

AGENDA ITEM 5**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL****CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD****11TH MAY 2015****PROVISION OF YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICES FOR CWM TAF**

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform and update the corporate parenting board of the current arrangements that exist across the Cwm Taf area for the provision of Youth Offending Services (YOS), with a focus on the effectiveness of the service and its continued development.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the content of this report and acknowledge the progress made in developing a regional Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service.
- 2.2 Note the maintenance of positive performance in relation to the key performance indicators.
- 2.3 Receive further reports in due course aimed at highlighting specific functions and developments of the service.

3. BACKGROUND**Current Arrangements for a Youth Offending Service**

- 3.1 The 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 simple aim of the service is to prevent the offending and re-offending of children and young people. Historically two separate Youth Offending Services existed across the local authority areas. The statutory partners are: South Wales Police; Cwm Taf University Health Board; National 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 A steering group was convened in 2013 in order to scope out the potential and merits of a collaborative service across the Cwm Taf region. Ultimately, it was the view of the steering group that there was a clear and robust business case supporting the creation of a Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service. The primary rationale for the development of a Cwm Taf service was in order to promote resilience of the two services during times of increased austerity and a central focus on collaboration. The rationale and view was underpinned by Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf being two individual services that were well established and well performing with identified strengths and was further promoted by:
- Access to regional funding streams;
 - Recent and anticipated legislative changes;
 - Existing partnership arrangement across the Cwm Taf region;
 - Existing joint governance arrangements;
 - Changing trends in youth crime and youth offending service workloads.
- 3.3 The overriding factor was the provision of a service that focussed on positive outcomes for children, young people, their families and their communities whilst being efficient and effective in its delivery.
- 3.4 Consequently Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service came into existence in August 2014 with Rhondda Cynon Taf acting as the host authority and overall governance being facilitated by a Cwm Taf Regional Management Board which consists of all statutory partner agencies and other agencies/organisations as deemed appropriate by the board (e.g. housing, substance misuse agencies). The board meets quarterly to hold the service to account, examine performance, development and to set the priorities of the service.
- 3.5 In addition to the scrutiny provided via the Regional Management Board, the Youth Offending Service also reports its performance on a quarterly basis to the Youth Justice Board (referred to below). The service is also subject to an inspection regime carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) and has recently taken part in a three day thematic inspection focussing on "Desistance", the findings of which will be available in August 2015.
- 3.6 As well as the recent thematic inspection on Desistance that Cwm Taf participated in, HMIP have a range of thematic inspections which examine specific provision and practice within chosen YOS areas. The outcomes and generic recommendations of the thematic inspections are published and used by the service to review and evaluate its own practice and provision against the determined recommendations. One such thematic inspection report, focusing on "Girls in the Criminal Justice System" was published in December 2014 and Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service has devised an action plan in order to review and monitor its own position and progress against the published recommendations. This action plan is highlighted within **appendix one**. One of the recommendations stipulates that "*senior corporate parents, including Directors of Children's Services and elected members, routinely review the offending rates of Looked After Children by gender to ensure that they understand patterns of offending by girls and are able to take action to address this where necessary.*"

- 3.7 The Youth Offending Service consists of two levels of provision aimed at delivering services focussing on preventing young people from entering the criminal justice system and services for young people once in the criminal justice system and in doing so, aims to positively impact upon overall performance and outcomes for young people, their families and their communities.
- 3.8 The current structure is outlined within **Appendix two**.
- 3.9 As is indicated above, the financial contributions for the Youth Offending Service are generated from a range of sources. As has been anticipated, going forward into 2015/16 there have been firm indications of reductions in grant funding and core funding. The Effective Practice Grant provided by the Youth Justice Board will be cut by 6.7% into 2015/16 in comparison to 2014/15. This equates to an overall reduction of £61,111 across the Cwm Taf region from an annual total of £804,093 to £742,982. Additionally, the service has a projected reduction in core budget via the pooled contribution of the local authorities, of £66,660. The anticipation of funding reductions was factored into the initial considerations for the development of a regional service. The current total indicative reduction of £127,771 will be absorbed due to the flexibility afforded via the merge and the ability to reduce the overall establishment via posts that have become/held vacant via the process of regionalisation.

4. PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 The work of the Youth Offending Service is measured via three national key performance indicators namely:
- A reduction in the number of first time entrants (FTEs) into the youth justice system.
 - A reduction in the use of custody as a sentence.
 - The proven rate of re-offending.

First Time Entrants (Appendix three)

- 4.2 The Youth Offending Service, both in its historical format (RCT and Merthyr Tydfil) and within its current format (Cwm Taf), has achieved considerable results in terms of a reduction of the numbers of first time entrants into the criminal justice system and the use of custody as a sentence.
- 4.3 Within 2010/11 (April 1st – March 31st) there were 302 FTEs within Rhondda Cynon Taf and 72 FTEs within Merthyr Tydfil (Cwm Taf total 374). This figure has reduced year on year with the last full annual figure for 2013/14 showing that there were 59 FTEs within Rhondda Cynon Taf and 18 FTEs within Merthyr Tydfil (Cwm Taf Total 77 FTEs) evidencing an aggregate percentage reduction of -79.4% (over 4 years)
- 4.4 More latterly, and since the collaboration of the services, Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service has continued to positively impact upon an overall reduction of First Time Entrants into the criminal justice system across the Cwm Taf region. At the end of September 2014 there were a total of 78 first time entrants compared to a figure of 83 for the same period in 2013. It is generally acknowledged that the rate by which

First Time Entrants reduces, will in it-self reduce and plateau off due to the continued smaller numbers involved.

Use of Custody (Appendix three)

- 4.5 As is the case for FTEs, the Youth Offending Service in its historical and current format has achieved considerable results in terms of a reduction of the use of custody as a sentence.
- 4.6 Within 2010/11 there were 36 custodial sentences within Rhondda Cynon Taf and 18 custodial sentences within Merthyr Tydfil (Cwm Taf total 54). This figure has reduced year on year with the last full annual figure for 2013/14 showing that were 3 custodial sentences within Rhondda Cynon Taf and 6 custodial sentences within Merthyr Tydfil (Cwm Taf total 9 custodial sentences) evidencing an aggregate reduction of -83.3%.
- 4.7 Since the collaboration of the services, Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service has continued to monitor and report on its use of custody. Overall, up to the end of quarter 3 (April 1st 2014 – Dec 31st 2014) there have been a total of 7 custodial sentences across the Cwm Taf region; this being comparable to the same overall figure (7) for the same period in 2013/14.

Re-Offending Rates (Appendix three)

- 4.8 Due to the nature within which re-offending data is tracked the information provided in terms of this performance measure is historical, being 12+ months in the past. It relates to a rate associated with a cohort of young people within a defined period. As there has been a significant reduction in the number of first time entrants entering the system the cohort of young people within defined periods has also decreased but as preventative and diversionary methods have been effective in keeping a significant number of young people out of the criminal justice system, it follows that those who now enter the system generally have more complex needs and are subsequently likely to be more prolific in their offending.
- 4.9 Between the period January – December 2012 within Rhondda Cynon Taf, there were 193 young people within the re-offending cohort. Of these, 66 went on to re-offend with the cohort committing a total of 176 offences (0.91 offences per person – this being termed as frequency rate). The re-offending rate, i.e. the numbers of young people within the cohort that went on to re-offend was 34.2% (66 young people re-offending from a cohort of 193).
- 4.10 Between the period January – December 2011 within Rhondda Cynon Taf, there were 269 young people within the re-offending cohort. Of these 104 went on to re-offend with the cohort committing a total of 243 offences (0.90 offences per person). The re-offending rate for the period is 38.7% (104 young people re-offending from a cohort of 269).

