

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2018

### CWM TAF YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

#### REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR LEYSHON

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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the findings and outcomes of the full Joint Inspection of Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (YOS), which took place in March 2017, the findings of which were published in July 2017, and to highlight the work being done to address areas for improvement.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the findings and outcomes of the full Joint Inspection of Cwm Taf YOS;
- 2.2 Note the information contained within this report and the actions being taken to address areas of further improvement.

#### 3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide Cabinet with details of the actions being undertaken to address the areas for improvement highlighted in the Full Joint Inspection of Cwm Taf Offending Service in March 2017.

#### 4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This report and Action Plan was scrutinised at the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and was endorsed by Members.
- 4.2 Cwm Taf 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 local authority YOS areas merged to form Cwm Taf YOS in August 2014. The simple aim of the service is to prevent the offending and re-offending of children and young people. The statutory partners are: South Wales Police; Cwm Taf University Health Board; HM

Prison and 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.

- 4.3 Overall governance is 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.
- 4.4 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 and is also subject to an inspection regime carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) The YOS was a part of a thematic inspection on the topic of "Desistance" in February 2015 and more recently subject a rigorous Full Joint Inspection in March 2017;, it is this latter inspection that forms the basis of this report.
- 4.5 The Youth Offending Service consists of two levels of provision; voluntary services, aimed at delivering services focussing on preventing young people from entering the criminal justice system and statutory 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. As the preventative function of the YOS are not legislated or regulated the Full Joint Inspection focussed on the statutory provision of the service.

## **5. THE FULL JOINT INSPECTION PROCESS**

- 5.1 The Full Joint Inspection (FJI) examines Youth Offending work in a small number of local authorities each year. Despite part of the criteria being based on YOS areas deemed to have poor performance based on re-offending rates, it should be noted that Cwm Taf YOS was the last YOS to be inspected as part of the FJI inspection regime, which commenced in 2012.
- 5.2 The FJI of Cwm Taf YOS was announced in February 2017 and commenced on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017, the notice period providing enough time for inspection arrangements to be made, while ensuring that the YOS was inspected 'as is' without the opportunity for undue preparation.
- 5.3 HMI Probation led the FJI programme with partner inspectorates covering health, children's social care, education and training, and police being full members of the inspection team contributing to inspection judgements.
- 5.4 At the time of the inspection announcement the published reoffending rate for Cwm Taf was 43.4% (average number of offences per offender of 1.40) and 45.9% for South Wales (average number of offences per offender 1.61) and 42.2% for all of Wales.

- 5.5 Prior to the commencement of the FJI, the YOS had commenced the implementation of ASSETplus; a compulsory national assessment framework that required significant investment in terms of training, development and delivery. Implementation and transition of this new framework commenced in May 2016, a time that overlapped with the sample caseload chosen via HMIP for the purposes of the inspection. Therefore, a number of cases chosen within the sample (as outlined below) were assessed or had interventions that overlapped this transitional period.
- 5.6 During the first week a team of inspectors from HMI Probation assessed the quality of practice in a representative sample of statutory cases (35) that had been running for six to nine months and for the second week the team was joined by inspectors from partner inspectorates, to explore and further understand the findings from the first week and to assess the quality of partnership work. During week one, a member of the inspection team devoted their time to meeting service users to assess their experience of working with the YOS.
- 5.7 The sample of cases included a number of those who are were high risk of harm to others, were particularly vulnerable, were young women, or were black and minority ethnic children and young people. Cases were assessed by a team of inspection staff. They examined these wherever possible with case managers, who were invited to discuss their work in depth, explain their thinking and identify supporting evidence in the record.
- 5.8 During the second fieldwork week HMI Probation was joined by colleague inspectors from police, health, social care and education. They explored the lines of enquiry which emerged from the case inspections. The leadership, management and partnership elements of the inspection were assessed, with a particular focus on reducing offending.
- 5.9 The FJI formed judgements and subsequently scored against the effectiveness of the YOS in the following six key areas:
- Reducing re-offending
  - Protecting the public
  - Protecting children and young people
  - Making sure the sentence is served
  - Governance and partnerships
  - Interventions to reduce reoffending

Each area was marked within a scale of one to four stars corresponding to:

- poor
- unsatisfactory
- satisfactory
- good

## 6. FINDINGS OF THE FULL JOINT INSPECTION

- 6.1 The FJI report (attached as Appendix one) (<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/07/Cwm-Taf-FJI-report.pdf>) was published on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017 where the following judgements against the key areas were made:



- 6.2 Furthermore the following key recommendations were made:

*“Post-inspection improvement work should focus particularly on achieving the following outcomes within 12 months following publication of this report:*

- 1. strategic planning should be informed by the commissioning, and effective evaluation of, a needs analysis to identify the needs of the cohort, the staff and the business needs of the YOS as a whole (YOS Management Board)*
- 2. work should be undertaken to secure suitable and sustainable accommodation for children and young people (YOS Management Board)*
- 3. routine intelligence sharing between the police and the YOS should make sure that case managers receive timely information about all children and young people who are arrested (South Wales Constabulary and YOS manager)*
- 4. joint working with children’s services and information sharing at case level should be consistent (YOS manager and Directors of Children’s Services)*
- 5. case management practice should be of good quality, driven by thorough investigation by case managers and fully utilising the AssetPlus assessment and planning system (YOS manager)*
- 6. there should be a structured and consistent approach, based on good practice, to the provision and use of interventions intended to reduce offending (YOS manager).”*

- 6.3 As well as the key recommendations that were made, the report also highlighted areas of good practice that existed within the Youth Offending Service, which are evidenced throughout the report with particular reference being made to the level

of engagement between the YOS and service users, restorative justice and the work carried out with victims and young people.

- 6.4 Overall judgements presented a balanced picture of the service with clear indicators of areas across the service that required developing or further attention.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 This is an information report and therefore no Equality and Diversity screening is required.

## **8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Consultation was as undertaken with service users as part of the Full Joint Inspection. The Improvement Plan was developed and is monitored through the Multi Agency YOS Management Board.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 9.1 There are no adverse financial implications associated with this report.

## **10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 10.1 The Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service provides services legislated through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

## **11. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 11.1 The provision of effective responses to the needs of children and young people is a key priority for the Council and is supported by the contents of the actions undertaken within the Improvement Plan.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

- 12.1 The YOS seeks to improve on the findings and recommendations made within the FJI report, and following its publication was tasked with completion of a post inspection improvement plan aimed at addressing the areas identified for improvement and development. To this end the YOS completed, submitted and had approved by HMI Probation, an improvement plan (**Appendix two**). This plan was submitted on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2017 with defined timescales for review and oversight being provided via the regional management board and Youth Justice Board Wales. The improvement plan was last reviewed in September 2017 with all areas being on target for completion / achievement.

- 12.2 The YOS has commenced the implementation of the improvement action plan and has carried out its first formal review of achievement against the objectives set as identified within the "RAG" section of the improvement plan (**Appendix two**). The YOS has established defined dates on which to complete formal reviews and working parties set up within the service report back to the YOS Management team and in turn to the YOS management board and Youth Justice Board Wales.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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**Background Papers**

Children and Young People Scrutiny – 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017

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