

HARROW YOUTH OFFENDING PARTNERSHIP

YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2012-13

September 2012

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Summary

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 YOT's will be resourced in a 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.

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.

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

- 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.

HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) inspected Harrow's Youth Offending Services in November 2011 and subsequently published a report on 21st December 2011. 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 inspection took a representative sample of cases which were judged on how often Public Protection and Safeguarding aspects of work were done to a sufficiently high level of quality.

The inspection was split into three areas of Assessment and Sentence Planning, Delivery and Review of Interventions and Outcomes, each of which identified areas that needed improvement, including lack of permanent management in place, CAMHS input declining which impacted the provision of specialist input and delivery, to example a few. All of which then impacted the ability to assess whether there were successful outcomes for young people.

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 re-offend was done well enough 53% of the time.”

The results were a disappointing set of findings which identified significant short comings in management oversight and staff changes which had impacted the quality of work to manage risk of harm to others and to address safeguarding needs.

Some of these area’s have already been addressed; the recruitment of a permanent YOT manager, work on identifying a skilled workforce and any gaps alongside a new operating model as part of the wider Children’s Services restructure. This should secure closer integration with services for vulnerable children and young people.

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 -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.

This plan is set out as follows:

- Structures and Governance
- Partnership arrangements
- Resourcing and Value for money
- Risks to Future Delivery
- Performance
- Key Challenges and Achievements
- Priorities for 2012-2013

1. Structures and Governance

Outcome: Integrated strategic planning and working with clear performance oversight to ensure effective delivery of youth justice services.

Safer Harrow is considered the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership which is jointly chaired by the Borough Commander and chief executive. This partnership takes a strategic approach to Crime and Disorder issues within Harrow. Membership of Safer Harrow consists of the following statutory partners:

- Probation Service
- Police
- Courts
- Local Authority Children's Services
- Community Safety / Crime Reduction
- Health

The YOT Management Board meets quarterly and is chaired by a Divisional Director within Children's Services. All statutory partners are represented at a senior level, including specialist services such as victim support / parenting. The YOT management group includes overseeing the development and implementation of the Youth Justice Plan; considering resource and workload issues; performance data reporting; approving policies and protocols; the group also incorporates public protection and safeguarding issues are addressed at each meeting.

Following the recent Inspection of Harrow YOT, a "time limited" Improvement Board has been created to oversee the implementation of the YOT improvement plan This board sits underneath the YOT Management Board which is chaired by the Divisional Director with lead responsibility for quality assurance. Responsibility of this board consists of the delivery and implementation of the YOT improvement plan – post inspection, including driving up of national standards and improvement of quality and specific areas identified within the inspection.

A new operating model within Harrow Children's Services has placed Harrow YOT within targeted services sitting alongside other specialist services such as Children Looked After. This also involved moving to a new building in an open plan shared office. This provides the YOT with a management structure that is both leaner and more cost effective, as well as providing an increased level of support for both staff and young people.

The positioning of the YOT, with governance and accountability through Safer Harrow and line management within Children's Services enables the YOT to meet its dual strategic functions relating to both justice and welfare.

2. Partnership Arrangements

Outcome: Effective partnership arrangements are in place between YOT statutory partners and other local partners that have a stake in delivering local youth justice services, and these arrangements generate effective outcomes for children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending.

The YOT partnership ensures that the YOT are strongly linked to other planning frameworks. As stated earlier – the YOT management board reports to Safer Harrow and feeds into the development of strategic approach of Crime and Disorder

In achieving the Commissioner's vision of Total Policing with efficiency savings, the Metropolitan Police is examining all areas of business to look at how things can be done better, smarter and deliver real crime reduction. As part of this vision, Harrow Borough is examining its youth engagement strategy for both enforcement and intervention work. We recognise the complexity of youth crime and the multi faceted reasons why young people commit crime and that often there are complicated and complex social, family, education and health issues which all play a significant part. In addition, Harrow Borough recognises the emerging

existence of a gangster culture among some of its youth and the correlation of gang culture and levels of violence. This is a challenge to both local policing and the local authority is problem solving in a truly multi agency way to identify those at most risk, engage and divert away from crime.

Core to the Harrow Police strategy is the joint working within the Harrow YOT's Team. This relationship is continuously seen as crucial in our joint efforts to reduce crime. Resource levels are currently being reviewed throughout Harrow police and as part of this process, Harrow police and YOT will be identifying appropriate and suitable staffing arrangements to the YOT. Harrow YOT management have a dedicated representative at Early Intervention Panel, Joint Area Tasking and Co ordination Group, alongside this a senior practitioner will attend every Looked After Child, Child Protection and safeguarding meetings amongst other local meetings – including those held at local youth centres.

