

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 20th April 2021

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WARD(S): All

PART I

FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION

YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM REPORT

1. **Purpose of Report**

For the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel (ECS Scrutiny Panel) to receive an update on developments within the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and the Youth Justice arena since the last report in February 2020.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The ECS Scrutiny Panel is requested to note the report.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Priorities:

1. *Starting Well*
2. *Integration (relating to Health & Social Care)*
3. *Strong, healthy and attractive neighbourhoods*
4. *Workplace health*

The provision of Youth Justice Services for Slough directly contributes to Slough's Joint Wellbeing Strategy and is evidenced within the YOT's Youth Justice Plan. In particular priority 1 (Starting Well) and 2 (Integration) of the strategy.

Priority 1

The Youth Offending Team (YOT) provide a preventative service which identifies children and young people at an early stage who are at risk of becoming involved in offending / re-offending behaviour, or are at risk of becoming a victim of such behaviours, including being exploited. These concerns can be raised from children's social care, schools and other community agencies, parents and young people, or from police at the arrest stage. Prevention support can range from 4 to 12 weeks of intervention for young people, consistent with their identified needs and their risks of offending behaviour and vulnerability.

The YOT have developed a training offer to provide training to key non statutory partners/agencies such as schools, community groups and foster carers to support identification of young people at risk of involvement in offending behaviour, exploitation, gangs and/or serious violence.

The YOT have renewed and maintained our silver Youth Justice SEND Quality Mark for 2021. In the process of attaining this award, the YOT has forged closer links with schools, Pupil Referral Units and statutory services such as Special Educational Need (SEND) Teams, as well as demonstrating the sharing of effective practice across the networks in areas such as co- locating specialist provision and understanding the impact of complex needs.

Priority 3

The YOT have an internal risk management panel which monitors all young people assessed as posing a medium risk or higher in terms of significant harm to others or self safety and wellbeing. This is a multi-agency risk management approach which shares the risk posed by the young people and promotes working together in order to reduce those risks.

The YOT have introduced a trauma recovery model approach to support young people, linking with a clinical psychologist and senior mental health practitioner seconded to the YOT. Interventions take into account the impact of Adverse Childhood Experience's (ACEs) on the young person.

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The work of the YOT helps to deliver the following from the Five Year Plan:

- Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful.
- Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs.
- Slough will be an attractive place where people will choose to live, work and stay.

The YOT works with young people who have committed crimes and also to prevent offending via services and support. This covers a wide range of needs including parenting support, substance misuse, speech and language, mental health, education, training and employment services. The YOT also works to support victims of crime. YOT staff are trained in a wide range of areas including systemic practice, trauma, bereavement, domestic abuse, restorative justice, risk and social media cyber awareness to support young people to be safe in Slough and on the internet.

The YOT delivers its work in conjunction with a wide range of partners who are integrated within the YOT and across the Slough Borough Council to ensure good outcomes for children and young people.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications of proposed action.

(b) Risk Management

The YOT Management Board identifies, considers and as a collective, reduces risks in respect of ensuring effective crime prevention services within Slough. This takes place at YOT Board meetings and is on-going.

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
The Committee is requested to note the report	Risks: None Opportunities: Help deliver Slough's Five Year plan	YOT Management Board oversees the work of the YOT team and the delivery again the YOT Justice plan	5 (Negligible severity high probability)	YOT Management Board; Upcoming HMIP inspection

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - The 'Articles' of the UNCRC that have most direct bearing on youth justice include (but are not limited to):

- A child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier (Article 1)
- States Parties (governments) shall respect and ensure the rights set forth to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status (Article 2)
- Article 3, 16, 37a and b, 40(1), 40 (3)

Outcome 22 was introduced with effect from 1 April 2019 in response to recommendations in the Lammy Report about expanding the use of deferred prosecution. Outcome 22 reduces the criminalisation of children by providing diversionary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action'.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - The functions of the YOT are set out in section 39(7) as follows:

- To co-ordinate the provision of youth justice services for all those in the authority's area who need them; and
- To carry out such functions assigned in the local authority's youth justice plan.

The act also refers to paragraph 7(b) of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 – the local authority's duty to take reasonable steps designed to encourage children and young people not to commit offences.

