

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

INFORMATION REPORT TO CABINET

24 NOVEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATION

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WESTERN BAY YOUTH JUSTICE AND EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report on the progress that has been made to bring the three previously existing Youth Offending Services of Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea together and provide an overview of performance.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

Working together to make the best use of our resources.

Working with children and families to tackle problems early.

Working together to raise ambition and drive up educational achievement.

3. Background

- 3.1 Youth Offending Services are statutory multi-agency partnerships who have a legal duty to co-operate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area funded from a variety of sources including UK Government, Welsh Government and the statutory partners. (i.e. the Local Authority, Police, the National Probation Service and Health).
- 3.2 During 2012 the Youth Offending Services of Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea collectively agreed with their respective management boards that collaboration would be explored, with a view to making the services more resilient in light of the likely challenges ahead. In December 2012 the three local authorities agreed to further exploration and an interim Western Bay Regional Youth Offending Service Management Board was established. In 2013 the local authorities agreed to amalgamate their individual Youth Offending Services into one. Initially each service retained its local management board and management arrangements and a project manager was appointed, funded by Welsh Government until March 2014, to drive progress forward.
- 3.3 On 29th May 2014 the three local management boards ceased and the first Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service(Western Bay) management board meeting was held. The management board is chaired by the Neath Port Talbot 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. The shared service manager post was filled in November 2014 and Locality Managers were appointed by the end of March 2015. The overall Western Bay group manager is employed by Bridgend

County Borough Council (BCBC) but locality managers are appointed by the respective local authorities and there has been no secondment or transfer of staff.

- 3.4 The Annual Youth Justice Plan for 2014/15 was agreed by the Western Bay management board and submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales which oversees the youth justice system. 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 service will operate. The plan comprised the medium to long-term business plan for the Western Bay service and set out its aims of quality service delivery and continuous improvement. A highlight summary of the progress across service delivery areas relating to the Youth Justice Board Key Performance Indicators is provided below for information.

Summary of the annual performance 2014/15

Reduction in First Time Entrants into the youth justice system.

- 3.5 There is an expectation that youth offending services reduce the number of children and young people entering the youth justice system year after year. The Western Bay Service achieved this – reducing the number across the region by 36.6%. The figures compare January 2013 – December 2013 with January 2014 – December 2014. Bridgend's locality team achieved a 43% reduction locally. The Western Bay figure compares well against an average reduction of 19% in South Wales and a Welsh average reduction of 31%.

Reducing Reoffending

- 3.6 Of those young people who do enter the youth justice system, there is an expectation that youth offending services will stop them committing any additional offences through effective intervention. As court numbers decline because of effective early intervention, youth offending services find they are left with a small number of more complex children and young people who are more likely to reoffend.
- 3.7 The data relating to reoffending is always two years old due to the time taken to track young people. The binary rate for reoffending i.e. the number of children and young people who commit further offences, for the Western Bay region is an average of 38.1%. This rate compares favourably against the South Wales average rate of 44.7% and the Welsh average of 39.2%. Good performance being indicated by a lower percentage figure.
- 3.8 When looking at the data it actually relates to young people from July 2011-June 2012 compared to young people from July 2012 – June 2013. The Youth Justice Board has provided youth offending services with a reoffending toolkit to help break down the numbers for local use. Graphs are attached separating the figures between the three local authorities. The most common re – offence is violent offending across all three Western Bay teams.

Reducing the use of custody

- 3.9 Custodial figures are low across the Western Bay region and it is therefore hard to bring numbers down. Western Bay had a total of 14 custodial sentences imposed

last year compared to 14 the year before. This rate is not high compared to national figures but the service did not reach its aspirational target of 10. This is where Bridgend's performance dipped with an increase from two custodial sentences in 2013/14 to four in 2014/15 and of the four two were recalled following release

