

Cabinet

11 July 2018

Children and Young People's Services Annual Reports and Plans



Report of Corporate Management Team

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Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report presents Cabinet with an executive summary of the following Children and Young People's Services Annual Reports and Plans:
 - (a) The Youth Justice Plan 2018/19.
 - (b) The Annual Report of Fostering Panels and the Fostering Service 2017/18.
 - (c) The Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2017/18 and Young People's Annual Report 2017/18

The Youth Justice Plan 2018/19

Background

- 2 Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are statutory partnerships, 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 within their area. Police, National Probation Service (NPS) and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.
- 3 Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out:
 - (a) how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded; and
 - (b) how the YOT will be composed and funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.

- 4 The Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) by the end of July 2018. The Plan is then sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (lead for Youth Offending Service inspections) and is placed in the House of Commons library for Ministers.
- 5 The YJB welcomes plans that cover more than one year with an annual refresh particularly in relation to finance and governance. In 2017, the County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) submitted the Youth Justice Plan for the period 2017 - 2019 and this current plan is a 'refresh' for the period 2017/18.

Key Achievements and Developments

- 6 The Youth Justice Plan highlights the following achievements in 2017/18:
 - (a) Between October 2016 and September 2017 the rate of FTE per 100,000 10-17 population in County Durham at 324 is higher than the national rate of 304 but is lower than the North East Regional rate which is 394. The latest available locally sourced data shows 119 young people entering the Youth Justice System between April 2017 and March 2018 at a rate of 277. This is the lowest rate ever achieved.
 - (b) The latest national re-offending data (April 2015 – March 2016 cohort) shows a re-offending rate of 46.4% which is a 7.6% reduction compared to the previous year. This is higher than the England rate which is 42.2% but below the North East rate which is 50%.
 - (c) In relation to the use of Custodial Sentences, the CDYOS performance is on par with England and North East Region with a rate of 0.4 per 1,000 10-17 population. The most up to date locally sourced information (April 2017-March 2018) shows 15 custodial sentences which is a reduction in the rate to 0.35. There has been a 33.4% reduction in Remand Bed nights on the previous year.
 - (d) Following a Public Health assessment of the health needs of young people who offend, the Service has implemented a co-commissioned multi-skilled health team based in CDYOS comprising a School Nurse, Clinical Psychologist, Speech Language Therapists, Substance Misuse Specialists, Liaison & Diversion Specialists and Mental Health Specialists. This team ensures the often complex health needs of young people who offend are effectively assessed and responded to so that they are supported to achieve good health outcomes.
 - (e) The Service has engaged 192 victims of youth crime in restorative approaches. In particular, the work with young people who are the victims of youth crime has provided dedicated support and an opportunity to re-build and restore confidence. Young people who offend have also engaged in 4,000 hours of unpaid work in and across communities in County Durham as a means of reparation.

- (f) The Service has continued to develop resources and interventions to meet young people's speech, language and communication needs. This has supported young people in engaging actively with their learning and their active participation in CDYOS programmes of intervention. The Service has implemented the Skill Mill, a community interest company which provides employment and training for young people under the supervision of CDYOS. The first cohort of 4 young people completed their 6 months contract with Skill Mill. None of the young people committed further offences and 3 progressed into further long term employment.

Youth Justice Plan 2018/19 Priorities

- 7 The YJ Plan sets out the main priorities for the County Durham Youth Offending Service (CD YOS) as follows:
 - (a) Reduce First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System
 - (b) Reduce re-offending by young people, including targeting resources on those young people committing the most offences and improving their engagement in opportunities for education, employment and training.
 - (c) Reduce the use of custody for both sentenced and remanded young people.
- 8 The priorities will be underpinned by the following:
 - (a) Improving communication with young people and the interventions completed with them
 - (b) Putting victims, including young victims, and restorative justice at the heart of everything the Service does
 - (c) Ensuring robust quality assurance and staff management processes are in place and a skilled management team to manage those processes
 - (d) Ensuring volunteering, by both adults and young people, is a key component of the work undertaken with young people and victims
 - (e) Ensuring that case management systems and administration support provide the highest quality support to staff and managers in the delivery of services to courts, communities and young people.
- 9 In addition, and following the publication of a new Inspection Framework for Youth Offending Services (March 2018), the Service will undertake a robust self-assessment against the published standards. The outcome of this work will inform the production of a new Youth Justice Plan for the period 2019 – 2021.

