

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE 2 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN

IMPLEMENTATION OF A SINGLE YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE ACROSS WESTERN BAY

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny committee as to the progress being made with the creation of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

The report links to the following corporate priorities:

- Working together to raise ambitions and to drive up educational achievements
- Working with children and families to tackle problems early
- Working together to help vulnerable people to stay independent
- Working together to tackle health issues and encourage healthy lifestyles

3. Background

- 3.1 Youth Offending Services/Teams (YOSs) are statutory multi-agency partnerships who have a legal duty to co-operate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. There is currently a YOT in each Western Bay (WB) council area (Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot and Bridgend). YOSs are funded from a variety of sources including UK Government, Welsh Government and the statutory partners. (i.e. the local authority, police, the probation trust and health).
- 3.2 During 2012 the three YOS Managers collectively agreed that to make the service more resilient in light of the falling levels of statutory work and to allow the services to focus more on early intervention and thus improve outcomes for young people who have or are “at risk” of offending; that amalgamation would be the sensible way forward.
- 3.3 This idea was proposed to each Management Board who met individually and then collectively and determined that regional collaboration should be taken forward for mutual benefit. In December 2012 an Interim Combined Western Bay Regional YOS Management Board (“NEWBO”) was established.

- 3.4 In 2013 each of the three Cabinets agreed to amalgamate the three Youth Offending Teams in the WB region, subject to a supportive business case. In principle agreement was also given to Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to host the WB YOS.
- 3.5 Cabinets were advised in April 2013 of a desire to achieve amalgamation by April 2014 on the assumption that a supportive business case and all legal, human resources and financial requirements could be properly addressed within that timeframe. In October 2013 Cabinets were advised that if all the necessary elements were not achievable within this time scale the start of a new service would be delayed. Discreet work-streams (HR, Legal, ICT, Finance and Governance) were identified and work-stream leads from BCBC were nominated to ensure these areas of work were sufficiently undertaken to ensure that approval for amalgamation could be given within the desired time-frame.
- 3.6 In April 2014 all three Cabinets gave agreement for the amalgamation to take place. On 29th May 2014 the first Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service Management Board was held and all local management boards ceased. The Management Board is chaired by the Neath Port Talbot Director of Social Services and has a membership in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act including Cabinet Members from all three Local Authorities. The amalgamation seeks to realise cost savings with no reduction in service delivery but actually seeks to improve service delivery with no increase in resource. This is to be achieved through restructuring the service across Western Bay, sharing resources and good practice.

4. Current situation.

- 4.1 The recruitment of the overall Group Manager and three Locality Managers has been delayed due to ongoing negotiations with the Trade Unions.
- 4.2 Negotiations were originally delayed as they cut across the wider Trade Union negotiations that BCBC was having. Once this was resolved negotiations recommenced.
- 4.3 Since then there have been further protracted negotiations with regards to Terms and Conditions. In order to address some of the Trade Union concerns the decision has been taken to second the Locality Managers to Bridgend. The result of the most recent meeting with unions on 29th July 14 was that the only way to resolve the issues we have to everyone's satisfaction was to enter into a process of TUPE for all YOS staff subject to the relevant approvals.
- 4.3 The three existing YOTs have their own ChildView databases that are provided by CACI. These will be merged into one Western Bay database in order for information sharing to easily take place and to aid with reporting to the Youth Justice Board (YJB). However the level of data cleansing that needed to be done prior to the databases being merged was greater than expected and has led to a slight delay. This is now on schedule for mid November 2014 and will not cause any delay to the full amalgamation.

- 4.6 The Youth Justice Plan for 2014/15 is being written and will be finalised by September as a transition plan for the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service. This will form the basis of the medium to long-term business plan for the service setting out the aims of the new service and the steps that are necessary to achieve these. It will be a single plan for the 3 areas although due to circumstances it will have to contain separate staffing structure and separate financial breakdowns. Failure to submit the plan by this date can result in the YJB grant not being released to the service.
- 4.7 Collaborative work between the three existing youth offending teams (YOTs) is already taking place with some staff already working across the Western Bay footprint. Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend in particular have started to access each other's programmes and specialist staff members, developing the ethos of a united service. Neath Port Talbot are accessing the Bridgend skills development project and parenting support whilst BCBC are having help from the NPT information officer.
- 4.8 The Youth Crime Prevention Fund already finances a Western Bay delivery plan and reporting is processed through Bridgend as the host authority. This Welsh Government grant brings together the pre-court work across Western Bay aligning practise and further developing restorative approaches which includes a new overarching Restorative Practice post funded through the grant.
- 4.9 Other grant funding is still held at local level as this financial year is seen very much as a year of transition. The Management Board is very aware that as the service progresses that partner agencies may also see the amalgamation as an opportunity to make savings and this will need to be carefully managed as the service moves forward.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 Local Authorities have the power to collaborate and there is a duty to consider collaboration contained in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. YOTs are statutory partnerships that must be established for a local authority area or areas in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (CADA).

6. Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equal opportunity issues arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The combined net budgets for 2014-15 of the three Councils equates to £1.728 million. This is broken down over the three Councils as follows:

Budget 2014/2015	
Expenditure	Income

	Staffing Budget	Total Non-Staffing	Total Gross Budget	Total Income	Net Controllable Budget
	£	£	£	£	£
Bridgend	813,553	183,822	997,375	-606,182	391,193
Neath Port Talbot	784,454	287,824	1,072,278	-664,988	407,290
Swansea	1,513,400	469,100	1,982,500	-1,052,800	929,700
TOTAL	3,111,407	940,746	4,052,153	-2,323,970	1,728,183

- 7.2 Of the £4.052 million gross cost, £2.085 million is met from grant funding, in particular Youth Justice grant (£1.056 million) and Youth Crime Prevention Fund (£788,000).
- 7.3 The budget for Bridgend takes into account the MTFs saving for 2014-15 of £77,000. No further savings are currently set out in the Medium Term Financial Plans of any of the three Councils, although it must be borne in mind that this may change as the funding position for local authorities becomes clearer. In addition, the services have experienced quite significant reductions in grant funding over recent years and any further reductions may impact on the level of service provision.
- 7.4 The WB Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service project was granted £375,000 from the Regional Collaboration Fund for 2013-14 and a further £75,000 for 2014-15. The funding for 2014-15 is planned to meet the cost of merging the three separate client databases, along with a small element of premises related costs. Cabinet has agreed that any ongoing project management costs associated with this project will be met from individual Council budgets during the transition phase, using the 10-17 population estimates as the basis for apportionment. This is currently estimated at £16,866. In Bridgend this cost will be met from the YOT budget. Based on current data, the percentage apportionments to each authority is set out in the following table:

	%
Bridgend	28.1
Neath Port Talbot	27.4
Swansea	44.5

- 7.5 As the lead authority Bridgend will be responsible for managing a pooled budget, the financial details of which will be incorporated into the shared service legal agreement.

8. Recommendation.

- 8.1 That Committee note the content of this report.

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25th July 2014

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Background documents

Cabinet Report, 1st April 2014 Managing Youth Offending Services across Western Bay
Cabinet Report, 15th October 2013, Establishment of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service
Cabinet Report, 2nd April 2013 Western Bay Youth Offending Services