

**EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE  
17 October 2017**

**Bromley Youth Offending Service - Update**

This is an update report to the Select Committee on the performance of the Youth Offending Service and progress of the Service since the inspection and other related operational and strategic developments.

**1. Background**

1.1 All Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales are monitored and supported by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) which is an executive non department public body and leadership is retained within the Ministry of Justice. The YJB has oversight of the youth justice system and works to prevent offending and ensuring that young people in custody are safe and secure and that their offending behaviour is addressed.

1.2 The Youth Offending Service YOS is situated in Education, Care and Health with direct line management of the Head of Service through the Director for Children's Social Care.

**2. Youth Offending Service**

2.1 Bromley YOS Operational Improvement Plan reviewed and updated and will be presented to the YOS governance Board on 11 October 2017 for approval. This process assessed progress of actions within the YOS Operational Improvement Plan; providing challenge on areas requiring further development and increasing focus with additional requirement of dates for completion and exception reports against the actions that had not yet been achieved; with a plan to reach full compliance.

2.2 The following 7 key priority areas (in line with HMIP Full Joint Inspection themes):

- **Reducing Reoffending**
- **Protecting the Public**
- **Protecting the Child or Young Person**
- **Ensuring that the Sentence is Served**
- **Governance and Partnership Arrangements**
- **Effectiveness of YOS Interventions**

- **Improving Practice**

2.3 As a result of this process the Bromley YOS Operational Improvement Plan has been further developed to take into account the service achievements; allowing it to be a more focused document, further drilling down to what is still requiring further work and development to improve the service, performance against targets and outcomes for children and young people who use the service, their families and the wider Bromley community affected by youth offending. A detailed annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan (2017-19) has been produced in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. There is a comprehensive improvement plan which has been approved by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation and the Youth Justice Board.

### **3. YOS Team**

3.1 The focus in recent months is on ensuring that our performance secures outcomes for young people that reduce their offending, reducing the need for custody and reducing those coming into the criminal justice system. The work is focused on developing and enhancing practice so that this can be standardised and streamlined. In order for this to happen it is essential to have the right staff in place to deliver this vision.

3.2 There are approximately 108 cases within the service and approximately 22% are conditional cautions or triage that are all offered intervention and support. The work in the team is delivered by a mixture of senior YOS officers who take on a half management role and half caseload of complex high risk cases. At full capacity there are 11 caseworkers who hold the bulk of cases. The work is further supported by specialist colleagues who provide support in the form of a 0.2 FTE school nurse; substance misuse, wellbeing practitioners and parenting consultation.

3.3 The specialist support service provision does not fully support and enable the YOS to carry out its duties and the reduction in the school nurse provision is a noticeable gap, there is no CAMHS seconded worker in the team, the use of the parenting provision via early help has not provided the level of parenting support that would normally be expected in the service. A new school nurse has been allocated to the team and whilst the offer is reduced from 0.6FTE to 0.2FTE there are limitations on the service which will impact on YOS young people.

3.4 Restorative justice and reparation are key requirements within a court order. Whilst attempts are made to ensure that this is included in all work with young people it is evident that this needs strengthening and more local community projects are being sourced.

3.5 The drive within the service is to have skilled and experience staff within the service. The recruitment of social workers will increase capacity within the service to work more intensely with cases of an increasingly complex nature

and ensure that concerns in relation to safeguarding are approached and managed in a consistent manner across the service. The change may prove to be challenging but in order to attract high calibre staff with a consistent professional development framework social work training offers this level.

#### **4. Performance**

4.1 The YOS works with young people at risk or involved in the criminal justice system. The service is required to work within a comprehensive national standards framework which determines the nature and frequency of contact with young people and is accountable to the YJB in relation to performance against a set of indicators. The 3 current KPI's:

- Reduction in first time entrants
- Reduction in reoffending
- Reduction in the use of custody for young people.

4.2 Over the last five years there has been a substantial reduction in First time entrants into the youth justice system. The introduction of Triage in 2009 has played a significant role in diverting young people out of the system and has positively impacted on numbers.

4.3 The rate of young people entering the system for the first time remains low in Bromley with a rate of 219 per 100,000 of the 10-17 year old population between April 2016 to March 2017 (latest published data). In the last year there were 66 young people, representing a 24% reduction on the previous year.

