

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

16 SEPTEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

UPDATE ON BRIDGEND YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 on progress in implementing the Bridgend Youth Justice Service improvement plan which was developed following the recent Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) inspection.

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate priorities:

- 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.
- Helping people to be more self-reliant – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
- 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 Bridgend Youth Justice Service is a statutory multi-agency partnership that has a legal duty to co-operate in order to secure appropriate local youth justice services. The service is funded from a variety of sources including UK Government, Welsh Government and statutory partners (ie Bridgend County Borough Council, South Wales Police, the Probation Service and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board).
- 3.2 Statutory duties to prevent offending are outlined in criminal justice and civil legislation. The principal aim of Youth Justice Services in England and Wales is to prevent offending and re-offending by young people in accordance with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Local authorities in Wales also have statutory duties to provide preventative services contained in Section 15 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Local authorities must provide services to:

- encourage children not to commit offences;
- avoid the need for children to be placed in secure accommodation; and
- enable people to live their lives as independently as possible.

- 3.3 In 2018, Welsh Government made the decision to migrate health services for Bridgend from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg Health Board (ABMU) to Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB). This change took effect from 1 April 2019.
- 3.4 The service had been operating a voluntary collaboration on the ABMU footprint as the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service (WBYJEIS) for four years but that service had never progressed to become a fully amalgamated youth justice service and had also caused numerous operational difficulties. It was therefore agreed in October 2018 by all partners at Board level that this would be an opportune time to end the collaboration.
- 3.5 WBYJEIS was subject to a full joint inspection by HMIP in December 2018 and the findings of which were published in March 2019. The inspection concluded that the WBYJEIS received an overall rating of inadequate. The findings of the HMIP inspection concluded that nine of the twelve inspection domains were rated as inadequate, one was adequate, one was good and one was outstanding. The inspection report is available at www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk.
- 3.6 The service is now subject to monitoring by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and significant scrutiny from a variety of sources including UK Government and Welsh Government. It is likely that the service will be subject to re-inspection within a 12 to 18 month timeframe and the implication of a failure to improve is that the service would be referred to Ministers for action.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 On 19 April 2019 Cabinet agreed to the disaggregation of the WBYJEIS and that the new arrangement would be for the Bridgend's Youth Justice Service to sit within the portfolio of an existing group manager within the Education and Family Support Directorate.
- 4.2 Bridgend Youth Justice Service became operational from 1 April 2019 and its structure is under review. At the time of writing this report, a staff consultation is underway to progress a proposed restructure of the service. More information on the proposed restructure will be shared with members on conclusion of the consultation, which was predicted to be at the end of August 2019, but maybe extended if there are any issues which cannot be addressed in the timeframe.
- 4.3 The current structure is confused and has led to a lack of supervision and poor quality supervision which has resulted in limited management oversight of the quality of interventions. In reviewing the residual staff structure in Bridgend following disaggregation from WBYJEIS, it is clear that there are crucial posts missing from that structure (e.g. an information officer (as Bridgend has been using the services of the information officers in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea)). The service has inadequate professional management with only one social work qualified senior member of staff which HMIP has identified has resulted in poor quality assurance mechanisms and failures in the management of risk. The current proposed re-

structure will address these issues by enhancing the line management and increasing social work capacity within the team.

- 4.4 To progress the recommendations from the HMIP inspection, senior managers from within the local authority now meet YJB colleagues on a fortnightly basis to monitor progress against the improvement priorities. These meetings are proving to be invaluable in developing more robust and effective local arrangements. Since the disaggregation of the service from WBYJEIS, there have been a number of development sessions to progress the improvement plan. These sessions have consisted of stakeholder groups, the whole staff cohort and board members. A new management board was formed and held its first meeting on 10 June 2019. The Board will meet monthly for the first 12 months and bi-monthly thereafter.
- 4.5 The Management Board is jointly chaired by the Chief Executive of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Communities. Terms of reference for the Board are attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.6 The Management Board will oversee the delivery of the 14 recommendations within the inspection report, namely:

The Management Board should:

- review and clarify its role and function, include all statutory partners and work in an effective way to make sure that the service operates to a sufficient standard;
- make sure that partnership agencies provide appropriate support and services;
- develop effective oversight of the service's work and effective challenge to partners;
- develop a clear plan to manage disaggregation of individual YOTs from the joint service to limit any detrimental effect on the remaining parts of WBYJEIS;
- provide the resources and support to the management team to manage the service effectively;
- review the role and function of the prevention service.

Service managers should:

- make sure that all staff have appropriate supervision and management oversight;
- review the management structure and lines of accountability.

The Director of Children's Services (Director of Education and Family Support in Bridgend) should:

- monitor and review all cases where there are safety and wellbeing issues, making sure that appropriate referrals are made and joint work takes place as needed;
- improve the quality (and awareness from staff) of the referral systems so that children and young people receive the services they need.

The local authority education services should:

- review the effectiveness of information-sharing protocols to ensure that all schools and workers involved have the information they need to provide support tailored to children and young people's individual needs;
- develop effective strategies to encourage children and young people who speak Welsh to access services in their preferred language, and to use, develop and recognise the value of the language as an employment skill;
- develop a literacy and numeracy strategy to support children and young people to develop these skills to improve the chances of desistance.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board should:

- provide relevant and timely physical, sexual, emotional and mental health services to meet the needs of children and young people to reduce further harm and promote wellbeing.

4.7 A copy of the improvement plan is attached at Appendix 2.

4.8 The service recognises that key to the improvement journey is the support of the staff group and there has already been engagement with staff to identify their roles in the improvement journey. Future activity is planned including joint development activity between staff and Management Board members.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no effect on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications directly arising from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 A summary on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment is listed below:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Long-term | The long term aim of the service is to improve outcomes for children, young people and families by reducing first-time entrants into the youth justice system, reducing re-offending rates and reducing the use of custody for young people |
| Prevention | The focus of the service is to prevent offending and re-offending by young people under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. |
| Integration | The service is a multi-agency partnership where integration is key to good service delivery arrangements. |
| Collaboration | Collaboration will be critical to deliver the inspection recommendations. |
| Involvement | Participation and engagement arrangements will be strengthened as part of the new working arrangements. |

8. Financial implications

8.1 The total funding available for the service for 2019/20 is summarised below;

| | 2019/20 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | £ |
| Youth Justice Grant | 191,536 |
| Children and Communities Grant | 202,751 |
| Other Income | 159,060 |
| LA Core Budget | 360,920 |
| TOTAL FUNDING | <u>914,267</u> |

*Other income includes smaller grants and income from partner agencies

8.2 In addition to the above, there are in-kind secondments from a number of partner agencies including south wales police and the national probation service.

8.3 The recommendations contained within the improvement plan will be implemented within existing resources.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2:

- notes the contents of the report; and
- provides comments/recommendations.

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Background documents: None