Access to services

- 3.10 The Youth Justice Board performance indicators relating to accessing services are Wales only indicators and relate to access to substance misuse services, education training and employment and accommodation. This year access to emotional and mental health services was added to monitor the access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) across Wales. The Western Bay region normally performs relatively well across existing indicators however there are two areas that need to be improved. These areas are accessing education, training, and employment, and the new emotional and mental health measure.
- 3.11 The performance measure for accessing education, training and employment (ETE) for those in the youth justice system is the increase in hours accessed from the start of the the young persons statutory involvement with the service compared to the hours accessed at the end. Western Bay young people had an average increase from 8.36 hours per week to 21.6 hours per week at the end of their involvement for statutory school age children. There was an increase from 10.7 hours to 15.43 hours for those aged post-16 years. The Bridgend specific figures were 14.9 hours to 16.8 hours and 10.6 hours to 14.8 respectively. The South Wales figure relating to ETE access was an average increase in hours from 14 to 18.1 hours for those who should be receiving statutory education of a minimum of 25 hours per week and the Wales figure was 16.6 to 18.4. For the post-16 age range the South Wales figure was an average increase from 9.2 hours to 15.1 and the Wales figure was 11.3 to 14.6 hours per week.
- 3.12 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) has been mentioned above as it relates to the emotional and mental health measure. The measure requires a CAMHS assessment to take place within 10 days of identification need. This is going to be a challenge for the service over the next year as the Western Bay service has had two vacant CAMHS nurse posts for a considerable period. The introduction of the performance measure is likely to highlight gaps in provision but this can help to identify the level of service provision necessary to meet the needs of children and young people within the youth justice system.

4. Current situation

- 4.1 The Youth Justice Plan for 2015/16 was agreed by the Western Bay Board and submitted to the Youth Justice Board at the end of July 2015. It outlined how services will be delivered to meet key performance indicators as well as work with victims, workforce development, safeguarding, risk management and participation. The plan forms part of the overall information held in relation to youth offending services nationally. The plan has been accepted by the Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice and the service is now reporting as one single Western Bay service as opposed to having three separate sets of data published. The service has been subject to a Short Quality Screening Inspection conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). It was explained by the lead inspector that the fact that the service was not subject to a Full Joint Inspection is an

indication that from the information available to the Inspectorate which includes the plan and performance data that the service is not causing concern.

- 4.2 The short quality screening inspection report is not yet published so the detail at this stage cannot be shared, however, the Lead Inspector gave verbal feedback to the Western Bay management team confirming that no areas of concern were found across the cases audited, but areas of good practice and areas for development were identified. Areas for development focused on the need to more accurately record reviews of plans and significant changes that occur, achieve consistency of practice with regard to, for example, enforcement action and the need to evidence the impact of management oversight on case work ie how the oversight has made a difference to the outcome for a child, young person or victim. The service has already been investigating these areas, recognising the need to improve.. Strong areas include assessment of factors linked to offending, assessing vulnerability and the efforts made by staff to engage effectively with service users. Overall the service was considered above average in all areas audited.
- 4.3 The 2015/16 quarter one performance data (April to June 2015) has been published by the Youth Justice Board but not without some queries from a number of Youth Offending Services across Wales regarding the accuracy and interpretation of the Wales only measures. The Youth Justice Board's data therefore carries with it a note of caution until these potential inaccuracies are addressed. Western Bay's second quarter data was submitted to the Youth Justice Board at the end of October and as yet has not been published.
- 4.4 The number of first time offenders recorded in 2013/14 in Western Bay was reduced in 2014/15 by 26.9%. This is in comparison with a 20.7% decrease in South Wales and 30.8% across Wales. An issue that has affected this figure locally in Bridgend has been a number of young people going straight to court to enable their licence to be endorsed following driving offences. These offences have not involved car theft.
- 4.5 The work to address first time entrants is funded by the regional WG Youth Crime Prevention Fund. Across the Western Bay region the early intervention delivery focussing on partnership approaches to tackle anti-social behaviour, and the Bureau approach to diversion through restorative interventions have developed consistent approaches. The Restorative Justice in Schools project has also been reviewed and is being rolled out across the Western Bay region. Bridgend is leading, in partnership with the Social Care Workforce development team.
- 4.6 Reducing reoffending is based on data two years old but Western Bay showed 38% of young people reoffended and they committed an average of 1.18 additional offences. The data is collated through the Police National Computer so locally we are unable to ascertain the Bridgend figure however the attached diagrams (Appendix 1) are taken from the Youth Justice Board's reoffending toolkit and help to show what each area looks like. The diagrams show the number of young people who re-offend and the numbers of offences committed by them over a twelve month period. Whilst the figures may seem high the Western Bay performance is not out of line with the performance across Wales. An average of 43.7% of young people being tracked reoffended across South Wales and they committed an average of 1.33 further offences each. Wales has a 40.4% reoffending rate amongst young people with an average of 1.16 further offences. The reoffending toolkit used across

the Western Bay region highlights that violent offences are the highest re – offence whatever local authority they may reside in.

