

YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE PEER REVIEW

To: **Children and Young People's Service Committee**

Meeting Date: **8th November 2016**

From: **Sarah Ferguson, Service Director: Enhanced & Preventative Services**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **n/a** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To Consider the findings of Youth Offending Service Peer Review**

Recommendation: **For the Committee to endorse the Peer Review recommendations, strengths and improvements.**

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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report outlines the findings from the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Peer Review conducted earlier this year. The peer review process provided an opportunity for the YOS to have Youth Justice experts visit the service for a period of 3 days to explore and investigate the key lines of enquiry and scope provided. The process aims to assist the service to reflect upon effectiveness, overall performance and areas for development. Partners, senior managers, Youth Offending Team managers, staff and young people were interviewed as part of the process.

2.0 MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The scope and key lines of enquiry agreed for the YOS Peer Review were:
- In a strained financial climate is the YOS partnership fit for purpose, both now and for the future, and does it ensure the required offer for young people who offend, in particular with relation to:
 - Education, Training and Employment
 - Accommodation
 - Substance Misuse
 - Are crucial key partners (YOS, Police, Court and Social Care) doing the best we can for children who are remanded and go to custody
- 2.2 The review team found that the YOS is a well performing service with impressive reoffending data, low rate of first time entrants and minimal use of custody. They met enthusiastic staff with willingness to 'go the extra mile' within a culture of honesty, openness and appropriate challenge. There was a strong teamwork ethos within the YOS with effective communication and positive conversations. The review team was impressed by the service and staff who we found to be creative, adaptive, experienced, positive, committed, resilient and passionate about achieving positive outcomes for YOS young people. The systems set up to discuss casework and supervise practice were varied and well regarded e.g. Think Family meetings, clinical/case supervision and team meetings. Leadership from a united management team was respected and the quality of work was seen as robust.
- 2.3 The multi-agency partnership were full of respect for the work undertaken by the YOS and had confidence in the team's ability to deliver. Co-location was reported to be highly valued, especially with Children's Social Care. The review team noted that YOS prevention workers were particularly seen as working well in the locality teams and it was felt that this resource in localities could be better used going forward e.g. as a "step-down" from statutory work. The governance board was seen to be committed with strong leadership and it was felt there were additional opportunities to develop a more explicit vision. Given the strained financial climate it was felt that aligning outcomes with other strategic plans would be beneficial to ensure best use of limited resources.
- 2.4 The Youth Justice Board Peer Review process identified the following key strengths for Cambridgeshire:
- The management board meets regularly and efforts are made to ensure members are kept well informed. Good working relationships exist

between board members with a consistent, committed and well regarded Chair.

- The data and information provided confirmed that young offenders of school age have an education offer and it is acknowledged how crucial this element of provision is to prevent offending.
- There is a strong partnership between YOS, Housing and Social Care. This partnership allows for the provision of appropriate alternative housing and tiered support packages for young people throughout the county.
- There was confidence in an equality of offer between internal substance misuse provision and with that offered by Cambridgeshire Child and Adolescent Substance Use Service (CASUS). No difficulties could be seen in the management of cases between each element of the current delivery model.
- The offer to those young people at the 'tipping point' of custody is robust. There are positive Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) opportunities for young people and intensive programmes of activities where needed. The fact that this offer is viewed as consistent across the county is impressive, given the challenges of geography.

2.5 Whilst many strengths were identified the process also identified key areas for development:

- Increased ownership of a youth justice vision across the partnership with cross reference to other strategic plans
- The peer review process identified a need to improve the range and availability of post 16 education provision for YOS young people across the county
- Support for the YOS to open a dialogue with Academies to prevent exclusion of YOS clients, whilst appreciating they have behaviour policies to uphold
- Improve the geographical disparity in the accommodation offer for YOS young people throughout the county with increased provision in key locations
- Young People's Substance Misuse and the interplay with physical and mental health is discussed and planned for strategically.
- For partners to be aware of and respond to emerging risks associated with gang and drug exploitation
- To provide a specific resettlement offer for young people leaving custody that includes health, accommodation, therapeutic and mentoring intervention from across the partnership

All of the above areas for improvement have been embedded into the annual Youth Justice Plan

3.0 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The recommendations identified within the Peer Review Process support the youth offending service statutory partnership to achieve the aim of reducing/preventing offending by young people, keeping young people who offend safe and protecting the public.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

- 4.1.1 The budget provision for Youth Offending Service as a statutory partnership was part of the budget report submitted to the Children and Young People Committee in October 2016.

4.2 Statutory, Legal and Risk

- 4.2.1 *There are no significant implications within this category*

4.3 Equality and Diversity

- 4.3.1 *There are no significant implications within this category*

4.4 Engagement and Communications

- 4.4.1 *There are no significant implications within this category*

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

- 4.5.1 *There are no significant implications within this category*

4.6 Public Health

- 4.6.1 *There are no significant implications within this category*

Source Documents	Location
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Youth Justice Peer Review, Cambridgeshire (YOS)Cambridgeshire Youth Justice Plan 2016/17	Anna Jack 2 nd Floor Babbage House, Castle Park, Cambridge