

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018/19

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

December 2018

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR,
COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Agenda Item No:

**CWM TAF YOUTH OFFENDING
SERVICE**

**Author: Lyndon Lewis, Acting Head of Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
Tel: 01443 827300 / 01685 724960**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to offer an annual review of the work of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) for 2018/19. This includes a summarised review of the implementation of a post inspection action plan following a Full Joint Inspection of the work of the YOS which took place during March 2017, the findings of which were published in July the same year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that members:
- 2.2 Acknowledge the proposed strategic changes within the Youth Justice System and potential impact upon YOS business;
- 2.3 Acknowledge the findings and outcomes of the Full Joint Inspection of Cwm Taf YOS and actions in this year's Youth Justice Plan that link to the post inspection improvement action plan, reviewed in July this year;
- 2.4 Receive further reports in due course in order to be satisfied of the progress and improvements being made as a result of the improvement action plan and receive updates on the work/changes that impact upon the YOS generally.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service is a statutory partnership legislated by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and provides services across two local authority areas, namely Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil. The local authority YOS areas merged to form Cwm Taf YOS in August 2014. The aim of the service is to prevent the offending and re-offending of children and young people. The statutory partners are: South Wales Police; Cwm Taf University Health Board; HM Prison

and Probation Service; and the local authority areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil. These partners provide financial and staffing contributions to the Youth Offending Service. The Youth Offending Service also attracts external grant funding from the Youth Justice Board, Welsh Government and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

- 3.2 Overall governance is facilitated by the Regional Cwm Taf Offender Management Board which meets quarterly to hold the service to account, examine performance, and to monitor the delivery of the service.
- 3.3 In addition to the scrutiny provided via the Offender Management Board, the Youth Offending Service also reports its performance on a quarterly basis to the Youth Justice Board (YJB), and to the Welsh Government in relation to its prevention work. The YOS is also subject to an inspection regime carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) (mentioned in section 2 above), and which subsequently informs a part of this report.
- 3.4 As the preventative functions of the YOS are not legislated or regulated, the Full Joint Inspection focussed on the statutory provision of the service. However, it should be acknowledged that over a significant number of years, a proportion of YOS business is carried out within the prevention arena, which has no doubt impacted positively on reducing the numbers of first time entrants (FTE's) to the statutory services and the youth justice system.

4. Summary of the 2017 Full Joint Inspection and YOS Action Plan/ Review

- 4.1 The Full Joint Inspection (FJI) of Cwm Taf YOS commenced during March 2017, whereby judgements were formed against six key areas and marked within a scale of one to four stars corresponding to;
 1. Poor
 2. Unsatisfactory
 3. Satisfactory
 4. Good
- 4.2 The FJI report (<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/07/Cwm-Taf-FJI-report.pdf>) was published on 5th July 2017 where the following judgements against the key areas were made:



- 4.3 Overall, it was felt that the judgements of the Inspection presented a balanced picture of the service with clear indicators of areas that required developing or further attention.
- 4.4 A number of key recommendations were made. These included how strategic planning could be better informed by more effective evaluation to identify the needs of the cohort, the staff and the business needs of the YOS as a whole. Although it was acknowledged that the Management Board provided a good base for supporting the YOS to meet its priorities, there was no overarching strategy that was informed by a fuller understanding of the needs of those young people who are known to the service.
- 4.5 Furthermore, although there was good evidence of partnership working, the provision of health services, and in particular Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), was deemed to be poor.
- 4.6 In relation to the findings highlighted in 4.4 and 4.5, the YOS has taken steps to address the issues and this work is continually in progress. For example, in June last year, the YOS took the opportunity to form a Resource Group which has taken on the challenge of identifying and redeveloping all existing resources used by the YOS and has created a comprehensive resource file for use within our interventions to reduce offending.
- 4.7 Regarding health provision, the Offender Manager Board have continued to raise concerns regarding the quality of the service provided. In June this year, a meeting took place between YOS and CAMHS to resolve the issues, and a new YOS/CAMHS Pathway is now in place. The Offender Management Board has asked for future assurances that the new arrangements are effectively monitored and reported back to Board.
- 4.8 As well as the key recommendations that were made, the report also highlighted areas of good practice that existed within the Youth Offending Service, which are evidenced throughout the report with particular reference being made to the level

of engagement between the YOS and service users, the use of restorative justice and the work carried out with victims and young people.

