

# REPORT FOR: **CABINET**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	17 October 2013
<b>Subject:</b>	Youth Justice Plan 2013 - 14
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Melissa Caslake, Divisional Director of Targeted Services
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Janet Mote, Portfolio Holder for Children and Schools
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	No, as the decision is reserved to Council
<b>Enclosures:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Draft Youth Justice Plan 2013 – 14</li><li>- EqIA – to be circulated with the main agenda</li><li>- Reference from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee</li></ul>

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report presents the draft Youth Justice Plan for 2013/14, a statutory plan, which once agreed will be submitted to the Youth Justice Board as part of the conditions attached to the grant received from the Ministry of Justice.

### **Recommendations:**

Cabinet is requested to provide comments in relation to the draft Youth Justice Plan and recommend the Plan to Council for approval and for submission to the Youth Justice Board as part of the YJB grant conditions for 2013/14.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introduction**

The Youth Offending Team (YOT) has responsibility for reducing the risk of young people offending and re-offending and to provide counsel and rehabilitation to those who do offend.

A requirement of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) Grant conditions is for the local authority to produce an annual Youth Justice Plan. The plan provides an overview of activity over the past year together with details of future strategic planning for 2013/14 and how the YOT will meet key deliverables.

The YOT Management Board has provided rigorous challenge to ensure difficulties identified were responded to and overcome in an effective and timely way. A new management team has provided the leadership needed to bring about change, address performance concerns and develop a motivated and skilled workforce whose primary aim is to reduce offending and engage children and young people in a meaningful way to address the complexities in their lives that lead to their offending behaviour. Stronger partnerships with the Police, Probation, Health, Early Intervention Service, Children in need and those working with looked after children have all provided the framework for managing offending in a systemic way.

The successful work of the Early Intervention Service through the Triage has seen targeted interventions result in reductions in re-offending. Out of a total of 57 entrants meeting the criteria 56 engaged fully. This has resulted in a 98.2% rate of no re-offending. This is an extremely successful piece of partnership work which has contributed significantly to our above average rate of reduction in first time entrants, and ensures that more young people are diverted from the criminal justice system thus avoiding any record which could have a negative impact on them later in life.

The analysis of case loads in the YOT has highlighted case managers are increasingly managing the most prolific and entrenched offending behaviour that requires a higher level of intervention and supervision, so manageable caseloads are critical to successful delivery and positive outcomes. This complexity is also reflected in the rise in custody rates.

The plan in place for 2013/14 will involve young people coming into contact with the YOT benefiting from good quality assessments that take into account previous offending behaviour and vulnerabilities, accurate and focussed risk assessments, good planning through the use of well thought out interventions and an emphasis on engagement with children, young people and their parents/carers to achieve sustainable change.

Looking ahead into 2014-15, we have anticipated grant reduction and identified growth required to make up the shortfall. From April 1<sup>st</sup> this year we became responsible for the cost of young people remanded into custody and received additional funding from the Youth Justice Board for this. We are not

currently predicting budget pressure on this but it is possible that unforeseen circumstances create pressure in the next few months. This is very closely monitored and links to one of our challenges and objectives for this year to present more creative bail packages to the courts to reduce use of custody. We have initiated conversations across borough about sharing resources going forward and will continue to explore this. We are also active members of the YOT London networks at Divisional Director, Service Manager and Team Manager level which assists in identifying opportunities for cross borough working and innovation in service delivery. We are looking to continue our reduction in first time entrants although anticipate that the rate of reduction (currently around 33%) is likely to slow. We are determined to start to impact more intensively on the very small cohort of serial offenders who contribute to the re-offending rates. It is important to note however that although our percentage rate of re-offending has increased this is because our overall numbers of young offenders has come down, so the ones that re-offend are a bigger proportion of the overall cohort. The actual numbers of young people who re-offended has not changed. This however means we must do more to ensure our interventions are successful and this forms our biggest priority this year.

We are also seeking to strengthen the YOT Management Board partnership by ensuring consistent active membership across the Council, police and health. The importance of these boards has recently been reiterated by revised guidance for YOTs and we will also seek to ensure that community and faith groups may be represented in the future. This will assist us in challenging ourselves about service provision for young people who have English as an additional language, and it is known that young people who become known to YOT services have higher levels of communication difficulties and some special educational needs.

## **Financial Implications**

No changes anticipated. The work identified in this plan will be funded from existing budgets and approved grants.

## **Legal Implications**

Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 makes it a duty of the local authority, after consultation with partner agencies, to formulate and implement for each year a youth justice plan setting out:

1. How youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded;
2. How the YOTs are to be composed and funded, how they are to operate, and what functions they are to carry out.

Such functions may include the local authority's duty to take reasonable steps to encourage children and young persons not to commit offences.

Partner agencies are the chief officer of police, local probation board and strategic health authority.

Following approval, the youth justice plan has to be submitted to the Youth Justice Board and published.

As a statutory plan, the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Council's policy framework and as such requires approval of full Council.

## **Performance Issues**

There has been a significant cultural change in the management and service delivery in the YOT. This has included the development and implementation of a rigorous quality assurance framework aimed at tracking and raising performance against key YJB indicators:

- Reduction in the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system
- Reduction in re-offending
- Reduction in the use of custody
- Protecting the public
- Protecting the child and young person
- Ensuring that the sentence is served

The development of the performance scorecard evidences a clear journey of improvement including standards being raised in the quality of assessments and interventions in response to entrenched and high risk offending behaviour. In total during 2012 – 13 a total of 198 children and young people were on interventions in the YOT with those displaying high risk behaviour being on multiple interventions and being known to other social care teams due to complex and entrenched social vulnerabilities.

There has been a drive to recruit the right staff that are both experienced and committed. Concerted efforts have been made to improve management oversight and accountability with a focus on timeliness of assessments with greater engagement with children and young people. A comprehensive staff training programme has lead significant improvements in the quality of assessments.

The forthcoming year will focus on embedding high standards of practice, developing creative bail packages and reducing rates of re-offending through greater participation and engagement.

## **Environmental Impact**

None

## **Risk Management Implications**

The risk to the local authority of a reduction in resources will impact significantly on the pace of change and future successes.

## Equalities implications

The Youth Justice Plan was presented to partner agencies for their comments at the August 2013 Youth Offending Team Management Board. Comments provided were incorporated into the final Youth Justice Plan submitted. The EqIA is attached to this report. This shows that the monitoring data is good and indicates that white males and black males are more likely to offend and re-offend, which is broadly in line with national data. Monitoring needs to improve in relation to disabilities to identify needs and enable targeted service delivery. As the focus of the YJP is to reduce re-offending, increase the numbers of young offenders in education, training and employment and build an excellent workforce able to engage effectively with young people, the impact of the YJP should be positive on the groups of young people who are disproportionately more likely to offend. The impact of the YJP will be kept under review.

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jo Frost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 1 October 2013		
Name: Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 24 September 2013		

## Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: David Harrington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director Strategic Commissioning
Date: 1 October 2013		

## **Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance**

Name: Andrew Baker



on behalf of the  
Corporate Director  
(Environment &  
Enterprise)

Date: 1 October 2013

## **Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Parmjit Chahal, Service Manager, Youth Offending and Children in Need Teams Telephone: 020 8736 6470 /Ext. 6470

**Background Papers:** Youth Justice Plan 2013-14, as per the enclosure

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

**NOT APPLICABLE**

*[Call-in does not apply as the  
decision is reserved to Council]*