- 4.11 Between the period January – December 2012 within Merthyr Tydfil, there were 44 young people within the re-offending cohort. Of these, 20 went on to re-offend with the cohort committing a total of 72 offences (1.64 offences per person). The re-offending rate for the period is 45.5% (20 young people re-offending from a cohort of 44).
- 4.12 Between the period January – December 2011 within Merthyr Tydfil, there were 81 young people within the re-offending cohort. Of these, 46 went on to re-offend with the cohort committing a total of 191 offences (2.36 offences per person), the re-offending rate for the period is 56.8% (46 young people re-offending from a cohort of 81).
- 4.13 In conjunction with the Youth justice Board, the youth offending service is in the process of utilising a “re-offending toolkit” and “live tracker” which will enable us to establish more contemporary information on a re-offending cohort.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Cwm Taf Regional Youth Offending Service is the amalgamation of two historically well performing and well regarded services. The merging of two local authority Youth Offending Services was supported and initiated in order to create resilience whilst acknowledging the commonality that already existed across both services.
- 5.2 Although the collaborative service is within its relative infancy, there are clear indications of a service having been developed that is both efficient and effective and has been able to respond and be resilient to financial reductions whilst maintaining service provision.
- 5.3 The regional service will continue to monitor its performance and outcomes in line with quarterly and annual reporting as well as the outcomes of any inspection regime and report accordingly to the regional management board and Members at defined stages.

Appendix one

Girls in the Criminal Justice System

Recommendation	Current	Action	By Who / By When	Status
The Chairs of the Youth Offending Team Management Boards should ensure that:				
1) work is undertaken to understand and identify needs which are specific to girls and that appropriate services are commissioned to meet those needs	No work has been undertaken within the Cwm Taf region to evidence identified aggregate need and consequently no specific whole scale services have been commissioned. Individual work is carried out with girls in the CJ system and within prevention processes, and this is based on individual assessment. The work completed tends to be in house rather than commissioned.	To complete the YJB girls health check audit tool and report findings back to management board	YOS manager July 2015	
2) the effectiveness of interventions for girls is evaluated in order to support the development and continuous improvement of practice	No evaluations have yet taken place across the Cwm Taf region.	To collate the range of interventions aimed at girls that currently exist. Devise methods by which the effectiveness of such can be evaluated. This to include non YOS programmes of intervention.	YOS Manager Partner agencies September 2015	
3) they regularly review data by gender to understand the trends of offending by girls, and then use that data to develop the shape and content of future provision	First brief data provided to management board on 22 nd Jan 2015. This examined points of interaction for girls with Cwm Taf YOS.	To devise data set, aimed at enabling greater exploration of trends and issues relating to girls within the Cwm Taf YOS region and to feedback into management board on a quarterly basis.	YOS Manager/ YOS information officers. July 2015	
4) there is effective liaison and cooperation between Youth Offending Teams and other agencies working to safeguard girls at risk of sexual exploitation and that the effectiveness of this cooperation is regularly monitored and evaluated: including any out of area placements for girls	The YOS holds HRPs and MARPs which have a multi agency involvement and focus on planning. YOS attends relevant partnerships / boards, including CTSCB, Ops groups and relevant individual planning processes for individual YPs – (CIN, CPR, LAC etc). YOS manager currently part of working group aimed at prioritising safeguarding issues as they relate to LAC.	Continue with current practice.		
5) staff working with girls are suitably skilled and trained to assess and meet the specific needs of girls effectively.	At staff have received safeguarding training and relevant CSE training. There has not been any specific	Specific training to be arranged for staff relating to diversity issues and needs of	YOS Manager September 2015	

	training to focus on diversity and need as it relates to females.	females within the CJ system.		
Youth Offending Team Managers should ensure that:				
1) assessments of likelihood of reoffending and risk of harm take into account the impact of gender	All girls who come into the CJ system within CT are assessed utilising Asset. Consideration is given to appropriate allocation of case worker with gender being a factor. All girls carrying out community reparation are paired up with a female worker.	Quality assurance tools currently being devised within CT YOS which (amongst other areas) will evidence that impact of gender has been considered. Further training to be considered to focus on gender considerations within assessment and intervention.	May 2015 September 2015	
2) appropriate interventions are offered to meet the needs of girls	There are a range of individual programmes and interventions offered to females across the CT region. Previously girls groups have existed that have focussed on safety, relationships, sexual health, CSE.	The range of interventions currently used across the CT YOS to be collated. Devise an ongoing girls group.	YOS Manager May 2015 September 2015	
3) assessments of vulnerability take the impact of gender into account and for all girls consider the possibility of child sexual exploitation	All staff have received training on CSE. All Asset assessments are completed on girls within the YOS / prevention system – this includes assessing risk as it relates to vulnerability and serious harm. SERAF assessments are completed where there is an identified need.	Quality assurance tools currently being devised within CT YOS	YOS Manager May 2015	
4) health practitioners are sufficiently involved with the work carried out, in particular, in relation to assessment, interventions and information sharing	YOS health workers have been involved in the provision of sexual health groups and individual interventions. Health workers are involved with the C Card processes. YOS health workers carry out individual pieces of work as assessed with girls.	Review and devise an updated girls group.	September 2016	
5) exit strategies are developed to ensure that girls have access to appropriate ongoing support when their involvement with Youth Offending Teams ends.	All girls with an assessed level of high risk are discussed within the YOS High Risk panels which examines exit strategies. The YOS holds Multi agency risk panels which are aimed at sharing intelligence and multi agency planning for high risk young people and young people where it is deemed that further multi agency strategies or plans need to be put in place.	CTYOS is currently in the process of developing reintegration panels as part of a wrap around prevention service for any young person with identified unmet need at/nearing end of intervention. YOS to examine the range of “panels” that	YOS Manager / YOS Operational Management Team. May 2015	

