

EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Monday, 16 March 2015 at 7.00 pm in Conference Room L, second floor, Civic Offices

Present

Councillor Will Purvis (in the Chair)
Lynne Stagg

10. Apologies for absence (AI 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Dowling.

11. Declarations of interest (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

12. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2015 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel held on 24 February 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

13. 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.

Julia Katherine, Inclusion Commissioning Manager

Julia explained that she had represented education on the YOT Board since January 2014 with the aim to address the issues raised in the Ofsted inspection report. The education link worker role had been revised and following three previous attempts to recruit, the position has now been filled. The education worker provides the link between the YOT, schools and colleges and also retains strong links with existing teams within education including the special educational needs and disabilities team and the school attendance team. New statutory duties relating to young offenders with special educational needs come into force on 1 April 15. PCC are well prepared for this, having worked with the Department for Education to pilot these changes prior to implementation.

Initially the Education YOT Link Worker was asked to focus on getting post-16 young offenders into education, employment or training (as this was raised as an area of concern in the inspection report). There is now good evidence that this increasing numbers of young people are now accessing education, employment or training.. There is also a better understanding of the data on young people who are not accessing education, employment or training, for

example understanding the differences between those young people who do not have an offer of education, employment or training and those who have an offer, but are choosing not to access this. A review of all of the cases of school-age children who are not accessing full-time education has been able to confirm that plans are in place to increase the attendance of these children and that where they are on part-time timetables, these are regularly reviewed. The next step is to ensure that this information is fully integrated within YOT reports. This will be addressed through the audit that is currently taking place and which will be reported back to the next YOT Board meeting.

In response to questions the following points were clarified:

- 75-85% of the cohort has special educational needs. The new legislation gives PCC responsibility for making sure the cohort receive the correct education whilst in custody.
- Schools buy into the military preparation college and the YOT are confident that the education aspect is sufficient. Desistance theory looks at how and why people stop offending and the YOT encourage young offenders to consider the military preparation college.
- Audits take place into individual plans and the health audit is ongoing. Following the Children's Social Care safeguarding audit the team will be in a much stronger position identify any deficits. The demographics of the YOT cohort have changed. The reoffending tracker identified an emerging a pattern of concern with 10-14 year olds and this information was used to focus resources.
- The education audit would be completed by the end of April.
- Quality assurance strategy to deliver a number of things in place looking at systems and areas where improvement is needed. Workforce development strategy drawn up with input from the YJB regular audit by managers and YJB dip sample. There is congruence with the YJB assessments. There is now a need to look further to see how well plans are integrated with the YOT improvement plan.
- The YOT has a full complement of staff for the first time in three years and if a member of staff leaves or is off sick there is currently the capacity to back fill. It has been difficult to recruit people with the right skills.
- The induction process was reviewed and revised last summer which is working well. A 'buddy' system is in place for new members of staff. Jon Gardner monitors and tracks supervision. Sessions with CAMHS to provide support clinical support sessions starting end of April. A measured and planned approach.
- There are currently no long term sickness issues. In June and July 8.8% days sickness but this reduced to 1% for October and November.
- The panel felt that the YOT now had an excellent staff and the right systems were in place.

Anne Fleming, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Service Manager, Solent NHS Trust

Anne explained that the YOT provides an assessment and intervention service for children and young people (10-17 years) who have committed a criminal offence. The team has a specialist CAMHS nurse attached, who

provides mental health consultation, training and direct work. The team also assist with speech and language therapy and there is training for YOT officers to understand and identify speech and language problems had been provided by the Solent Speech and Language Therapy Service.

Previously there was no clear inter-agency working between health and the YOT. Discussions taking place with the CCG about how to enhance the offer. The CAMHS team are also working with the YOT to identify any specific training which is not in place. A training session on loss and bereavement training is being considered and details had been provided to the YOT manager to explore what is required.

In response to questions the following points were clarified:

- There is no physical healthcare nurse in place to ensure that the young people are looking after their health which is often not their main priority. Physical health is one of the most overlooked factors and things such as poor diet and poorly controlled medical conditions could lead to serious health issues in the future. Undiagnosed brain injuries can also be a factor linked to criminal behaviour. The YOT are linked with Headway, the brain injury association, who offer sessions to staff on implications of an acquired brain injury. The team are also looking to have a session in A&E to get first-hand experience of brain injuries.
- The new AssetPlus assessment tool will provide a holistic assessment and intervention plan. This allows one record to follow a child or young person throughout their time in the youth justice system. In Portsmouth this will go live in Summer 2016. Portsmouth YOT has chosen to adopt this approach before going live and all young people are screened. Still not capturing all but there are robust systems in place.
- Obtaining GP details from young people can be a challenge and has been more difficult than initially envisaged. This has delayed the health audit.
- The substance misuse worker is in the process of being TUPE'd over to Public Health and they will continue to work with the YOT and the LAC team. There has been a significant reduction in the number of LAC from 23% down to 8%.
- There was now a need to ensure that all the training received by the YOT team is fully embedded and this continues to be an area of focus for the YOT board. More work in terms of identifying specialist health needs and know what needs to be completed.
- The YOT team can screen to individual's health needs and there is a need to ensure that they all receive the same pathways.
- Health needs can be missed. The team ensure support continues once they stop offending. Education and home environment are the biggest factors to help ensure reoffending does not occur.

YOT Improvement Plan Part B

Hayden Ginns advised that he was confident the team had met all the objectives within part A of the improvement plan. This would be signed off at the next YOT board and governance of the YOT was strong. Part B of the

Improvement Plan is the detailed frontline issues and huge progress has been made. The content of this had not changed since the last meeting.

In response to questions the following points were clarified:

- Members of the YOT team had received a great deal of training which had now been left for the team to embed. There was a training plan however in place for next year. Making every contact counts training scheduled for January and he needed to reflect with health colleagues how the team use this. Assessment, planning, intervention and supervision training (APIS) had also taken place which is reflected upon monthly with audits. This was a continual process and reflective discussions were starting to take place.
- Good practice is rewarded through support arrangements. Work had taken place between the board and the management team and two development days had taken place to bring the two closer together. There had been a lot of cultural change in the team about how to work differently and with partners and there was now a much improved feeling and improved morale within the team. This was highlighted this week with the implementation of the new casework system. There had been a few teething issues but the staff had remained positive and not become demoralised. Councillor Stagg felt that it was important that someone outside of the team praised the YOT team for their hard work and positive attitudes so that they know they are valued and this would give them an incentive to continue the good work. It was suggested that the Lord Mayor may wish to thank the team and officers said they would look into this. Jon Gardner added that the team kept a 'smile file' where any support from colleagues or notes of thanks are stored which staff could access if they are feeling disheartened.
- Jon Gardner showed councillors the latest YOT newsletter which had some artwork from one of the young people. Members felt this was very impressive and was an excellent way of allowing them to express themselves. He said he would ensure that councillors receive email copies of the newsletters.
- None of the objectives on part B were classified as red, there were a few that were amber but these were more technical actions. Members were pleased with the progress and commented that it had been an ambitious plan.
- The next YOT inspection was due the first week of May followed by an inspection in July.

14. Dates of Future Meetings (AI 5)

The panel felt it would be useful to write up the evidence received so far and to hold an informal meeting to see whether there is any further evidence required to complete their review. The date of the informal meeting was agreed as 2 April at 7:00pm.

The meeting concluded at 8.05 pm.

Councillor Will Purvis