

EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday, 24 February 2015 at 6.00 pm in Conference Room K, Civic Offices.

Present

Councillor Will Purvis (in the Chair)
Ben Dowling
Lynn Stagg

6. Apologies for absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Ken Ferrett. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Purvis.

7. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

8. Minutes of Previous Meeting - 2 February 2015 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel held on 2 February 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

9. New review Topic - A review into progress against the Youth Offending Team Improvement Plan (AI 4)

The Chair welcomed all guests to the meeting and introductions were made around the table before evidence was given.

Scoping Document

The panel had received the draft scoping document which was introduced by Hayden Ginns. Members were happy with the objectives and proposed way forward for the review.

RESOLVED that the draft scoping document be approved, subject to amendment during the course of the review.

Superintendent Stuart Murray, Chair of the Youth Offending Team Board

Superintendent Murray circulated some presentation slides to the panel which he introduced. He advised that in July 2013 he had taken on the role of District Commander and YOT Board Chair. He had now been appointed Detective Superintendent for Hampshire Police and would be stepping down from chairing the YOT Board. Chief Superintendent Will Schofield, who is currently chairing the Isle of Wight YOT Board, would be taking over the role of Portsmouth YOT Board chair from April 2015. Chief Superintendent Schofield has been attending meetings for the last few months to ensure a

smooth transition. Due to Julian Wooster's imminent departure, Stephen Kitchman had taken over the role of Vice Chair of the Board for the next 6 months.

The YOT migrated to Portsmouth YOT from Wessex following a problematic inspection. HMIP chose to inspect Portsmouth in November 2013 primarily because of concerns arising from the core case inspection of Wessex YOT in 2011, which had identified particular weaknesses in Portsmouth, together with higher than average rates of reoffending. The outcome of this was a new methodology. Areas that needed improvement were:

- Governance
- Performance management
- Partnerships
- Professional Practice
- Peer Review

There were also a number of staffing issues, however the staff that remain are very capable and can deliver the service. He felt that Portsmouth YOT had previously not as involved as they could have been.

Youth offending can be difficult to get a handle on and it is difficult to find out whether the work being done is effective. There was a feeling that governance was not direct enough and things had been allowed to 'trundle along'. The YOT brought together statutory partners including the LA and Police to establish what their roles were, whether the professional practice was of significant quality, and their performance management. The Youth Justice Board sits alongside the YOT and following the HMI visit an improvement plan was drawn up, this was broken down into two parts.

Achievements of the YOT included:

- Attendance and Commitment by partners
- Robust performance data, analysis and challenge
- Priority Young People strategy
- Peer Review which was undertaken by the YOT Manager at Milton Keynes and valuable feedback had been received which had helped
- Case and Practice Audits

The YOT cohort had now reduced but those who remain have complex needs which is a challenge. The biggest challenge however was funding, it is expensive to run at nearly £900,000 and conversations were starting to gather pace about future funding.

There have been some periodic dips in performance but underperformance is managed. The management team is new and a key element that they embed together work is ongoing and starting to see progress.

The YOT are expecting the next HMI inspection in the Summer and the aim is to achieve all the Improvement Plan items.

In response to questions, the following points were clarified:

- There were a variety of funding sources including the Youth Justice Board (YJB), LA, Police and Crime Commissioner, Probation service and Police. The majority of funding was from the LA. The service costs £174,000 per year from the Children and Social Care budget.
- There is a 'Spend to save' approach in that if the YOT was not in place and a child reoffends nine times a year the cost of this is equivalent to the YOT budget.
- There is an overlap with the YOT, Troubled Families and also Looked After Children. The phase 2 criteria of Troubled Families is changing all about mainstreaming and a really good opportunity to use funding.
- The number of first time entrants has reduced
- With regard to mental health for young people, there is a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) worker who works with the YOT team for two days a week and is available for appointments.

Members thanked Superintendent Murray for all his hard work chairing the YOT Board and getting this back on track.

YOT Improvement Plan

Mr Ginns explained the Improvement Plan was split into two parts with 10 objectives split into two. Part A focuses on governance and part B on frontline practice. The Improvement Plan is reviewed every month to monitor progress.