The Annual Report of Fostering Panels and the Fostering Service 2017/18

Background

- 10 The work of the Fostering Service is governed by the Fostering Services Regulations 2011, The National Minimum Standards 2011 and the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 (amended) and associated amended regulations and guidance.
- 11 The National Minimum Standards for Fostering (2011) require that the executive side of the local authority monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the service is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children.
- 12 This Annual Report details the work of the Fostering Service during 2017/18, together with the activity of the Fostering Panels. It also describes the challenges which the service will need to respond to in future years and the priorities for 2018/19.

Key Achievements and Developments

- 13 The numbers of Looked After Children have remained more stable than in the previous 2 years, however they remain at a historically high level. At 31st March 2018 there were 795 children being Looked After by Durham County Council which is a 22% increase since 2015 (620 Children). This has continued to place pressure on placement availability and sufficiency and the service continues to be dynamic and innovative in its approach to meeting these challenges to ensure sufficient carers to meet need.
- 14 The Fostering Service, Foster Carers and Fostering Panels have achieved the following in 2017/18:
 - (a) Prioritised its Recruitment and Marketing Strategy to increase foster carer recruitment. The Service successfully approved 28 new carers during the past year, who have provided a total of 54 potential placements.
 - (b) Developed a new Placements Team to bring focus on ensuring that the Service matches children to the right carers to get the best possible placement for children and young people. The team has also focussed on maximising the use of in house foster carer provision resulting in an increase from 374 children placed with DCC carers on 31 January 2018 to 400 on 31 March 2018.
 - (c) Ensured that permanent matches have been approved by panels for 27 children over the past year which gives these children the stability and certainty they need to achieve their potential as they grow and develop.
 - (d) At 31st March 2018, supported 22 young people leaving care to remain in their placement under Staying Put arrangements, where this is the wish of the young person and deemed in their best interests.

- (e) Targeted Durham County Council employees who had significant experience of working with children to provide emergency and respite care for the Supporting Solutions Service who support children on the 'edge of care'. A total of 5 foster carers will be approved by the end of June 2018. In addition, two fostering support workers were integrated into the Supporting Solutions Service to provide additional support to young people in foster care.
- (f) Re-located from its longstanding base in Langley Moor to new premises at Spectrum 8 in Seaham with no disruption to service delivery.
- (g) Held the annual foster carer awards evening on 22 March 2018. The awards recognised 54 foster carers for a range of achievements, including training, long service and special recognition awards, as well as recognising the contribution of foster carers' own sons and daughters.
- (h) Supported the three Fostering Panels in county Durham continue to meet monthly, with occasional extra-ordinary meetings. The Fostering Panels undertake a number of functions including considering applications from prospective foster carers (including family and friends as foster carers) and making recommendations on their suitability to become a carer. The number of assessments undertaken by the panel in relation to permanent and temporarily approved foster carers has continued to increase in 2017/18.

Priorities for 2018-19

15 The Fostering Service have set the following priorities for 2018-19:

- (a) Recruitment of Foster Carers
- (b) Retention of Foster Carers
- (c) Maintain and strengthen links with Supporting Solutions Service
- (d) Signs of Safety Implementation
- (e) Early Permanence Planning
- (f) Placement Stability

Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2017/18 and Young People's Annual Report 2017/18

Background

16 Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body established under the Children Act 2004. It is independently chaired and

consists of senior representatives of all the principle stakeholders working together to safeguard children and young people in County Durham.

