

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET

18 SEPTEMBER 2018

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

#### YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2018-2019

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The report presents the background and summary of the content of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service (WBYJEIS) Annual Youth Justice Plan 2018-2019 (Appendix 1).

#### 2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report relates to all three Corporate Improvement Plan priorities:
1. Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
  2. Helping people to become more self-reliant – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
  3. Smarter use of resources – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Youth offending services/teams (YOS) are statutory multi-agency partnerships that have a legal duty to co-operate to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area funded from a variety of sources including UK Government, Welsh Government (WG) and the statutory partners (ie the local authority, police, the probation service and health).
- 3.2 The production of a youth justice plan is a statutory duty of the local authority under Part 3, section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.  
The plan sets out:
- how youth justice services are to be provided and funded;
  - how the youth offending service established by the local authority is to be composed and funded;
  - how it will operate; and
  - what function it is to carry out.
- 3.3 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 39(1) placed a duty on each local authority, acting with its statutory partners (ie police, probation and health) to

establish youth offending teams in their local area to deliver youth justice services. Section 38(3) of the Act grants a power to the local authority and its statutory partners to make payment towards the expenditure incurred in providing youth justice services. The purpose of the WBYJEIS is to ensure that youth justice services are available across the Western Bay area (ie Bridgend, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot).

3.4 Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Youth Offending Teams have been a merged service since 29 May 2014 when the first WBYJEIS Management Board was held and all local management boards ceased to exist. The Management Board is chaired by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's Director of Social Services, Health and Housing and has a membership in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act including Cabinet Members from all three local authorities.

3.5 The youth justice plan contains information relating to:

- a summary of achievements;
- structure and governance;
- resources and value for money;
- partnership arrangements; and
- risks to future delivery against the youth justice outcome measures.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

##### **Summary of achievements**

4.1 Efforts have been concentrated on bringing consistent good practice across the region from early intervention prevention and diversion work through to resettlement and reintegration. This has not been without difficulty; it has taken staff time to move from one established way of working to another especially during a time of local and national uncertainty. However, Youth Justice Board (YJB) key performance indicators continue to show a reduction in first time entrants and a reduction in the use of custody. Re-offending rates whilst still high have started to reduce but the actual number of young people re-offending continues to be relatively low. The children and young people considered as repeat offenders are complex and they are more entrenched in offending behaviour, however, the number of offences committed by children and young people is reducing.

4.2 Focusing on the YJB three England and Wales key performance indicators (KPI) above during 2015-2016, 100 children and young people entered the youth justice system. During 2016-2017, the service saw 72 children and young people enter the youth justice system for the first time (recorded as first-time entrants by the YJB). In the Western Bay region there are 45,817 children aged 10-17 years. Of those, only 67 children and young people entered the youth justice system during the financial year 2017-2018 approximately 23 of the 67 first time entrants were resident in Bridgend (this number does not include those already within the system from previous years). In addition to this, over 400 children and young people were diverted away from having any criminal record through early intervention by the service and diversion through the bureau.

- 4.3 The use of custody has reduced from 15 young people receiving custodial sentences in 2014-2015 to 13 custodial sentences in 2015-2016 and 12 custodial sentences being given in 2016-2017 and 9 in 2017-2018.
- 4.4 The re-offending cohort being reported for 2017-2018 is taken from 2015-2016 to allow the potential offending behaviour to be tracked. Western Bay has 245 children and young people in the cohort compared to 295 the year before. 119 children and young people (48.6%) re-offended during the tracked period compared to 153 (51.9%) the year before.
- 4.5 If the bureau (pre-court diversion scheme) young people are included in the calculation of reoffending, the figure is reduced to a rate of approximately 27%.
- 4.6 There have been a variety of developments over the past year which evidences the benefits of regional working such as an increasing number of staff working across the region. There are 19 shared posts in 2018-2019 compared to 11 in 2017-2018. This is allowing effective vacancy management as well as the sharing of skills. There has been no 'big bang' effect of the regional working; progress continues to be a pragmatic approach to adapting to change. This approach is fortunate as it allows for any disaggregation of the service to be more manageable than had the service been taken through a whole region wide restructure.

### **Structure and governance**

- 4.7 The primary purpose of the WBYJEIS is to ensure that youth justice services are available across the Western Bay area. A YOS is the main vehicle through which youth justice services are coordinated and delivered, working to reduce anti-social behavior, offending and reoffending amongst children and young people.
- 4.8 The activity of the YOS across the Western Bay region is overseen and monitored by a management board. The management board has agreed the content of the youth justice plan which was signed by the chairperson on 28 July 2018. As indicated, this is chaired by a Director from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and is made up of senior representatives from each of the statutory partners who closely monitor and challenge the operation of the service including the functions it undertakes and the funding arrangements. There is a Cabinet Member from each local authority on this governance board.

### **Resources and value for money**

- 4.9 The development of regional working came at a time of significant financial challenge for all partners. As the service joined in 2014-2015, each local authority realised a 20% saving against core funding because of the amalgamated approach to the delivery of services. The Western Bay service is continuously undergoing redesign across the three local authority areas responding to opportunities and changes in demand. The following years have shown year on year reduction in staffing levels from 107 full-time equivalent in 2015-2016 to 84.5 in 2017-2018. The service income has reduced from £4,230,124 in 2015-2016 to £3,686,411 in 2017-2018. There has been no negative impact on performance and no compulsory redundancies to date.

