

REPORT FOR: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	11 October 2012
Subject:	Youth Justice Plan and Youth Offending Improvement Plan following Core Case Inspection of youth offending work
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Catherine Doran, Corporate Director of Children and Families
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Brian Gate, Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Families
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Enclosures:	Youth Justice Plan 2012/13

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

(a) Note the contents of the Youth Justice Plan and Inspection Report;

(b) Agree the Improvement Plan.

Reason:

Effective delivery of youth justice services is a statutory function. The Council must take political as well as corporate responsibility for ensuring that rapid improvements are secured.

Section 2 – Report

The Council's top corporate priority is the protection of vulnerable children and adults. Effective partnership arrangements between the YOT statutory partners and other stakeholders are essential to ensuring effective outcomes for children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending. This report sets out the strategic plan for achieving this, the findings of the 2011 inspection of the service and the plan for securing improvements.

Options considered

Effective delivery of youth justice services is a statutory function. Addressing the recommendations in the inspection report is crucial to ensuring this.

Background

Since 2000 there has been a requirement in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for Youth Offending Teams (YOTS) and their partnerships to produce a Youth Justice Plan setting out how the YOT will be resourced in the local area and the services which will be available in relation to the statutory primary aim of YOTs to prevent youth offending in the area.

This YOT inspection programme which entailed visits to all Youth Offending Services in England & Wales over a three-year period, commenced in April 2009. Its primary purpose has been to assess the quality of practice against published criteria in relation to assessment, interventions and outcomes. The inspectorate assesses this by selecting a sample of cases which are read by a team of inspectors and assessors who then conduct interviews with the practitioners in charge of those cases.

HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) inspected Harrow's Youth Offending Services in November 2011 and subsequently published a report on 21st December 2011 ([Core Case Inspection of youth offending work in England and Wales. Report on youth offending work in Harrow](#)). The purpose of the inspection was to judge "how often the Public Protection and Safeguarding aspects of the work were done to a sufficiently high level of quality" (HMIP inspection report London Borough of Harrow 2011, p.3)

The inspectors judged that;

"the Safeguarding aspects of the work were done well enough 45% of the time. With the Public Protection aspects, work to keep to a minimum, individual's *Risk of Harm to others* was done well enough 43% of the time, and the work to make each individual less likely to reoffend was done well enough 53% of the time."

Harrow's inspection came towards the end of the three year cycle. It is has been widely recognised that the criteria for evaluating services have been raised and that a number a number of Youth Offending Service inspections in London in particular, have given rise to concerns about the London context. That being said, the results are of great concern placing Harrow significantly below both the national and London averages.

The inspectors did comment favourably on the senior management response to the findings, noting that some had been anticipated and were being addressed.

Whilst there is no statutory requirement to present the Youth Justice Plan to Cabinet, the Youth Offending Service is recognised as a high risk area for the Council and its partners in relation to capacity to respond to the improvement challenges required. In response to this, the partnership has put in place an improvement board to support the improvement work and ensure appropriate pace is maintained.

A small number of YOT's will undergo inspections in the current financial year before the new inspection regime come into effect in 2013/14, it is unclear as to whether Harrow YOT is likely to be one of those selected.

Current situation

The YOT Management Board is a multi-agency partnership accountable to the partnership through Safer Harrow. The membership of the board has recently been reviewed to ensure appropriately senior representation and it has been agreed that the YOT Management Board will now be chaired by the Divisional Director with lead responsibility for quality assurance to ensure robust challenge and scrutiny. The Management Board is responsible for the production and delivery of the Youth Justice Plan (Appendix1).

The strategic aims for the YOT are set out in the plan as:

- Integrated strategic planning and working with clear performance oversight to ensure effective delivery of youth justice services.
- Effective partnership arrangements between YOT statutory partners and other stakeholders to generate effective outcomes for children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending.
- Efficient deployment of resources to deliver effective youth justice services to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people.
- Ensuring sufficient capacity and capability to deliver effective youth justice services.