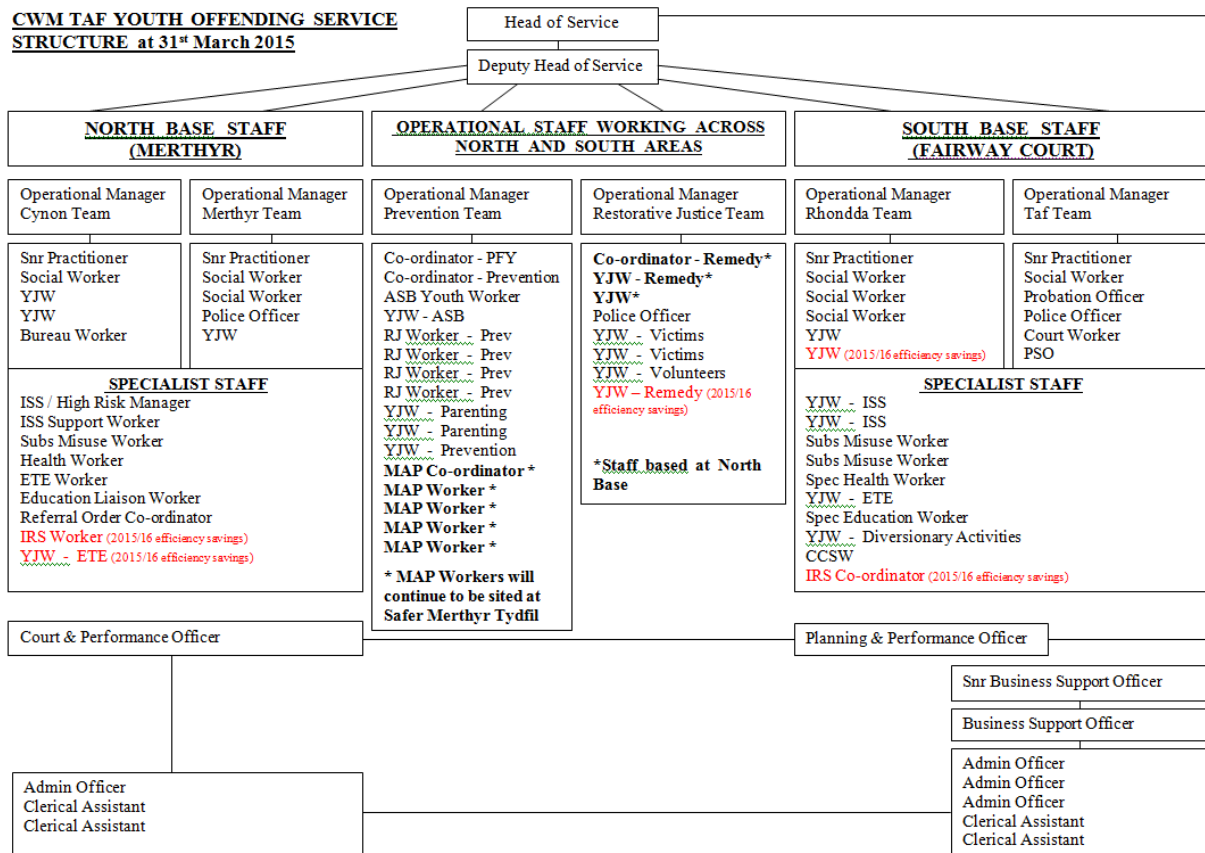
		exist across the CT region in order to streamline processes.		
Local authorities should ensure that:				
1) senior corporate parents, including Directors of Children’s Services and elected members, routinely review the offending rates of Looked After Children by gender to ensure that they understand patterns of offending by girls and are able to take action to address this where necessary	Analysis for gender split completed for 1 st Jan 2012 – 31 st December 2014, but LAC issues not incorporated within. YOS provides RCT children’s services with a quarterly analysis of case load as it relates to LAC population with a gender split.	Thematic action plan to be taken to Corporate Parenting Board. Further analysis of LAC gender split / offending rates to be compiled.	Director of Children’s Services / YOS Manager May 2015	
2) where girls are known to children’s social care, regular contact should be maintained while they are in custody so that plans for their release are made in a timely way and involve them fully, in line their legal duties.	There have been no females in custody in the Cwm Taf area within the past three years	The respective children’s services departments will be made aware of the potential for any female to receive a custodial sentence	As and when required	
Police forces should:				
1) ensure that early intervention schemes, commissioned, provided or used by the police, take account of the needs and interests of girls.	Across the Custody suites in South Wales Police there are processes in place to divert young offenders away from the Criminal Justice system and into RJ outcomes. This is achieved through the Youth Bureau.	Review and monitor in line with Bureau scrutiny with SWP and YOS.		
	This work is undertaken in partnerships with the YOS across Cwm Taf. For Youth Bureau cases the young person is bailed for the YOS to undertake a full assessment to determine the outcome when the young person appears before the Youth panel. The maximum time a young person is bailed is 28 days The introduction the process has had a positive impact on the first time entrants into the Criminal Justice process and ensures that young people quickly have their needs taken into account			