- 17 The LSCB's primary responsibility is to provide a way for local organisations that have a responsibility in respect of child welfare, to agree how they will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in County Durham and to ensure that they do so effectively.
- 18 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 requires each Local Safeguarding Children Board to produce and publish an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area.
- 19 Throughout April and May 2018 both draft versions of the Annual Report have been circulated to the LSCB Board, partner agencies and stakeholders and Corporate Management Team for consultation and comment. The feedback received has been incorporated into the final document.
- 20 The Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2017/18 and Young People's Annual Report 2017/18 were agreed electronically by the LSCB Board on the 04 June 2018.
- 21 Cabinet is requested to note the following dates for the dissemination of the Annual Reports 2017/18:
 - (a) Durham LSCB General Board will receive formal presentation of the Annual Reports on the 12 July 2018.
 - (b) The LSCB Annual Reports will be provided for information at a range of meetings such as the Children and Families Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board, Safe Durham Partnership, Children & Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Parenting Panel at the next available meeting.

Overview

- 22 The Durham LSCB Annual Report 2017/18 sets out the work of the LSCB to ensure effective arrangements are in place to safeguard and protect vulnerable children and young people from abuse and neglect.
- 23 The report describes the work undertaken against the 2017/18 priorities and sets out the future priorities for 2018/19. It describes the local governance arrangements and structure of Durham LSCB and provides a summary of the use of restraint in secure centres, Serious Case Reviews, and the LSCB multi-agency training provision.
- 24 The report also provides an overview of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 in respect of the forthcoming changes to new Safeguarding Arrangements that will be developed in 2018.

- 25 The Young People's Annual Report refreshes the work previously done with Durham Constabulary's Police Cadets (spanning key stages 3-5) and various secondary schools identified by the Education Development Service. Written in clear language, it provides general safeguarding information from a young person's perspective.

Priorities for 2018-19

- 26 Durham LSCB has agreed the following priorities for 2018-19:
- (a) Child Sexual Exploitation
 - (b) Neglect
 - (c) Empowering Young People
 - (d) Working Together

Recommendations and reasons

- 27 Cabinet is recommended to:
- (a) note the content of this report;
 - (b) endorse the Youth Justice Plan 2018/19 and forward it to full Council for approval;
 - (c) receive the Annual Report of Fostering Panels and the Fostering Service 2017/18; and
 - (d) receive the Durham LSCB Annual Report and the LSCB Young People's Annual Report.

Background papers

- The Youth Justice Plan 2018/19.
- The Annual Report of Fostering Panels and the Fostering Service 2017/18.
- The Durham LSCB Annual Reports for 2017/18

Full copies of each Report and Plan can be found in the Members' Library.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance	The Youth Justice Plan contains CDYOS partnership pooled budget 2017/18. Yearly financial contributions to Durham LSCB are received from partner agencies.
Staffing	CDYOS staff establishment is included in the Youth Justice Plan in line with YJB requirements. The Service is staffed in line with statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
Risk	Risks to the future delivery of the CDYOS have been considered and are included in the Youth Justice Plan. The number of Looked After Children remains at historically high levels and has increased significantly from 2015.
Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty	The Annual Reports and Plans identify the actions to safeguard the needs of vulnerable children and young people.
Accommodation	Not applicable
Crime and Disorder	The statutory function of CDYOS partnership is the prevention of offending by children and young people (Crime and Disorder Act 1998). The LSCB Annual Report shows effective partnership working with the Safe Durham Partnership.
Human Rights	Not applicable.
Consultation	CDYOS Management Board and Partners have been consulted in the development of the Youth Justice Plan. Consultation with partner agencies and stakeholders has been undertaken as part of the development of the LSCB Annual Report.
Procurement	Not applicable
Disability Issues	The services provided to children with a disability are a consideration within all of the annual reports
Legal Implications	The Youth Justice Plan ensures Durham County Council and statutory partners meet their legal responsibilities to CDYOS Partnership. Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body established under the Children Act 2004. Working Together to Safeguard Children (Statutory Guidance) requires

each Local Safeguarding Children Board to produce and publish an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area.

The Annual Reports and Plans have been prepared in line with statutory requirements.