Since the beginning of 2012, a time limited Improvement Board has been in place to oversee the implementation of the YOT improvement plan. This board reports to the YOT Management Board and is chaired by the Divisional Director, Targeted Services. The improvement board is responsible for the delivery and implementation of the YOT improvement plan (Appendix 2) – post inspection, including driving up of national standards and improvement of quality and specific areas identified within the inspection. The improvement plan has recently been reviewed to ensure that there is a relentless focus on both performance outputs but more importantly on the *quality* of intervention and support to young people.

A capable and competent workforce is critical to achieving the desired outcomes for children and young people and to achieve this, the following are being put in place:

- Clear performance management expectations supported by regular supervision, appraisals and comprehensive training.
- Appropriate use of the Council's capability and conduct frameworks.
- Coaching and mentoring support from a high performing YOT manager.
- Ensuring the YOT is appropriately comprised to address the improvement challenges.

In addition in the latter part of 2012 we will commission the Youth Justice Board and a well-recognised independent provider to undertake a comprehensive mock inspection including cross team case audit to assure ourselves that the necessary improvements are being made and where not, appropriate action is taken.

Financial Implications

The 2012/13 budget for the YOT service totals £790,000, of which £310,000 is funded from Youth Justice Board Grant with the remaining £480,000 funded by council budget. To date the actions of the Improvement Plan have been delivered from within existing resources though the scale of the plan is creating pressures, especially in respect of management capacity.

Performance Issues

YOT performance is measured via a set of outcome indicators which are reported to the Youth Justice Board. The most recent data is shown in the table below:

Indicators*	Harrow	London	YOT comparison group	England
First time offenders rate per 100,000 of 10-17 year olds population				
Jan 11 - Dec 11 (latest period)	597	891	590	749
Apr 10 - Mar 11	632	1017	720	876
Use of custody rate per 1,000 of 10 -17 year olds population				
Apr 11 - Mar 12 (latest period)	0.71	1.77	0.87	0.80
Apr 10 - Mar 11	0.80	1.57	0.81	0.90
Reoffending rates after 12 months				
frequency rate - Jul 09 - Jun 10 cohort (latest period)	0.90	0.98	0.81	0.96
frequency rate - Apr 09 - Mar 10 cohort	1.04	0.95	0.81	0.92

*note that due to validation and checking against police records this data becomes available significantly in arrears

Harrow's YOT continues to have comparatively good results on these indicators but faces challenges to reduce reoffending and use of custody, which have both increased in recent years, in line with other London LA's. Engagement of young offenders in education training and employment is also monitored locally and is a priority for improvement.

The 2011 inspection identified weaknesses in compliance with a range of standards in the following areas:

- the quality and timeliness of assessments and plans
- effective risk and vulnerability management planning
- management supervision and oversight
- to ensure regular home visits for all young offenders
- measuring activity and outcomes to drive improvement
- ensuring young people, parent and carers are an integral part of their intervention plans

- victim awareness work is competed with all young people

Addressing these issues is central to the Improvement Plan.

Environmental Impact

There are no environmental impact considerations in this report.

Risk Management Implications

See separate guidance notes.

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? No

Identify potential key risks and opportunities associated with the proposal(s) and the current controls (in place, underway or planned) to mitigate the risks.

See improvement plan

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

Corporate Priorities

Please identify which corporate priority the report incorporates and how:

- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 1 October 2012		
Name: Helen Ottino	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 3 October 2012		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: David Harrington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director Partnership, Development and Performance
Date: 1 October 2012		

Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: John Edwards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Divisional Director (Environmental Services)
Date: 2 October 2012		

Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Kamini Rambellas, Interim Divisional Director
Tel: 020 8736 6978

Background Papers:
Post-Ofsted Improvement Plan

**Call-In Waived by the
Chairman of Overview
and Scrutiny
Committee**

NOT APPLICABLE

[Call-in applies]