Communication with courts is had through Court User Group meetings, and North West London Youth Panel Meetings where YOT manager and senior practitioner attend, Legal Advisors also attend YOT Management Board.

The Triage and prevention operations such as PVE and mentoring sit outside of the YOT within the Early Intervention Service. The YISP was placed within the Early Intervention Service to make best use of the early years focused staff and subsequently proved very successful. The approach has continued to be successful in reducing first time entrants and in particular the very low re-offending rate of young people subject to Triage. The YOT and EIS are closely linked with shared education and careers staff, prioritising of young offenders in the troubled families strategy as well as being co-located.

One of the strengths of the New Operating Model is that there will be a centralised commissioning function across the whole of Children's Services, and through this the YOT will be able to call upon a wide range of voluntary sector agencies for work with parents and families. Existing contracts include HOPE (a local parenting support network), Victim Support and Oasis (Counseling support).

Stronger links with Probation are also in the process of being established, which involves utilising YOT probation officer for specialised work such as taking lead on MAPPA, transfer of young people from YOT to Probation, and being a key role in the Integrated Offender Management scheme.

A revised and updated information sharing agreement will ensure that the YOT is able to take full advantage of the additional information resources available locally. This will be managed through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) a multi agency, multi disciplinary access team, through which all referrals and requests will be funneled along with court.

Constructive, positive activities for young people will be provided by a range of agencies, overseen by the commissioning team, and accessible to the YOT.

Some effective partnerships are in place between YOT statutory partners and other local partners that have a stake in delivering local youth justice services; some are being strengthened and reviewed – this includes working agreements between teams such as Children in Need and YOT; and these arrangements generate effective outcomes for children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending in recognition of our high percentage of LAC population that offends.

3. Resourcing and Value for Money

Outcome: Efficient deployment of resources to deliver effective youth justice services to prevent offending and reoffending.

In all previous years Harrow Youth Offending Team has been resourced by contributions from statutory partners, the Youth Justice Board and some additional grant funding. National financial pressures have resulted in the reduction of Youth Justice Board funding by 13% from 2011/12 to 2012/13. In 2012/13 the Local Authority stepped in to cover the shortfall to prevent a further budget reduction.

In previous years, statutory partners have also been contributing through in kind deployment or secondment of key personnel. At present there is no expectation that statutory agencies will reduce the secondment of staff into the YOT, and we are grateful to them for continuing to prioritise this work.

In addition to these seconded staff, the YOT has been able to call upon the expertise of a range of skilled professionals, most of who are directly employed by the Local Authority as detailed in Table 2. Other key skills are commissioned from the voluntary sector as recommended by the Youth Justice Board. However third sector agencies who are commissioned to provide services directly to the YOT mainly substance misuse, parenting, Victim work and counseling have all been commissioned for the coming year. A review of service commissioning is being carried out at this moment, and decisions around funding for the year 2013-14 will be made as a part of this review as well as taking into consideration whether they are fit for purpose services being delivered.

During 2011-12 a new operating model was introduced for Children's Services in Harrow which will create a single front door for access to all services, and also realign services to improve outcomes for children and families. Harrow YOT has been at the forefront of these developments and welcomes the changes.

Some support services previously based within the YOT are now based across children's services encouraging a more holistic approach to children and their families from the YOT case managers and encouraging referrals for younger siblings for example with a view to prevent future offending.

In 2011-2012 Harrow had an offence rate per 1000 young people of 17, compared with 19 in 2010/11. This compares to the England average offence rate of 25 and the 'YOT family' average of 21.

The following tables set out the current budget for 2012-13 as compared to 2011-12, and the staffing resources as at 30.06.12.

Table 1 Financial Resources

Funding Stream	Type	2011-12 Total (cash and in kind)	2011-12 % of total budget	2012-13 Cash	2012-13 in kind	2012-13 Total	2012- 13 % of total YOT budget	Percentage Change Increase/Dec rease
Youth Justice Board	Total grant (All previous ring fenced grants now combined in Youth Justice Grant)	351,589	25.6%	307,282	0	307,282	23.1%	-13%
Probation	Statutory support	50,000	3.8%	0	50,000	50,000	3.8%	0%
Police	Statutory support	66,231	5.0%	22,000	44,231	66,231	5.0%	0%
Health	Statutory support	10,000	0.8%	10,000	0	10,000	0.8%	0%
	CAHMS	0	0	0	10,000	10,000	0.8%	-
	Sexual Health	0	0	0	0	0	0%	-
	Unitas	4,000	0.3%	4,000	0	4,000	0.3%	0%
Drug Action Team	Grant	20,000	1.5%	0	20,000	20,000	1.5%	0%
Local Authority	Main Budget	446,338	33.6%	483,538	0	483,538	36.3%	8%
Local Authority	Support Services cost	380,115	28.6%	380,115	0	380,115	28.6%	0%
Total		1,328,273	100%	1,206,935	124,231	1,331,166	100%	0 %