- 4.7 Work is developing across the Western Bay service to address re-offending, using the information available from the toolkit to effectively target those most at risk of reoffending. Work is being done to improve transition arrangements and follow-on support for young people moving from youth services to adult services, to avoid them falling back into offending behaviour. The sharing of expertise and resources is a key feature across all areas of service delivery.
- 4.8 Reducing the use of custody is the last of the three England and Wales measures (the other two being the reduction in first-time entrants and reducing reoffending) and each locality team had one youth sentenced to custody in the first quarter. This is improved performance against last year for Bridgend. I am aware that in the second quarter there was a further custodial sentence in Bridgend, but this was following a remand period for a young person who had committed a sexual offence and he was then sentenced post-18 years of age. Reducing the use of custody can rely on the packages of intervention offered to the court providing a robust level of supervision to address the risk posed in the community and the ability to achieve change. Working together has given more scope in relation to programme delivery and supervision, providing more sentence choice and improved quality of reports to the Magistrates.
- 4.9 In relation to the Wales only Key Performance Indicators, the substance misuse measure and the mental health measure have been resubmitted to the Youth Justice Board due to discrepancies across Wales. However, children and young people resident in Bridgend are accessing substance misuse services in a timely fashion with a substance misuse worker based within the locality team. There are plans to pilot an approach to have a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service nurse across the Western Bay service spending an allocated day in each locality team, with the remaining two days being managed by the nurse to meet need. It should be noted that the Wales Measures only relate to statutory orders so the numbers reported are low as a result of the amount and success of the early intervention and diversion work delivered by the service. As the statutory caseload reduces, the work of the service has focused increasingly on stopping children and young people from entering the youth justice system at all and the delivery of services to this group of children is only reflected in the measure to reduce the number of first time entrants.
- 4.10 Across Western Bay, 33 statutory order cases were closed during the first quarter . 32 of these young people had suitable accommodation before the start of their order. This reduced to 31 young people being recorded as in appropriate accommodation at the end of their orders . There were two individuals in Bed and Breakfast accommodation across the Western Bay region and neither were residents of Bridgend.
- 4.11 Access to Education Training and Employment (ETE) is of key interest to the Management Board. The average hours of ETE engagement for statutory school age young people whose statutory orders closed in the first quarter was 15.1 hours per week prior to the start of their involvement with the service and 14.9 hours per week by the time the order they were subject to ended. The South Wales average figures for the same period were 14.2 hours at the start of the statutory order with

youth offending services across South Wales and 14 hours of ETE at the end of their order. Figures for Wales for the same period were 14.4 hours at the start of involvement with the youth offending services and 15.3 hours at the end of the involvement. The recommended number of hours of ETE for this age group is 25 hours per week as a minimum entitlement. It seems from the local information submitted to the Youth Justice Board in readiness for the second quarter that there has been significant improvement locally with an average of 24 hours being offered by the end of the young persons order, and of 23 hours being accessed. This improvement has been reflected regionally in Western Bay, and on closer analysis it seems that the lower number of hours reported in the first quarter related to the specific circumstances of a small number of young people, where reduced timetables were in place or where there were sickness issues.

