

Restorative Youth Services Plan 2017/18

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 12th July 2017

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Wards: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 The Youth Offending Team (YOT) in Swindon is required to produce an Annual Plan which reflects on previous performance, and addresses priorities and business risks for the year ahead. This Plan incorporates three other services: the confidential youth counselling service On Trak, and the youth alcohol & drug misuse service U-Turn. New to this particular plan is information and commentary about the RESPECT programme; the adolescent to parental / carer Domestic Abuse programme which has been part of the Restorative Youth Services (RYS) from October 2016 onwards.
- 1.3 It is an expectation that the Plan is approved by the Youth Offending Team Management Board and the Local Authority, prior to submission (of the Plan) to the Youth Justice Board.
- 1.4 The Restorative Youth Services Plan 2017/18 was approved by the Youth Offending Team Management Board on the 27 April 2017.

2. Recommendations

The Board is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note and approve the Restorative Youth Services Plan for 2017/18 which 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 and programme, delivery of the youth domestic abuse programme RESPECT.

3. Details

Highlights from the Plan

- 3.1 Developments in 2016/17 associated with the Youth Offending Team included a continuing 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

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people, are manageable and effective in the local community. Re-offending rates experienced a spike (43.2%) in 2014 as a result of a more complex cohort of offenders (explored further in the HMIP Inspection of the Team in March 2015) but they have continued to fall and are now locally below the national average (Swindon 36.6%, national average 37.7%). The continuing reduction is also true of the local First Time Entrant (FTE) rate; which has continued to fall (outturn in 2015 of 153 against an outturn of 102 in 2016).

- 3.2 There is close continuing scrutiny being paid to this particular figure as there is a (nationally) recognised discrepancy between the FTE figures released by MOJ (based on police (PNC) data) and locally reported figures (based on YJB 'Live tracker' data). The latter is now used for more regular performance monitoring, being centred on a more sophisticated contemporaneous analysis of data.
- 3.3 Other key factors (influencing progress with the objectives set out in the 2017/18 Plan) include: more focused work on internal auditing of case work and levels of risk and vulnerability ratings by case managers (aided by the use of the new and embedded ASSETPlus Case Management system); the continued use of a programme around communication to improve the confidence and self-esteem of young people and intervention by a speech and language specialist, and the continuing offer of bespoke and commissioned group sessions for young people (including, but not exclusively, the GIRLS group, Youth Justice Centre, Weapons Awareness and Driving Awareness group).
- 3.4 The Plan for 2017/18 also incorporates strategies to educate young people about the harm caused through the misuse of alcohol and drugs. To support this, U-Turn continues to operate through the traded services initiative to help raise awareness about the impact of drugs (including New Psychoactive Substances) on the teenage brain and development. The team is also having an impact through their liaison with Schools, and advising and assisting with their PHSE curriculum, and more generally providing briefing papers in relation to local trends and impacts. They also continue to provide IAG via 'The Dock' website which includes short educational films (including the successful 'Jack's Story') as well as engaging and reaching young people via new forms of social media.
- 3.5 Incorporated within the Plan are those challenges facing the confidential youth counselling service On Trak. These include managing a high rate of referrals, mostly from GPs, which have resulted in long waiting times for some young people in need of counselling. More streamlined and responsive processes have been put into practice (including a closer working relationship with targeted mental health services) to help address the demand for counselling by young people and ensure that those most in need are prioritised for treatment. The most recent and welcome development has been the successful bidding for funds to employ a part-time CAMHS worker to be embedded in RYS to aid and assist in the early identification and signposting to appropriate treatment of young people requiring such an intervention.