Table 2 - Human Resources (as at 30 June 2012)

Post Title	No of posts	No filled	Source/Employer	Hours	Ethnicity	Gender
YOT Manager	1	1	Local Authority	F/T	A	F
YOT Snr Practitioner	1	2	Local Authority	F/T	A	M
	1		Locum		W	F
Case worker	3	2	Local Authority	F/T	W	F
		1 Vacant		F/T	W	F
		4	Locum X 4	F/T	B	M
				F/T	B	F
				F/T	B	F
				F/T	W	M
Probation officer	1	1	Probation	F/T	W	M
ISSP Co-ordinator	1	1	Local Authority	F/T	B	F
Referral panel co-ordinator	1	1	Local Authority	F/T	W	F
Victim support	1	1	Voluntary Sector - commissioned	0.5	W	F
Parenting	1	1	Voluntary sector - commissioned	0.5	W	F
Reparation worker	1	1	Local Authority	1	W	M
	0.5 post	vacant		0.5		
Housing worker	1	1	Local Authority	0.6	W	M
Police officer	1	1	Police	P/T	W	M
Substance misuse worker	1	1	Voluntary Sector – commissioned	P/T	W	F
Counsellor	1	1	Self employed	0.3 sessions	B	F
Performance officer	1	1	Local Authority	F/T	A	F
Admin support	3	2	Local Authority	1	W	F
		1 as and when contract		0.5	W	F
				0.5	A	F
TOTAL	20.5	23				

In 2011-12 Harrow underwent a restructure of its children's services which saw the transfer of staff previously placed in the YOT (mentoring, PVE and Education) over into the Early Intervention Service. The New Operating model provides far greater opportunities for more joined up working across the service, and ensuring more robust exit strategies for young people coming towards the end of their order, where on going needs have been identified. Over the course of 2012-13 YOT manager will work closely with EIS managers to ensure proposed working arrangements under the new operating model prove to be effective and young people receive a seamless intervention from across the service.

In addition to paid employees, the YOT is fortunate in being able to call on over 50 volunteers and sessional staff. These individuals make a substantial contribution to the work of the YOT through a range of activities including:

- Supervision of young people on ISS orders during evenings and at weekends
- Membership of community panels for referral orders
- Appropriate adult work in police stations and elsewhere

4. Risks to future delivery

Outcome: The YOT has the capacity and capability to deliver effective youth justice services

Resources

There was a further reduction in the YJB grant while in the year moving forward the Local authority has put in place additional funding to address the issues highlighted in the inspection report and subsequent improvement plan, continued pressure placed on the wider funding streams from central government mean that this is not a permanent increase in contribution, and will be reviewed once the improvement plan is considered to be successfully completed.

Capacity

The total number of offences by young people in Harrow was 410 in 2010-11 and 356 in 2011-12. The total offending population was 162 in 2010-11 and 164 in 2011-12. During the last 2 years there has been a decrease in the number of first time entrants (FTE) to the criminal justice system in Harrow. There were 127 FTE from Jan – Dec 2011 compared with 154 in the prior year. Some of this can be associated with the success of the early intervention work in the borough and a very effective Triage at point of arrest. This scheme applies to all young people arrested for the first time for a non-violent offence, and leads to a 3-month intervention programme under bail. Successful completion of the programme leads to the bail being concluded as no further action.

In 2009-2010, re-offending figure was 170, which significantly increased in 2010-2011 to 269 and then dropped to 259 in 2011-2012. There has also been a reflected pattern in custodial sentences. In 2009-2010 the rate per disposal was 10 out of 373 (2.68%), which increased in 2010-2011 to 17 out of 269 (6.09%), and then 2011-2012 a decrease to 15 out of 257 (5.84%).

Management

A new management team is in place consisting of one team manager and one senior practitioner. An additional senior practitioner post has also been created to support implement the YOT improvement plan, and drive up the level of management oversight, which was identified as an area for improvement in the inspection report. In addition the current structure of the YOT being a fit for purpose service is being considered.

Partners

The members of the Harrow Youth Justice partnership have all experienced reductions in resources in recent years. It is inevitable that this will impact on what is available locally to YOT clients.

The Harrow Magistrates Court closed in June 2011, and the Youth Court has been transferred to Brent Court now defined as Willesden Court. This has created opportunities for Harrow YOT to forge greater working relationships with our partner YOT's (Brent and Barnet) with whom we now share this court. The impact of being in a court based further away means staff spend more time travelling which means time away from face to face contact. In addition to this the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have now gone digital, meaning all papers are electronic, This has had an impact on YOT services receiving CPS papers in enough time to complete court reports, and has been raised as a "teething" issue at Court User Group meetings by those sharing the court. The closure of the court has impacted those existing familiar relationships with magistrates and court staff; which often can make complex court processes a lot smoother. However YOT staff are now beginning to build new relationships with staff and neighboring YOTs which has provided the opportunity to revisit existing practice and policies and build and improve on court processes.

