 Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Youth Offending Teams have been a merged service since 29th May 2014 when the first Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service (WBYJ&EIS) Management Board was held and all local management boards ceased. The management board is chaired by the Neath Port Talbot Director of Social Services, Health and

Housing and has a membership in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act including Cabinet Members from all three local authorities.

- 3.4 As outlined above the plan has to cover several aspects of service delivery.

The summary of achievements includes:

- 3.5 The sharing of good practice across the Western Bay region from early intervention and prevention work through to resettlement and reintegration panels for high risk young people.
- 3.6 Sustaining performance through a period of uncertainty and change. Whilst the key performance indicators record an increase as opposed to the desired decrease in the number of First Time Entrants into the youth justice system, when comparing January to December 2015 against January to December 2014, this needs to be read in context. During 2015/16 the service saw 109 children and young people enter the Youth Justice System but diverted 520 children and young people away through the use of prevention programmes and non-criminal disposals. Despite an increase of six FTE's (5%) the performance of the WB service remains strong as when the number of FTE's per 100,000 10-17 population is used as a measure as opposed to percentage decrease the region has a lower FTE rate than South Wales and Wales. Western Bay has a 10-17 population of 46,307 (YJB 2014 mid-year estimates).
- 3.7 Reducing the use of custody from 15 young people receiving custodial sentences in 2014/15 to 13 custodial sentences in 2015/16.
- 3.8 The performance measures relating to accessing services ie education, training and employment, suitable accommodation, substance misuse and mental health services showed improvement. The mental health measure remains under review, so cannot be accurately reported. The number of hours accessed for education, training and employment by the children and young people at the end of their order were considered high by the YJB for both statutory and post school aged children and young people. 132 young people had a closed community based penalties, 123 (93.2%) were in suitable accommodation at the start and 124 (93.9%) at the end of their orders. 13 young people ended a custodial disposal during this period, 11 were in suitable

accommodation at start and 13 were in suitable accommodation at the end. Substance misuse services have been accessed in a timely fashion for all young people assessed as in need.

Structure and governance

- 3.9 The purpose of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service is to ensure that youth justice services are available across the Western Bay area. A Youth Offending Service is the main vehicle through which youth justice services are coordinated and delivered working to reduce anti-social behaviour, offending and reoffending amongst children and young people.
- 3.10 The Western Bay Management Board, made up of senior representatives from each of the statutory partners, oversees the operation of the service including the functions it undertakes and the funding arrangements. Regular reports are provided to the individual local authorities including Cabinet members as requested.
- 3.11 The Management Board is relatively new only having formed in 2014 but is keen to be pro-active. The service is represented on all three Community Safety Partnership Boards, the Western Bay Safeguarding Children Board and the Western Bay Area Planning Board. The service manager represents South Wales YOT Managers on the South Wales Criminal Justice and Integrated Offender Management Board, MAPPA Senior Management Board and represents YOT Managers Cymru on the Youth Justice Advisory Panel.
- 3.12 The quality of the work delivered by the service has been subject to a Short Quality Screening Inspection during October 2015. This was a favourable report providing reassurance to the staff, Local Authorities and the Management Board that the service is delivering a good service but most importantly with the skills and capacity in place to grow stronger. The report and recommendations were reported to the Management Board but this report has not been seen in isolation. The thematic Inspections relating to resettlement, transition, and most recently desistance have been of particular interest to Board members as have the Laming Report (regarding looked after children in the youth justice

system) and naturally the Charlie Taylor review of youth justice services.

Resources and value for money

3.13 The amalgamation has come at a time of financial challenge. The service has managed to continue to deliver services sustaining performance whilst making savings of almost one million pounds when comparing the budget at the beginning of 2015/16 with that of the budget at the beginning of this financial year. The service has been flexible and able to work differently with less staff to achieve these savings. Commissioning, use of grants, sharing of resources and creatively managing vacancies have contributed to the savings. No compulsory redundancies have been made to date.

Risks to future delivery against the youth justice outcome measures.

3.14 The desired outcomes contained in the plan contribute directly to meeting local authority priorities held within corporate plans across the three local authorities. The priorities and outcomes mirror those of the YJB business plan 2016/17 and the YJB and WG joint strategy Children and Young People First July 2014. A well-designed partnership approach giving value for money achieving the following:

- Reduction in first time entrants through early intervention, prevention and diversion;

- Reduction in youth reoffending through appropriate interventions of the right level at the right time;

- Reduction in the use of youth custody confident that custody is a last resort and for crimes so serious no community sentence is an appropriate response;

- Access to devolved services for children and young people at risk of entering or having entered the youth justice system;

- Effective safeguarding through recognising vulnerability and improving the safety and wellbeing needs of children and young people;

- Effective public protection through risk recognition, assessment and management;
- The voice of the victim is heard;
- Successful reintegration and resettlement at the end of an intervention.
- A well supported professional workforce;
- True participation by all involved.

4. Financial Impact

There are no negative financial impacts associated with this report. However the collaborative approach has generated savings across the Western Bay region.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.1 The youth justice plan should have a positive impact on wider services provided by the Council by bringing down the number of children and young people in trouble with the police. This will in turn reduce the need for other services involvement as a result of their behaviours escalating.
- 5.2 The service focuses on diverting children and young people away from the youth justice system as much as possible and in line with the Youth Justice Board and Welsh Government youth offending strategy sees them as children and young people first and offenders second. Over 500 children and young people were diverted away from having any criminal record during 2015/16.
- 5.3 Acknowledging children and young people as a priority group in their own right as above informed the decision that a full equality impact assessment was not required.

6. Workforce Impacts

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

7. Legal Impacts

- 7.1 There are no legal impacts associated with this report.
- 7.2 The production of a Youth Justice Plan is a statutory duty of the Local Authority under Part 3, Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

8. Risk Management

- 8.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this report.
- 8.2 The risk to delivery repeatedly referenced through the plan is that of the uncertain political environment, reducing resources and the awaited commissioned Ministry of Justice review of youth justice services by Charlie Taylor. The review was due to be published in June 2016 but this has been delayed following the recent referendum result.
- 8.3 The Council has a legal duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all its various functions with “due regard to the need to prevent Crime and Disorder in its area”. The planned actions contained in the Youth Justice Plan aim to have a positive impact on preventing and reducing crime.
- 8.4 Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities in the exercise of their functions to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. The multi-agency youth justice team through the intensive work undertaken with highly vulnerable young people within the youth justice system and at risk of offending aims to have a positive impact to prevent them being drawn into terrorism.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item. However, each of the three locality offices of Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea have asked

children, young people, parents and carers and victims three very important questions

What should we stop doing?

What should we do more of?

What should we start doing/do differently?

- 9.2 The answers have been gathered to inform the annual delivery plan. The plan itself is shared with key partners for feedback prior to completion and agreement by the service's multi-agency management board for sign off.

10. Recommendations

That Council approve the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early intervention Youth Justice Plan 2016-2017 .

11. Reasons for Proposed Decision

The draft plan is currently going through the appropriate Cabinet and Scrutiny processes in all three Local Authorities. It has also been circulated to all Board members and Community Safety Partnerships for comment. After approval has been given by Neath Port Talbot Council, the final version of the plan has to be "signed off" by the Management Board Chair and submitted to the Youth Justice Board by 31st September 2016.

Implementation of Decision

It is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices

Draft Youth Justice and Early Intervention Plan 2016-2017

List of Background Papers

None.

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