4.4 The proven rate of reoffending is measured by young people who previously offended by the numbers of young people in the cohort during a one year follow up period following their original conviction in court or pre-court disposal. This rate is then expressed as the numbers of offences per young offenders, however this is subject to variations in subsequent years because the cohort size changes and the offending behaviour of those in the cohort also changes. The current picture indicates that the statistical effect of high number of offences being committed by a small cohort of young people.

4.5 Data in relation to reoffending is now taken from the Police national computer and is available three quarters in arrears to allow for arrests to be processed through the courts and MoJ to analyse and publish the information. The current period being measure is October 2014 to September 2015 and there are 190 young people.

4.6 Bromley quarterly performance data for October 2014 – September 2015 cohort shows the rate of reoffending has reduced by 7.6% on the previous year although the actual numbers of young people has increased by 5 young people. The London Borough of Bromley rate (39.5) has now lower than the London (44.2%) and 2% higher than the national averages.

#### **5. Health**

5.1 Bromley Wellbeing Service is a single point of access for children and young people's emotional and mental wellbeing commissioned by the Local Authority and delivered by Bromley Y since December 2014 to ensure that young people are receiving the right help at the right time. Bromley Y works with Bromley Local Authority and Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to put young people's wellbeing at the centre of good practice

5.2 Previously young people had not been accessing Bromley Y following referral by their YOS workers. In order to address this gap a Wellbeing Practitioner is now placed in Bromley YOS to enhance the local offer and provide an integrated approach to support and treatment for young offenders. This should narrow the gaps through which YOS clients can fall, support the referral and care pathways, and contributes to the health offer for YOS young people returning to Bromley following discharge from secure training centers and/or Young Offenders Institutions (YOIs).

5.3 The role encompasses two main facets: assessment and provision for the client group and secondly, consultation, support and training for YOS staff. The Practitioners use systemic approaches to understanding the young person's presentation and have specialist knowledge of conduct disorders, domestic violence and other needs and behaviours. There is a clear pathway to refer onto CAMHS when warranted. The well-being practitioners are currently overseeing and supporting around a third of the YOS caseworkers.

## **6. Service Development**

### **6.1 Forensic Pilot Service**

6.2 Bromley YOS has been successful in a bid to NHS England to develop a service for young people who come into the youth justice system with complex difficulties and in need of specialist assessment and interventions. Locally, arrangements are in place to ensure that all young offenders have access to evidence based early intervention emotional wellbeing service. This is delivered through a co-located wellbeing service.

6.3 In the last year, Bromley YOS worked with 242 young people with approximately 34% assessed as in need of CAMHs or other wellbeing support. Whilst the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system has fallen sharply over the last 10 years, those who remain in the system have a range of complexities requiring significant levels of more specialist intervention and support from the YOS and other agencies too.

6.4 Young people with the highest level of need also present additional risks of harm to themselves and others. In order to facilitate accessibility to specialist CAMHs by this cohort, the project is a CAMHs in reach model to offer:

6.5 This service provision will offer support to family and carers, treatment and engagement such as developing techniques to manage and control anger and stress through group work and one to one interventions; work with sexually harmful behaviours, determine the likelihood of re-offending in high risk cases, consultations to YOS staff and preparation of assessment reports for courts (where appropriate).

6.6 This project will also allow for the sustainable implementation of a consistent approach to risk assessment, risk formulation and management of high risk young people aged 10-18 years old who present with high risk behaviours in terms of their offending and conduct.

6.7 There will be an evaluation the effectiveness of evidence based anger management programmes, gain a better understanding of young people's likelihood of reoffending treatment provision for young people involved in sexually harmful behaviours. A project report on the outcomes of the pilot with recommendations will be provided at month nine of the one year pilot. Recommendations on how the interface between YOS practitioners, early intervention wellbeing services and CAMHs can be strengthened sustainably will be included in the final project outcome.

6.8 The goal is to improve the identification of a range of health problems which are going untreated in an attempt to reduce offending behaviour. By providing children and young people a flexible approach and rapid screening of their mental health needs combined with a more integrated partnership with the YOS and CAMHs will increase the benefits of treatment for this hard to reach population.

6.9 The project has been approval from Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxleas Trust will second a Psychologist to develop and deliver the aims of the project from December 2017.

## **7. Summary**

7.1 The last eleven months has been a challenging time in respect of implementing the change and having to further refine the service structure to improve the capacity of the YOS to meet the legislative framework and responsibilities for Youth Offending Teams to reduce and prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people.

7.2 However, the YOS continues to be making good progress as demonstrated by the inspection outcome in 2016 and ongoing work to deliver against the priority areas in the youth justice plans.

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