Part A of the Improvement Plan was a good news story with only a couple of areas where the objectives had not yet been met. Objective 1 number 9 - *to develop an induction pack for new members* had been held up by the Youth Justice Board. Objective 2 number 4 - *Co-locate CAMHS and substance misuse workers with the YOT Team* had been delayed. This was being actioned by the YOT and Solent NHS Trust and was expected to be completed for the March YOT Board.

The next YOT Board will review the objectives and Mr Ginns said he was fairly confident that they are getting it right ready for the next inspection. If members of the YOT Board have concerns they can raise these with Superintendent Murray.

There were two actions which were expected to be completed in the next few months:

- *Review Police role in line with improvement plan and national guidance and implement necessary changes.* The Hampshire wide role review is on schedule and Mr Ginns advised that the YOT Board were waiting for Chief Superintendent Schofield to complete this review. Chief Superintendent Schofield explained that the options paper was expected in April.
- *To implement practice improvements and joint working around with Looked After Children following local protocol emanating from SE7 Reducing LAC Re-offending regional policy.* This work is ongoing and Kate Freeman is leading on this. Work on protocol has started and a new strategy is in development.

In response to a question about LAC performing poorly at school, officers advised that this was often the case. There was a multi-agency action plan was due to be endorsed next week and Portsmouth and Hampshire Constabularies had signed up to this. This contained a robust way of tackling this issue. Work was also taking place around truancy rates and there was a dedicated worker within the YOT who tracks individual's performance which is reviewed three times a year.

In response to a question about objective 3 - *to ensure the YOT Board accesses and uses accurate and timely data on performance through a new Performance Management Framework*, officers advised this was obtained from the case management system and a number of indicators had been developed. These were reviewed on a two monthly basis currently but would be moving to a quarterly basis from March. Reoffending rates were slowly but surely reducing and the live tracker is a good news story and a flavour on what is working well. Officers advised they could bring this information to the next meeting.

Part B of the Improvement Plan was about frontline practice and was more complex. There were four areas of governance that were not meeting objectives. The majority of amber actions in the plan had seen some progress. The progress of objective 10 was of most concern - *that by, December 2014 all victims of youth crime will receive high quality support and appropriate involvement in interventions with a focus on victim safety*. Significant progress had been made and it was hoped that by the next board meeting in March these will have turned to green status.

In response to a question relating to implementing relevant initial health screening tool and referral process, Mr Gardner explained that he had carried out a health needs assessment and progress had been made although further work was still required. The health economy is very complex and the changes to public health and the changing landscape had meant it was confusing who should take responsibility e.g. whether it is the commissioners, public health etc. Mr Gardner said this was now resolved and there was now regular attendance at YOT Board meetings by the CCG.

Analysis of Portsmouth YOT Performance against the 3 National Key Performance Indicators

Mr Gardner introduced his paper. He explained that the Portsmouth YOT was not dissimilar to other YOT's and the trend has reversed over the last three months. With regard to offending he explained that Multi Agency Triage Panels are planned for roll out in April. Any young person who comes into contact with the police who reaches a certain criteria will be discussed at a multi-agency panel. This was seen as the most appropriate intervention and it was anticipated this would have a significant impact on reducing first time entrants to the youth justice system.

Mr Gardner explained that there is a downward trend in re-offending rates although offences per offender has plateaued. It should be noted that data for this particular measure is historic and the re-offending rates relates to a cohort of young people who first offended three years ago. So, the data for Quarter 2 14/15 relates to a group of young offenders coming into contact with the YOT from January to December 2012. The YOT is currently using a live tracker to measure real time re-offending rates. In Portsmouth the projected rate is 13.1%. In addition the projected National Frequency Rate is 0.78%. In Portsmouth it is 0.46%. Re-offending rates therefore sit encouragingly below projected national averages for both measures. Unfortunately, it is the historical figure which is measured by the YJB.

Over the last 12 rolling months there had been fewer custodial sentences. During December 2014 and January 2015 there had been no young persons remanded in custody and to date there had been none in February.

The panel were pleased that the gap was narrowing between the Portsmouth YOT and other local authorities.

Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Monday 16 March at 7:00pm. It was agreed that this meeting would look further at part B of the Improvement Plan. It was also agreed to look at how integrated the YOT work is with education and health partners. Hayden Ginns said he would arrange for some suitable witnesses to attend this meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.35 pm.

Councillor Will Purvis
Leader of the Council