Compiled on 22nd January 2015

Reviewed on: 23rd April 2015

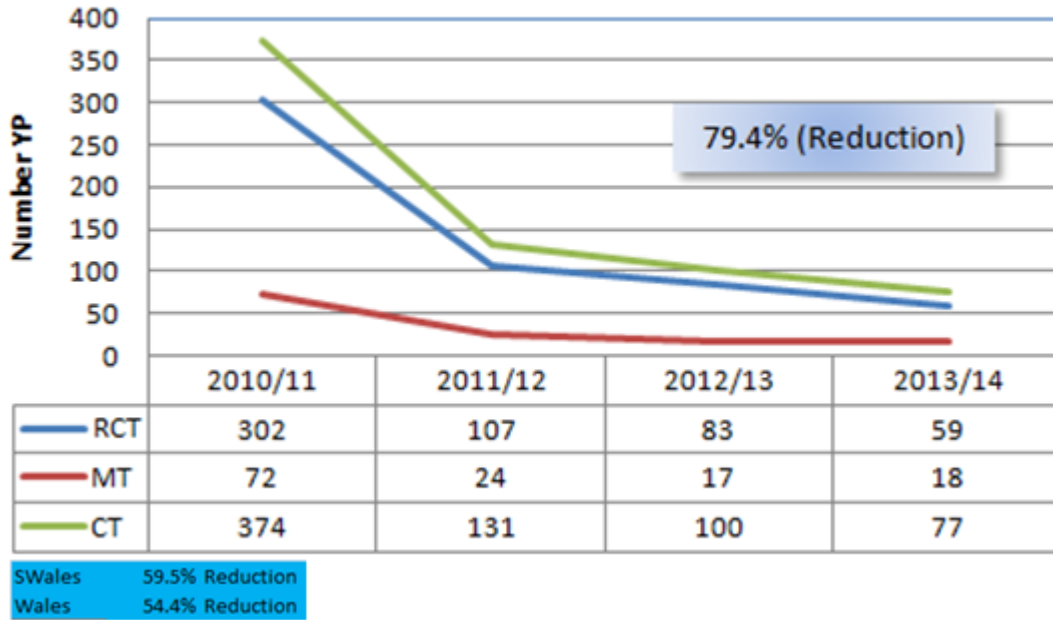
Appendix two

**CWM TAF YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE
STRUCTURE at 31st March 2015**