- 4.12 Of 20 young people ending their involvement with the service across Western Bay who were above school age, an increase in the hours of ETE that were offered went from 13.5 hours per week at the beginning of the involvement with the service (ie the start of the statutory order) to 19.7 hours at the end of the involvement, exceeding the Youth Justice Board's target of 16 hours per week of ETE for above school age provision. However, whilst 19.7 hours of provision were available, the average uptake was 14.5 hours per week. South Wales figures for the same period were 10.3 hours of ETE at the start of the involvement and 10.4 hours at the end. For Wales the figures were 11.0 hours at the start and 11.8 hours at the end of the youth offending services involvement. From local data gathered in readiness for the second quarter return an average of 13 hours per week is being offered in Bridgend at the end of the service involvement and 13 hours being accessed, however as the numbers reported are again particularly low because of how the data is reported on statutory orders and not the growing early intervention and diversion work, one unemployed young person can have a dramatic effect on the overall calculation of the hours offered and accessed.. Efforts to improve educational attainment include the early work of the Restorative Justice in Schools project, the delivery of a rapid English literacy programme, the development of Western Bay as an accreditation centre, the planned relocation of the Swansea Intervention Centre to allow greater access and the roll out of the Building Skills project. (Appendix 2)
- 4.13 The development of Western Bay as a regional service has followed a pragmatic approach, steadily bringing consistency to delivery, and increasing the sharing of resources to avoid duplication, whilst increasing the range of interventions that can be delivered through working together. Performance indicators and the initial Short Quality Screening inspection findings confirm that delivery to local communities has not suffered through the process and the financial information confirms that savings have been made.

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. There have been complications, one being the WG proposals for Bridgend to merge as a Local Authority with Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynnon Taff. Youth Offending Services are statutory partnerships that must be established for a local authority area or areas in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. At this moment in time the Western Bay Service is continuing to work towards one service delivery model but with staff remaining in the employment of the three local authorities.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no equal opportunity issues arising at this time. Should issues arise they will be comprehensively addressed.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 Bridgend achieved the 20% local authority financial saving required by each of the local authorities in 2014/15 without detriment to performance. It is hoped that this report has provided reassurance that the regionalisation of the service has not negatively impacted upon performance, and has provided opportunities for creative working and vacancy management.
- 7.2 However there are financial challenges ahead. Having already had a 7.9% reduction to the Youth Justice Good Practise Grant at the beginning of the financial year, it has been confirmed that an additional 10.6% (a £25,144 reduction to the Bridgend grant allocation) will be taken from the 2015/16 grant payment at the end of the 2015/16 financial year . By working creatively across the Western Bay region and not appointing to vacant posts the required savings can be realised, however this will have a knock on effect on the task of achieving efficiency savings in 2016/17 as some of the changes made to achieve the planned savings for 2016/17 have been taken to contribute to the £25,144 mentioned above. .
- 7.3 The local authority contributions are expected to reduce in Bridgend and Swansea in 2016/17 but currently these reductions are not at the same level. Swansea expects a 13% reduction in contribution, Neath Port Talbot has indicated that funding to the service will remain the same, and Bridgend is expecting a 36% reduction as per the table below.

	BCBC	SCBC	NPTCBC	WESTERN BAY TOTAL
	£	£	£	£
LA Contribution 15/16	418,820	743,100	413,022	1,574,942
LA Contribution as % of Total YOS Budget	38%	44%	43%	42%
16/17 Proposed Reductions	150,000	100,000	-	250,000
% Reduction	36%	13%	0%	16%

There are other expected reductions for the service to absorb in addition to the Youth Justice Good Practise Grant and local authority reductions . Grant funding to the service amounts to an average of 58% of the funding across the Western Bay, meaning that reduction in grant funding and local authority funding places the service in a very difficult position. There has already been an indication that there will be a reduction in the amount received from the Welsh Government Youth Crime Prevention Fund and a reduction in Probation contributions.

The Western Bay service has been preparing to meet expected reductions in funding but the potential level of reduction when all funding streams are taken into account is higher than anticipated. Over the last twelve months Bridgend has maintained two vacant posts instead of filling them to meet the requested £150,000 saving for the local authority. There is the potential for the locality team to move in 2017 from the current leased premises, which would also contribute to the required

savings but this cannot be relied upon at this stage. The position of the service is further complicated by the fact that the three local authorities are expecting very different levels of efficiencies for 2016/17 and this is being discussed at the Western Bay Management Board on 18th November 2015.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 That Cabinet note the content of this report as reassurance that the service continues to perform well against the South Wales and Wales comparison figures.
- 8.2 That Cabinet note challenges faced by the service in the future within the current climate of uncertainty.

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04/08/15

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Appendix 1 – Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend young person’s reoffending frequency band graphs.

Appendix 2 – Western Bay Skills Programme Booklet.