

Restorative Youth Services Plan 2015/16

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 9 December 2015

Author:	Board Director, Commissioning
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1. The Youth Offending Team (YOT) in Swindon is required to produce a Plan which reflects on previous performance, and addresses priorities and business risks for the year ahead.
- 1.2. The Restorative Youth Services (RYS) Plan for 2015/16 incorporates strategies for meeting Government and local targets for reducing first time offending, re-offending, remand, custodial rates, and substance misuse. The Plan also includes strategies for the timely and effective delivery of confidential youth counselling services.
- 1.3. Local Authority approval for the Plan is normally sought mid-year before submission of the Plan to the Youth Justice Board. This process was delayed in 2015 as a result of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) inspection of the YOT, and the requirement for a separate post inspection Action Plan which included changes discussed and agreed at the July meeting of the YOT Management Board. Following this meeting, the Plan was submitted to the Youth Justice Board and approval was given on the 3 November 2015.
- 1.4. The timetable for the drafting and respective approval of the Youth Justice Plan for 2016/17 provides for submission of the Plan to the Health and Wellbeing Board in May 2016.

2. Recommendations

The Board is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note and approve the Restorative Youth Services Plan for 2015/16 attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

3. Detail

- 3.1 The Local Authority (Chief Executive) with responsibility for Children's Services is required to ensure that the range of Youth Justice Services outlined in section 38 (4) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 are delivered through the Youth Offending Team.
- 3.2 The confidential youth counselling service On Trak, and the youth alcohol & drug misuse service U-Turn, are now under the direct management of the YOT's Manager (now entitled RYS Service Manager) and, accordingly, have separate

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Restorative Youth Services Plan 2015/16

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 9 December 2015

plans incorporated into the Restorative Youth Services Plan 2015-16. This plan acknowledges national and local priorities relating to offending, substance misuse and counselling, and describes strategy, performance, partnerships, finance, as well as the challenges and opportunities which now govern future priorities.

- 3.3 Developments associated with the Youth Offending Team include a historic fall (year on year) in the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system. As well as a current low rate of custody due in part to the success of working closely with the Courts to show that risk and rehabilitation, for even the most troubled young people, is manageable and effective in the local community. Re-offending rates experienced a recent spike as a result of a more complex cohort of offenders which was explored further in the HMIP Inspection of the YOT in March 2015. This resulted in the production of a full report and a local post inspection Action Plan. This Plan incorporates subtle but important changes in operational practice, and overarching strategies, including the more sophisticated analysis of re-offending data using a specialised tool kit. Other key factors (influencing the Plan) include the provision for Magistrates to make a requirement in orders for 16 and 17 year olds known as 'Unpaid Work' in the community; the implementation of communications software programmes to improve the confidence and self-esteem of young people; intervention by a speech and language specialist; and a national overhaul and update of the ASSET assessment tool which will require the training of multi-agency staff as part of a 7 month lead-in before full adoption of new systems and processes to assess the risks and causes of offending behaviour.
- 3.4 The Plan for 2015/16 also incorporates strategies to educate young people about the harm caused through the misuse of alcohol and drugs. To support this, U-Turn operates through the traded services initiative to help schools raise awareness about the impact of drugs (including legal highs) on the teenage brain. The Plan also takes account of the challenges facing the confidential youth counselling service On Trak. These include managing the high rate of referrals, mostly from GPs, which had resulted in over-long waiting times for young people in need of counselling, requiring new efforts from partners to find solutions and work in new ways.
- 3.5 All three RYS services are also set in the wider context, acknowledging the influence of changes associated with 'Stronger Together', of which the move to Clarence House to co-locate with other teams from Children's Services was a key component. Financial pressures on key funding partners have resulted in a reduction in the compliment of YOT social worker posts (from three to two), loss of support staff, and an efficiency review of the current RYS managerial structure to identify further cost savings. Also the Central Government grant to the YOT has reduced by 30% since 2012/13, with a further 10% in year cut expected.

Restorative Youth Services Plan 2015/16

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 9 December 2015

- 3.6 In spite of these financial pressures the YOT continues to have the full confidence of the YOT Management Board who approved the Plan on the 23 July 2015. The Youth Offending Team also has a close working relationship with other YOTs in the South West and is encouraged by the Youth Justice Board's local partnership adviser to compare outcomes in order to promote best practice and ensure that resources are deployed where they can be most effective. The Board's scrutiny of YOT performance has recently been the subject of a detailed review carried out after the HMIP inspection, leading to changes in the methodology used by partner agencies to receive and analyse performance data. The Plans for 2015/16 take account of these challenges, and set out local objectives and targets, ensuring that young people in Swindon receive the best start in life and are afforded access to appropriate and timely resources and opportunities.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

5.1 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1.1 The YOT is financed through a mix of funding from the Youth Justice Board, Local Authority (Children's Services), Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Commissioner, and partner organisations. The total Youth Justice grant for 2015/16 amounts to £242,500 including funding set aside specifically for engaging more victims of crime in restorative justice processes, and helping to meet new devolved demands associated with Unpaid Work and Attendance Centre orders from Court. Partnership cash funding amounts to £373,661, of which £257,500 comes from Children's Services. The following agencies also provide cash contributions: £76,994 from the Police and Crime Commissioner; £19,067 from the National Probation Service; and £20,100 from the CCG, in addition to staffing resources (based on secondments) as listed at section 6 of the Plan (staffing).
- 5.1.2 The substance misuse service U-Turn is funded from three sources; Local Authority based Public Health (£75,000); Youth Justice grant funding transferred from YOT income to U Turn (£13,000*); and Children's Services core funding (£26,800), in addition to £3,600 from Health, making a total budget of £118,400.
- 5.1.3 The youth counselling service On Trak is funded by the Local Authority (£134,000, and the CCG (£64,000) making a total budget of £198,000.
- 5.1.4 The Budget for 2015/16 was approved by the YOT Management Board on the 23rd April 2015, and included proposals to meet the challenges previously mentioned.

Restorative Youth Services Plan 2015/16

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 9 December 2015

5.2 Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2.1 The Plan conforms to all Swindon Borough Council protocols and policies concerning the Legal and Human Rights of Swindon residents.
- 5.2.2 The Plan also builds in interventions on behalf of young people designed to promote opportunities for constructive use of their leisure time and as a result, a reduction in anti – social behaviour or crime.

5.3 All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3.1 Restorative Youth Services are uniquely placed to straddle the criminal justice and care environments, resulting in strong links with the overarching strategic themes encompassed within key partner agencies including the Police and Crime Commissioner (Wiltshire and Swindon).

5.4 Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4.1 The Plan takes account of developments incorporated into Local Authority plans (including Community Safety) around crime prevention and reducing re offending, as well as links to 'One Swindon' Priorities and specific targets around improving life for families in Swindon.

5.5 Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5.1 The work of the YOT, substance misuse service U-Turn, and the youth counselling service On Trak, are embedded in the Restorative Youth Services Plan 2015-16 which includes the Diversity Impact Assessment.

5.6 Risk Management

- 5.6.1 Plans include activities or protocols and procedures designed to address known or anticipated risks, including those associated with the potential for public sector funding reductions, as well as safeguarding of staff and young people.

6. **Consultees**

- 6.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. **Background Papers**

- 7.1 None.

8. **Appendices**

- 8.1 The Restorative Youth Services Plan 2015-16.