Changes to Harrow Demography

The ethnicity profile of Harrow's school pupils reflects the general diversity changes within Harrow's population. Indian and White British pupils continue to be the largest ethnic groups in Harrow's schools as at January 2011. However, there has been a significant decrease in White British pupils from 28% in 2006 to 19% in 2011, and an increase in pupils from other Asian backgrounds from 13.1% in 2006 to 19.5%, followed by an increase in the other White backgrounds group from 4.2% in 2006 to 7.3% in 2011. The chart below shows the percentage of pupils in each ethnic group in Harrow schools as at January 2011.

Less than half the children at Harrow schools speak English as a first language (44.87%) as at January 2011. However English along with Gujarati, Tamil and Somali continue to be the main languages spoken. In line with the changing ethnic groups Middle Eastern and Eastern European languages (particularly Romanian) are increasing yearly.

These actual changes put pressure on both universal and targeted services across the Borough at a time when financial and other resources are significantly diminished. In addition to this it has an impact on the number of additional resources needed for young people in the youth justice system, in particular interpreting services.

5. Performance 2011-12

Over the last few years Harrow has changed rapidly as detailed above, and these changes have had both positive and negative impacts on the performance of the partnership and the Youth Offending Team.

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

Indicators*	Harrow	London	YOT comparison group	England
First time offenders rate per 100,000 of 10-17 population				
Jan 11 - Dec 11 (latest available data)	597	891	590	749
Apr 10 - Mar 11	632	1017	720	876
Use of custody rate per 1,000 of 10 -17 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 available data)	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 some 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. As detailed above, an improvement plan is in place to address the performance issues identified in the Core Case inspection, with a focus on the quality and timeliness of work.

In April 2011- March 2012 the youth crime prevention triage team received 82 Referrals, 4 agreed triage but later disengaged, and 8 refused intervention. From the 70 worked with there was success rate of 100% in rate of no re-offending in this period.

Other measures of performance have been variable over the period. Rates of Young Offenders in Education Training and Employment (ETE) have dropped from 76.2% in 2009-10 to 67.7% in 2011-12. Housing, referrals for substance misuse and mental health support have remained static at a reasonably high level. Victim engagement continues to meet the targets of engagement and satisfaction.

Harrow YOT has now joined with corporate performance to develop monthly monitoring on data which will form a substantial role in the YOT management boards oversight of these figures.

6. Key Challenges and Achievements

Key achievements in the last year have included:

- Reduction in use of custody
- Reduction in re-offending rates
- Sustaining the lower rate of FTE
- Improved management oversight
- Robust policies and procedures

Key challenges in the last year have included:

- Core Case inspection report highlighting the need for very significant improvements in areas of safeguarding, victim awareness and effective management oversight,
- Transition to the new operating model
- Staff performance issues currently ongoing requiring high levels of Human Resources input and support
- Changes in senior management team directly responsible for YOT

7. Priorities for 2012 / 2013

Harrow YOT's aim for 2012-13 will be to implement the actions outlined in the YOT improvement plan and ensure safe practice by practitioners, effective oversight by managers and the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

Staff need to be supported, managed effectively and developed in their roles which is critical to any improvement that should take place. This includes regular supervision which offers robust management oversight and identifies training and development needs as well as completing Appraisals; regular team meetings which will assist in the team working together to drive up standards of improvement and be accountable as a team for any future inspections. In addition to this opportunities are created for staff to be reflective in their practice and be open to challenges and share good practice by way of group supervision and peer support.

Structured allocations meetings immediately after court will ensure staff are clear on who has which case and offers the opportunity for staff to discuss as a multi disciplinary team a potential plan of action for the young person, as well as sharing any previous knowledge.

Report templates created to ensure consistency, and encourage staff to ask the "right" questions as part of the assessment process in order to elicit as much information as possible, and all staff to attend safeguarding training and attend training on risk management and analysis of information.

There is a considerable amount of work and resources needed to improve standards within the youth offending team – however through regular monitoring through improvement and management boards, the resources can be targeted to the right areas.

Summary of our priorities for 2012/13:

1. Improve safeguarding and quality assurance systems, including quality assessments, plans and interventions.
2. Drive up compliance with National Standards
3. Deliver strong performance
4. Manage poor performance through processes and procedures
5. Work in a more integrated under the New Operating Model to ensure young people's needs are met
5. Build workforce skills
6. Monthly data reporting into YOT management board