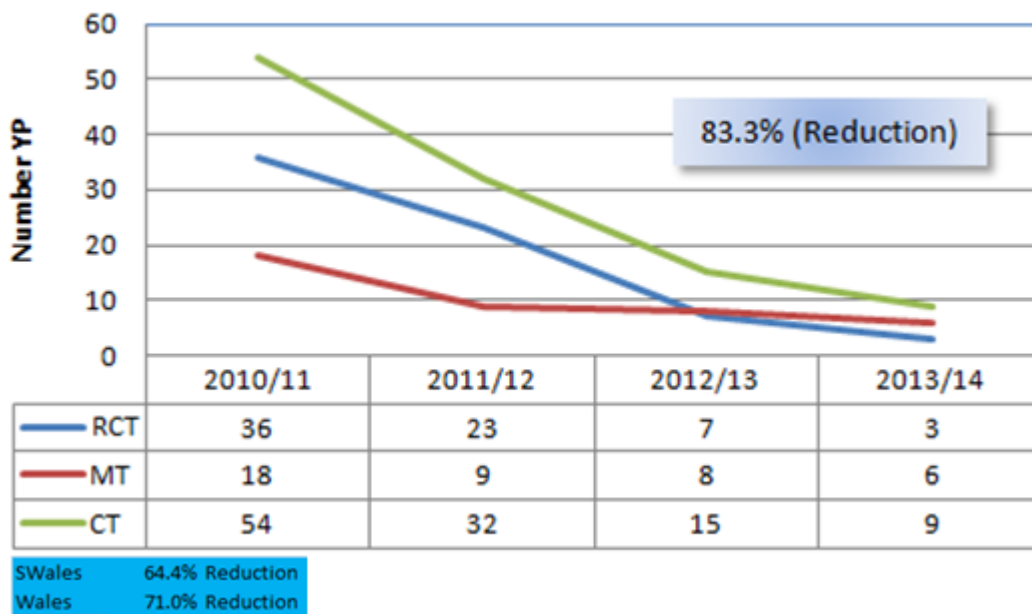


Appendix three

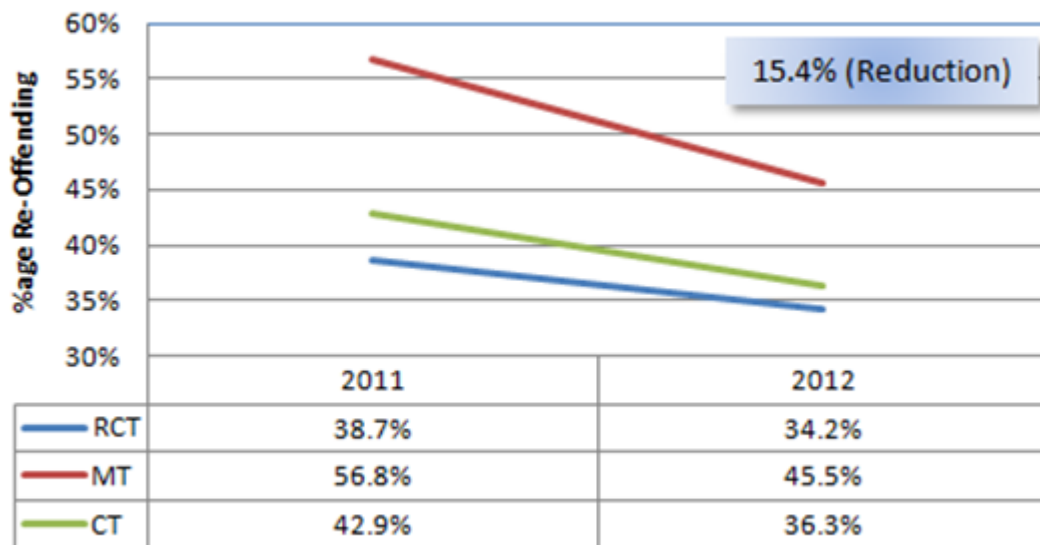
First Time Entrants



Custody



Re-Offending (Jan-Dec)



SWales 5.5% Increase
 Wales 0.3% Increase