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- 3.6 The Plan for 2017/18 has also had to anticipate continuing reductions in funding from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and key funding partners. This includes a reduction in funding from the National Probation Service. Historic falls in the Youth Justice Board grant since 2012 (of 40%) contributed to the loss of all the YOT's financial reserves of £43,940. Taken in conjunction with year on year increases in salary related costs, it was necessary to carry out a review of levels of staffing within RYS in order to secure the savings in costs necessary to sustain a workable budget for 2017/18. Voluntary redundancies, as well as natural retirements, helped to provide a platform aimed at sustaining RYS through to 2019 pending any further reductions in grant funding. Building up a small reserve in 2017/18 will help to offset pressures from 2018/19 and beyond.
- 3.7 The YJB have announced an increase in the cost of Remand bed nights (where the RYS have to fund Childrens places in secure remand placements when needed) as well as a reduction in grant funding to Local Authorities, amounting to £13,534 in Swindon. Undoubtedly this will create a budget pressure in 2017/18, although the YOTs priorities are to keep a young person out of remand based on a suitable package of support within the community.
- 3.8 In spite of the financial pressures and other uncertainties the YOT continues to have the full confidence of the YOT Management Board and are in support of the plan as presented.
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 The Team also has a reputation for innovation in practice, which included the development of and launch of a new web site ('The Dock') aimed at young people in October 2016.
- 3.11 The Plans for 2017/18 also take account of the continuing influence and positive impact on service delivery and reputation which comes from a community of volunteers (of which there are over 40). In order to capitalise on the wealth and breadth of the talent of these people the service have recruited to a half time new post of RYS Volunteer Co-ordinator who took up post on June 1st 2017. RYS was also successful in securing renewal of the Investors in Volunteers award, designed to ensure that RYS processes and policies are at the highest possible standard to recruit, manage and develop volunteers for 2017 and beyond, helping ensure that young people in Swindon receive the best start in life.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Youth Offending Team Board consider that the Plan as presented is suitable, and acceptable or feasible alternatives to the plan are not apparent and consider that it will be acceptable to the YJB. However should the Health and
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Wellbeing Board consider any aspect to be unacceptable the plan could be referred back to the YOT Board for consideration.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The YOT is statutorily required to be financed through a mix of funding from the Youth Justice Board, Local Authority (Children's Services), Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner, and partner organisations. The total Youth Justice Board grant for 2017/18 amounts to £225,850 which includes funding set aside to help meet demands associated with Unpaid Work and Attendance Centre requirements from Court. Partnership cash funding amounts to £471,394 of which £267,500 comes from Children's Services. The following agencies also provide cash contributions: £76,994 from the Police and Crime Commissioner; £5,000 from the National Probation Service; £19,700 from the Clinical Commissioning Group; and £62,200 from the Wiltshire Community Foundation (RESPECT Programme). In a separate initiative, RYS was able to commission CAMHS to recruit a 0.7 fte Mental Health Worker following a successful bid for funds from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) (£40,000).
- 5.2 The substance misuse service U-Turn is funded from four sources; Local Authority Public Health (£75,000); Youth Justice Grant funding transferred from YOT income to U Turn (£13,000); and Children's Services core funding (£35,700), in addition to £3,600 from Health, and £500 (net) from traded services with Schools, making a total budget of £127,800.
- 5.3 The youth counselling service On Trak is funded by the Local Authority (£63,700, and the CCG (£64,000) making a total budget of £127,700.
- 5.4 The Budget for 2017/18 was presented to and approved by the YOT Management Board in April 2017, and included proposals to meet the challenges previously mentioned. It should be noted that further reductions in contributions if they were made are now considered unviable without future decisions about actual service reductions.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.5 The Plan conforms to all Swindon Borough Council protocols and policies concerning the Legal and Human Rights of Swindon residents.
- 5.6 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.

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

- 5.7 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).

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.8 The work of the YOT, substance misuse service U-Turn, the youth counselling service On Trak and the RESPECT Programme are embedded in the Restorative Youth Services Plan 2017/18 which includes the Diversity Impact Assessment. The plan does acknowledge the need for RYS to continuously improve in respect of several areas of its core business and to remain vigilant that its services continuously remain accessible to all children and young people.

Risk Management

- 5.9 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 Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and the 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 Appendix 1 – Restorative Youth Services Plan 2017/18.