Section 38(4) of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 lists a large number of items which are within the meaning of youth justice services. These include:

- the provision of assistance to persons determining whether youth caution or youth conditional cautions should be given

- the provision of support for children and young persons remanded or committed on bail while awaiting trial or sentence

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

As part of its inspection, the YOT partnership has to ensure the nature and diversity of workforce responds to local needs. 73% of the YOT team are currently female which is at odds with 93% of young people being male (December 2020). In terms of diversity, 47% of the YOT workforce are white and 26% are BAME compared to 36% and 60% respectively of young people, though young white people are more likely to commit offences. Currently YOT staff are not representative of the young people it works with, though has had a stable team of staff who have delivered good outcomes with young people.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 As we have entered a new financial year the YOT Plan for 2021/22 is currently being refreshed and so is not referenced in this document.
- 5.2 Following a recent transformation within the Trust, the YOT are in the process of amalgamating the service within the Front Door element of social care and the YOT no longer has a designated Head of Service. This amalgamation will streamline the referral pathway for children and young people for preventative interventions and for initial triage and monitoring. Statutory cases will continue to be referred to the YOT for support and intervention directly from the police and courts as applicable.
- 5.3 The YOT are developing and expanding the prevention offer in Slough to include a more bespoke offer around exploitation and extra familial harm. Young people at risk of these behaviours can be linked to future episodes of anti-social and/or offending behaviour. The YOT's prevention offer will reflect this expansion by including a contextual safeguarding approach to assessment and intervention, and it is proposed the YOT will change its name to Youth Justice and Exploitation Service. This work is under development with plans for a staged approach starting in late April 2021.
- 5.4 In making these changes the statutory function of the YOT will remain the same with a team of skilled practitioners supporting and managing young people subject to statutory police and/or court disposals. The YOT Manger will oversee both services to ensure consistency in delivery and quality of intervention for children.

Performance

- 5.5 First Time Entrants (FTE) into the criminal justice system have seen a slight decrease in 2020 as opposed to 2019, although the figures for young males into the criminal justice system remain the same for both years. *(A FTE to the criminal justice system is an offender residing in England and Wales at the time of the offence, who has been recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC) as having received their first conviction, caution or youth caution.)*

The most recent YOT Data Summary indicates the following with regard to our First Time Entrants:

First Time Entrants – Baseline Jan 18 – Dec 18				First Time Entrants Current Jan 19 – Dec 19		
	Number	2018 Population	Rate per 100,000	Number	2019 Population	Rate per 100,000
Slough	54	16,845	321	52	17,393	299

- 5.6 During the period 2019/20 the top three offences committed by males were: Violence against the Person, Drugs, and Criminal Damage. For female offenders, the top 3 offence categories were Violence against the person, Theft and Handling Stolen Goods, and Breach of a statutory Order.
- 5.7 The YOT responded to Covid-19 by risk assessing all children and young people known to the YOT to ascertain the level of risk to themselves and others. The service maintained face to face contact throughout Covid – 19 with the provision of PPE from the Trust whilst ensuring the safety of both young people and staff.
- 5.8. Despite Covid-19, the YOT successfully delivered a summer programme and a number of reparation projects. The benefits of maintaining reparation during this time gave children and young people an activity in their home and maintaining contact with the YOT. At the same time risk was being monitored through relaxed activity. The YOT also supported NHS Nightingale Ward as well as Black Lives Matter events as can be seen in Appendix B.

Review of the quality of practice and interventions

- 5.9. In March 2020 Slough Children’s Trust requested Hampshire Children’s Services undertake a peer review of Slough’s Youth Offending Team under the Partners in Practice Sector Led Improvement support programme. The purpose of this review was to support the YOT in preparing for its inspection by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). Hampshire was asked to assess the quality of the work against domains two and three of the HMIP Youth Offending Inspection Criteria and look at the YOT’s work in relation to serious youth violence, exploitation, gang prevention and contextual safeguarding and joint working with Children’ Social Care.
- 5.10 The peer review team found the YOT staff group were a credit to the organisation, and they were enthusiastic, able to showcase their work and embraced the concept of audit and inspection. The review found the principle of ‘child first’ was a golden thread through all work review and they saw evidence of consistent and constructive management oversight.
- 5.11 Evidence was found of good engagement with young people, with team members spending time building relationships to support successful interventions. They saw consideration of a child or young person’s diverse needs, for example, considering the impact of a female white worker on her engagement with a child from a different background.

Youth Justice Board

- 5.12 The YOT were asked in 2020 to submit a self assessment to the Youth Justice Board with regard to its adherence to National Standards and in line with our statutory responsibilities. Their moderation exercise concluded our self-assessment evidenced a true reflection of the judgements against service standards. The Youth Justice Board therefore do not intend to carry out a validation visit to our service.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

No other committees have been involved in this report.

7. **Conclusion**

Slough Youth Offending Team is meeting its prime objective to prevent young people from offending, taking a holistic and systemic approach involving partners as required. The delivery of youth justice services have been delivered in line with national standards and legislation despite the additional challenges and pressures of Covid- 19. Slough Youth Offending Team continues to be an effective service as indicated by the Youth Justice Board.

8. **Appendices Attached**

- 'A' YOT Demographic
- 'B' Remote Reparation
- 'C' Hampshire Peer Review report

9. **Background Papers**

- '1' 06 February 2020 Educational and Children Scrutiny Report