- 4.9 The YOS seeks to improve on the findings and recommendations made within the FJI report, and following its publication was tasked with completion of a post inspection improvement plan aimed at addressing the areas identified for improvement and development. Elements of this plan are set out in this years **Youth Justice Plan 2018/19** (see background papers and end of this report) and there is a continued focus on many of the initial improvement plan actions.

5.0 Potential changes to youth justice system and YOS performance.


- 5.1 Members should be advised that the Youth Justice System is currently under review both nationally and regionally, and the YOS has already been notified by the Ministry of Justice that there will be changes to the way that YJB grant money will be distributed to Local Authorities in the next financial year. It is uncertain what this will actually mean for the service at the present time.
- 5.2 The Youth Justice Board (YJB) Cymru has recently announced a new (reduced) structure and set out an operating model from which to deliver their priorities for 2019/20. This includes the progression of a *'Blueprint for Youth Justice in Wales'*. This document sets out a vision for Wales that takes a 'children first' trauma informed approach to youth justice that encompasses prevention and early intervention which recognises and responds to adverse childhood experiences (ACE's). The Blueprint is currently before the WG Cabinet for agreement of the principles within, prior to the commencement of any further detailed work.
- 5.3 Furthermore, the Youth Justice Board have recently announced changes to the way in which they will monitor the YOS, and a new Performance Oversight Board (POB) will notify YOS where there is a decline in performance in relation to Reoffending, First Time Entrants or the use of Custody. The YOS will then be assessed and ranked against other YOS services with similar demographics. In Cwm Taf, the YOS has continued to provide an effective and efficient service against a backdrop of continued financial challenge, but has both maintained, and in some areas, improved overall performance against the Youth Justice Board outcome indicators and the devolved performance measures for Wales.
- 5.4 However, there continues to be further work required in order to deal more effectively with young people who repeat offend. The YOS has now embedded an Enhanced Case Management (ECM) approach into its practice in order to deal effectively with young people who offend and who have been subject to adverse childhood experiences (ACE's). The YOS has invested heavily in this programme which has been received positively and is currently under evaluation. Alongside this, the YOS commissions a Viewpoint data system to capture the views of our cohort, and a collation of the feedback we receive will, to a large extent, inform the future development of the service.
- 5.5 In addition, a sub group of the Offender Management Board is currently working on a revised performance framework with which the Board can monitor and more

collectively address as a partnership the issue of reoffending rates amongst young people and adults. Much of this work will align with the priorities set out in the Community Safety Partnership Delivery Plan 2018/21.

- 5.6 Funding from Welsh Government (Promoting Positive Engagement with Young People, PPEYP) remained the same as the previous year. However, the projects delivered within this fund are now part of the Flexible Funding Pathfinder across Cwm Taf, to focus on a single programme and provide flexibility across all grants in 2019/20. The YOS utilises the PPEYP grant to develop, deliver and coordinate preventative interventions and services across the Cwm Taf area. Some of this work is coordinated alongside the Resilient Families Service (RFS) and also ensures that the Cwm Taf YOS Prevention Service can provide a swift and proportionate response to anti social behaviour (ASB), Restorative Justice Street Disposals (YRD's) and respond quickly to crisis referrals from the Children's Services Dept.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 YOS management team are currently evaluating and reviewing the overall structure of the service and will continue to do so in the months leading into the new financial year. As such, the potential impact linked to the issues outlined above and the risks associated with potential changes to grant funding will need to be monitored closely to ensure that Cwm Taf YOS can properly meet the demands, aims and objectives ahead and to deliver better outcomes for young people who offend or who are at risk of becoming involved in offending behaviour.

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document (s)	Date	Document Location
Youth Justice Plan 2018/19	July 2018	 Cwm Taf YJ Plan 2018 19 Final.docx