

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Lives Select Commission – 03 May 2022

Report Title

Rotherham Youth Offending Team. HMIP Inspection Action Plan Progress Report

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Suzanne Joyner, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report provides a summary of progress made by Rotherham Youth Offending Team (YOT) against the action plan submitted to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) in January 2021 following the HMIP Inspection in September 2020 and includes the findings from the recent YJB Peer Review undertaken in March 2022 and examples of current youth justice practice.

Recommendations

That the progress made since the HMIP Inspection is noted.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Rotherham YOT Inspection Report Action Plan

Background Papers

An inspection of youth offending services in Rotherham
HM Inspectorate of Probation, December 2020

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
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Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes

An exemption for the discussion on the item “Youth Justice Practice Examples” under Paragraph 1 (Information relating to any individual.) and Paragraph 2 (Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this items contains sensitive information relating to individuals’ involvement in the youth justice system which could disadvantage the individuals if the information was to be made public.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information as the parties’ interests could be prejudiced by disclosure of this personal information.

Rotherham Youth Offending Team. HMIP Inspection Action Plan Progress Report

1. Background

- 1.1 Rotherham Youth Offending Team (YOT) were inspected by HMIP in September 2020 under the Small YOT inspection framework. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the inspection was conducted remotely. Meetings and case interviews were arranged and facilitated using Microsoft Teams.

The Inspection report was published on 17 December 2020. The Overall judgement was Requires Improvement and HMIP report made five recommendations:

The Chair of the YOT Management Board should:

- Make sure that Board members understand the specific needs of children known to the YOT and advocate on their behalf in their own agencies.

The YOT Management Board should:

- Ensure the partnership understands the reasons for the significant number of Looked After Children known to the YOT and reviews the policies and practices of all agencies to minimise the possibility of children entering the criminal justice system unnecessarily.
- Undertake a comprehensive health needs analysis of YOT children to better understand the health provision being delivered and what needs to be developed.
- Review the quality and accessibility of education, training and employment provision for post-16-year-old children known to the service.

The YOT Service Manager should:

- Review the quality of risk of harm work and improve the effectiveness of management oversight in all cases

An Inspection Action Plan was produced in January 2021 which contained 46 actions to address the areas requiring improvement which includes actions across the partnership

- 1.2 At the YOT Management Board on the 12th January 2022 the Chair (DMcW) noted that it was a year and a day from when the Board submitted the Inspection Action Plan to the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

The Board noted that all 46 actions had been completed and welcomed the opportunity to further review progress by inviting a sector led, Youth Justice Peer Review.

- 1.3 The Youth Justice Peer Review (YJPR) programme operates as a tripartite agreement between the YJB in partnership with the Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership (YJSIP) and The Association of Youth Offending Team Managers (AYM).

The primary purpose of a YJ Peer Review is to help a YOT and its partners identify their strengths and to highlight areas for potential improvement in the current provision of youth justice services.

The Peer Review team bring sector specific expertise and operate as a 'critical friend' and to hold up a mirror to the recipient service to support them to improve local practice

YJPRs are an opportunity for YOTs and local authorities to gain a fresh perspective from peers alongside collaborative support in improving local youth justice services. It is a supportive yet challenging process, but it is not an inspection and has a very different feel.

2. Key Issues

The Rotherham Youth Offending Team was at a time of transition when the Inspection took place. Inspectors noted that '*if they had visited in six months' time they would have seen a very different YOT.*' The Management Board and staff team have been quick to respond to the inspection findings and one of the 46 actions in the inspection action plan was to commission a peer review.

2.1 Rotherham YOT Peer Review 29th – 31st March 2022

4 Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) were established:

- Whether the partnership understands the needs of the YOT cohort and its role in setting the priorities for the YOT
- The role of the partnership in relation to risk management of justice involved children
- Looked after children and the disproportionate numbers in the YOT cohort
- Early help partnership working and the impact this has locally on first time entrants.

- 2.2 Over twenty focus groups took place over the 3 days with representation from the YOT staff team as well as YOT Management Board Members, elected members, colleagues from across the Council, Early Help, Inclusion, Education, the Virtual School, Children's Social Care, MASH, South Yorkshire Police, Voluntary & Community Sector, Housing, the Safer

Rotherham Partnership (SRP), Community Safety, the Police & Crime Commissioners office, Resettlement Consortium, Young People's CHANCE Group, Probation, Remedi, EVOLVE, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), Outdoor Learning, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Outreach and Engagement, Voice & Influence and SEND.