### **Risks to future delivery against the youth justice outcome measures**

- 4.10 The desired outcomes contained in the plan contribute directly to meeting local authority priorities held within corporate plans across the three local authorities. The priorities and outcomes mirror those of the YJB and WG joint strategy 'Children and Young People First' (July 2014). These are:
- a reduction in first time entrants through early intervention, prevention and diversion;
  - a reduction in youth reoffending through appropriate interventions of the right level at the right time;
  - a reduction in the use of youth custody when confident that custody is a last resort and for crimes so serious no community sentence is an appropriate response;
  - access to devolved services for children and young people at risk of entering or having entered the youth justice system;
  - effective safeguarding through recognising vulnerability and improving the safety and wellbeing needs of children and young people;
  - effective public protection through risk recognition, assessment and management;
  - ensuring the voice of the victim is heard;
  - successful reintegration and resettlement at the end of an intervention;
  - a well-supported professional workforce; and
  - true participation by all involved.
- 4.11 Improving the key performance indicator (KPI) regarding increasing access to education, training and employment for children and young people known to the service continues to be a challenge. The service has an intervention centre where the staff are able to deliver sessions such as trade tasters and additional tutoring for those young people who have missed significant periods of school. The future development of the intervention centre is central to improving this KPI. The hours offered by education providers increased last year but attendance did not improve at the same rate, this will be a focus for staff along with evidencing outcomes more effectively.
- 4.12 The approach is informed by the WBYJEIS service young persons' group who felt strongly that more vocational training should be available through schools. There was a range of experiences within the group, but one-to-one learning support was viewed positively. This can be provided through the intervention centre working in partnership with schools and training providers.
- 4.13 While the plan outlines actions relating to all the KPIs, there is a focus for the board on three specific areas in particular. ETE remains a priority along with maintaining the low numbers currently entering the youth justice system and addressing offending reoffending with a focus on reducing violent crime.
- 4.14 While the plan contains realistic and achievable actions and targets for service delivery over the next twelve months, the risks that come with grant-funded posts are always present. The pre-court work relies heavily on WG grant funding which in Bridgend has been included in the flexible funding pathway pilot. It is unclear how this may impact on youth justice services in the years to come.
- 4.15 The decision for Bridgend to leave the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg (ABMU) health

region to join the Cwm Taf health region brings with it challenges for WBYJEIS as there are shared posts within the service and a single Western Bay database which is currently hosted by Bridgend. At the time of writing this report there are no definitive plans agreed for this change.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 A YOS is a statutory multi-agency partnership with a legal duty to co-operate to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area.
- 5.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, section 39(1) placed a duty on each local authority, acting with its statutory partners to establish a YOS in their local area to deliver youth justice services. Section 38(3) of the Act grants a power to the local authority and its statutory partners to make payment towards the expenditure incurred in providing youth justice services

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 The equality impact screening has been completed with the conclusion that a full assessment is not required. The youth justice plan should have a positive impact on wider services provided by the Council by bringing down the number of children and young people in trouble with the police. This will in turn reduce the need for other services involvement as a result of their behaviours escalating.
- 6.2 Acknowledging children and young people as a priority group, the service focuses on diverting children and young people away from the youth justice system as much as possible. In line with the YJB and WG Youth Offending Strategy, the children and young people we engage with are seen as children and young people first and offenders second. Service delivery prioritises helping children and young people avoid criminal records that can hinder them reaching their potential in future years.
- 6.3 In January 2018, a young persons' sub-group of the management board was formed. It is only made up of four young people at present but between them they represent the whole area of delivery ie each local authority, pre-court, post court and exit planning. They meet two weeks before each management board and go through the intended agenda and raise any issues or observations they may have. They also receive the minutes and actions taken following on from any suggestions they make for change, so that developments are fed back. The group is new and still developing.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment**

- 7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act assessment (Appendix 1) has been completed and contains a summary of the outcomes expected from the delivery of youth justice services as outlined in the youth justice plan

Long-term	The reduction in offending and reoffending by children and young people.
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Prevention	The reduction in the number of children and young people entering the youth justice system for the first time.
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- Integration Reducing the number of children and young people disengaged from their communities.
- Collaboration Successful partnership working through the multi-agency approach established by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- Involvement The establishment of a children and young persons' sub-group of the service's management board and active participation.

## 8 Financial implications

- 8.1 The Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service expected significant reductions in grant funding for the current year. However, grants were not reduced, and the table below outlines how the service is currently funded:

	<b>BCBC</b>	<b>SCBC</b>	<b>NPTCBC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Youth Justice Grant	193,357	383,200	217,000	793,557
WG PPE Grant	319,641	262,321	136,249	718,211
Other Income *	221,229	220,606	163,281	605,115
LA Core Budgets	384,060	697,555	431,250	1,512,866
<b>TOTAL FUNDING 2018-19</b>	<b>1,118,287</b>	<b>1,563,682</b>	<b>947,780</b>	<b>3,629,749</b>

\* Other income includes smaller grants and income from partners re shared posts

- 8.2 There has been no indication for next year regarding the level of funding that can be expected therefore possible reductions to funding remain a risk to the service.

## 9. Recommendation

- 9.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the Youth Justice Plan 2018-2019.

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## Background documents

Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service Plan 2018-2019