

23 September 2016

**Youth Justice Plan 2015/17:
Progress Update 2015/16**

Report of Margaret Whellans, Interim Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services

Purpose of the Report

1. This report presents members with an overview of performance, progress and achievements (2015/16) in the context of the Youth Justice Plan 2015/17. A copy of the refreshed Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 is attached at Appendix 2 for information.

Background

2. County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) is a statutory multi-agency partnership, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people. Local Authorities are responsible for establishing a Youth Offending Team in their area. Police, National Probation Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.
3. It is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with partner agencies, to formulate and implement a statutory Youth Justice Plan setting out:
 - How youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded;
 - How the Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) will be composed and funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.
4. The Youth Justice Plan outlines the work of the partnership to achieve its strategic purpose:
 - To prevent re-offending by children and young people
 - To reduce First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system
 - By delivering specialist interventions
 - Underpinned by safeguarding and public protection.
5. CDYOS is accountable to a multi-agency Management Board, chaired by the Head of Children's Services, DCC. Membership and governance are reviewed annually in line with '*Modern Youth Offending Partnerships – Guidance on Effective Youth Offending Team Governance in England*' (MoJ/YJB, November 2013) to ensure they remain robust in a complex, changing operating environment.
6. Legal and data requirements placed on CDYOS and the Management Board include:
 - Complying with the statutory requirements laid out in s.38 to 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and other relevant sections of the Act
 - Complying with National Standards for Youth Justice and reporting requirements for Community Safeguarding and Public Protection incidents

- Adhering to the relevant Youth Justice Board (YJB) data recording guidance
 - Approving the annual Youth Justice Plan
7. After approval by the Management Board, the Youth Justice Plan is presented to Cabinet and full Council for approval before submission to the YJB. After submission to the YJB, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (lead for YOS inspections) and are sent to the House of Commons library for Ministers.
 8. The Youth Justice Plan 2015/17 was approved by full Council in July 2015.
 9. The Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 (Appendix 2) was approved by full Council in July 2016. It outlines key priorities, budget, staffing, and the service improvement plan.

National Outcome Measures 2015/16

10. There are three national outcome measures for Youth Offending Services/Teams: reducing First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System; Reducing Re-offending; and Reducing the Use of Custody. Progress against the national outcome measures is outlined in the following paragraphs.
11. **First time Entrants (FTEs): 161**, our lowest ever, and 16.6% reduction compared to 2014/15 (193 FTEs). This represents a significant achievement. Overall there has been an **85.7% reduction in FTEs since 2007/08**.
12. **Re-offending:** Ministry of Justice (MoJ) data (April 2013- March 2014 cohort) shows a binary rate (percentage of young people re-offending within a 12 month timeframe) from a cohort of all young people sentenced and/or cautioned of **44.7%** and a frequency rate of **3.22** (offences per re-offender). This method of calculating frequency was introduced nationally in April 2016. While the binary rate has risen by 6 percentage points compared to the previous year, this is as a result of the cohort size reducing by **13.1%**, while the number of young people in the cohort re-offending has reduced by 1.
13. Since 2007/08, the number of young people in the cohort has fallen by **80.2%**, the number of young people re-offending has fallen by **73.9%** and the number of offences committed by those re-offending has fallen by **68.7%**. The increase in the re-offending rate reflects the significant decrease in the cohort size as a result of the impact of diversion/early intervention (our fully integrated pre court/out of court system).
14. **Reducing the Use of Custody:** the national outcome measure is in relation to young people sentenced to custody. Locally, we also monitor remand bed nights (remands to youth detention accommodation).
15. **Use of Custody: 8** custodial sentences, a 60% reduction compared to 2014/15, and the lowest figure, by a significant amount, that we have ever achieved. Since 2010/11 we have **reduced the number of custodial sentences by 81.8%**.
16. **Remand bed nights: 227** bed nights in 2015/16, a 35.9% reduction on the previous year. The costs of remand bed nights are met by the Local Authority, partly offset by a grant from the YJB. Since 2010/11 we have **reduced the number of remand bed nights by 78.1%**.

Key Achievements 2015/16

17. Key achievements are outlined in the Executive Summary (pages 4-7). We are particularly proud of:

- Achieving our lowest ever number of first time entrants (FTEs): 161, a 85.7% reduction since 2007/08 (1129 FTEs)
- Achieving our lowest ever number of custodial sentences: 8, a 81.1% reduction since 2011/12
- Achieving our lowest ever number of remand bed nights: 227, a 78.1% reduction since 2011/12
- Continuing to reduce the number of offences committed and the number of young people committing them: a 54.6% reduction in both of these since 2010/11
- Increasing the proportion of 16-18 year olds, known to CDYOS, in education, training or employment compared to the previous year
- Two of our staff being awarded a joint Butler Trust Award 2015/16 for their innovative work and leadership of our Speech Language and Communication Needs Strategy and ClearCut Communication resources – one of only 10 Butler Trust awards in the UK
- Achieving the Restorative Service Quality Mark (Restorative Justice Council) for our restorative justice work across the service - the gold standard for RJ nationally. We are in the only service in Co. Durham and Darlington to achieve the RSQM.
- Achieving a further Investing in Volunteers Quality Mark
- Achieving Investing in Children status
- Successfully implementing AssetPlus across the service
- Our work on resettlement: 100% of young people leaving custody in 2015/16 had appropriate accommodation available prior to release
- Our work to support victims of youth crime
- Our staff and volunteers' hard work and continued commitment to reduce first time entrants, re-offending and the use of custody; their work to improve outcomes for young people, families, victims and communities; and their willingness to adapt to new challenges

Recommendation

18. Members are recommended to:
- (i) Note the contents of this report
 - (ii) Request an update in 12 months
 - (iii) Receive the Youth Justice Plan 2016/17

Background Papers

Youth Justice Plan 2016/17

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – This work continues to evidence significant savings to the Criminal Justice System, to Durham County council and partners.

Staffing – None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder – This work is a crucial part of the Reducing Re-Offending Strategy and has implications for all partners (CDYOS Management Board, the Safe Durham Partnership, Children and Families Partnership and the County Durham Partnership).

Human Rights – None

Consultation – Statutory partners have been consulted in the production of the Youth Justice Plan.

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications – The Youth Justice Plan is a statutory requirement.