2.3 Across the four agreed KLOEs, the reviewers spoke of 'golden threads' which they felt were evident and consistent in their interactions with staff and partners. These included;

- *A genuine child / young person-centred approach in Rotherham at both a strategic and operational level across all aspects of the wider youth justice system*
- *A strong focus on early intervention and prevention in supporting the reduction of risk*
- *Strong integration of the YOT into other operational areas such as inclusion panels, Evolve, practice leads, Out of Court decision making*
- *Joint supervision, where Early Help and Social Care are involved with children and families.*
- *A Culture of early intervention and keeping children out of Court*
- *A very real and tangible, positive, innovative, and passionate 'culture'*
- *Staff know the young people well and are passionate advocates*
- *The CHANCE Group is exceptional and something to be proud of, along with Devon our Apprentice Youth Support Worker*
- *Evidence of the voice of the child in shaping services*
- *Highly impressed with engagement and commitment of the workforce*
- *Cohesive values across organisational layers*
- *Approachable management team and visible senior leaders*
- *Confidence in the staffing team is evident from management and partners*
- *Genuine partner relations at operational and strategic levels – clear shared language and mutual respect*
- *A Child centred Board and children at the heart of decision making*

- *The reviewers were impressed with the strength of our relational partnerships and the role of elected members*

2.4 Areas for development

- *Need to develop a new Vision for the partnership and priorities going forward*
- *Performance Information; not sufficiently understood or adapted to promote youth justice achievements*
- *YOT centric at the Board and needs extending into other partnership areas*
- *Need to retain a focus / good practice with resettlement and probation transitions despite low custody numbers.*
- *Embed the new LAC Protocol (Reducing unnecessary criminalisation of children) and consider where the operational monitoring of the strategy will be owned, tracked and reviewed. i.e. Corporate Parenting?*
- *Linking work around OOC, screening and assessment to new HMIP standards issued in 2021.*
- *Health pathways do not enable expedited intervention to CYP open to YJS. Delays in assessments and interventions for YJ children.*

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 This report is for information and to provide feedback on the progress made to date on the Inspection Action Plan.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 There are no specific proposals as the report is for information purposes, however consultation with staff, partners and young people is currently taking place as we revise our YJ Plan for 2022 and consult on a name change from Rotherham Youth Offending Team (YOT) to Rotherham Youth Justice Service (RYJS). This would also require a name change for the YOT Management Board to Rotherham Youth Justice Partnership Board. (RYJPB)

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 14th -17th September 2020 – HMIP Fieldwork took place in Rotherham
14th December 2020 – YOT Management Board

17th December 2020 – HMIP Report published

11th January 2021 – HMIP Action plan submitted

19th January 2021 – SLT Report

20th January 2021 – Extraordinary YOT Board

26th January 2021 – Improving Lives Select Commission

8th February 2021 – Safer Rotherham Partnership

11th February 2021 – CEO group

2nd March 2021- Corporate Parenting Panel

15th March 2021 – YOT Management Board

16th September 2021 – CEO's

21st September 2021 – Improving Lives Select Commission

22nd September 2021 – YOT Management Board

12th January 2022 – YOT Management Board

10th March 2022 – YOT Management Board Development Day

6th April 2022 – YOT Management Board

9th June 2022 Safer Rotherham Partnership

30th June 2022 Youth Justice Plan Submission deadline

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 This report details the improvements made to Rotherham Youth Offending Team since September 2020 which improves outcomes for children in the Youth Justice System and those diverted from entering the system in the first instance.

- The YJ Peer review team found “*a genuine child / young person-centred approach in Rotherham at both a strategic and operational level across all aspects of the wider youth justice system, providing opportunity to young people to share their voice on their own experience in order to shape services and policies.*”

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 There are no Equalities and Human Rights implications arising from this report.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no implications in relation to emissions or climate change arising from this report.

12. Implications for Partners

The statutory aim of the youth justice system is to prevent children from offending (section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998). Rotherham Youth Offending Team is governed by a partnership management board and reports to Safer Rotherham Partnership. The YJB expects local management boards to take responsibility for all aspects of YJS governance; to lead strategically across relevant partners and to ensure a high-quality service is provided to all children. Section 39 (1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the co-operation of the named statutory partners to form a YJS. Section 38 (1, 2) identifies the statutory partners are;

- the local authority (this should include children’s social care and education)
- the police
- the probation service
- health

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Inability and lack of engagement in performance management arrangements by managers and staff could lead to poor and deteriorating services for children and young people. Strong management oversight by the Service Manager and the ongoing fortnightly performance meetings mitigates this risk by holding managers and workers to account for any dips in performance and quality both at a team and at an individual child level.

Lack of engagement by partner agencies to support the peer review findings. Agencies to advocate for children and young people in the Youth Justice System within their own agencies.

Strong partnership working arrangements through the YOT board and direction from the chair of the board will improve communication and working arrangements and ensure accountability across the partnership.

Accountable Officer(s)

Approvals obtained on behalf of:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive		Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).