

## **Report to CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY BOARD**

### **Youth Justice Service Plan**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Shaid Mushtaq

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#### **Purpose of the report**

Each year the Youth Justice Service is required to submit an annual plan to the Youth Justice Board. This plan needs to be endorsed by the Youth Justice Management Board and the Council. The plan was presented to the Youth Justice Management Board on 17<sup>th</sup> June and submitted to the Youth Justice Board on 28<sup>th</sup> June in order to meet the submission date of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

The Plan is placed before you today for your approval and comment.

#### **Executive Summary**

The focus of the plan for 2024/2025 is to move the service forwards in preparation for the new inspection process and to continue our focus on reducing serious youth violence. This plan also focuses on continuing partnership work across Oldham and Greater Manchester to ensure that the children that we work with are getting the support they need.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board accepts the plan for 2024/2025 and notes the progress made against the plan from last year.

Youth Justice Service Plan

**1 Background**

- 1.1 The Youth Justice Service in Oldham is commissioned to Positive Steps. The Youth Justice Service is Child First – remembering that children and first and foremost children. The service is also trauma-informed taking into account the impact that trauma has had on the children that we work with.
- 1.2 In Oldham the Youth Justice Service is proud to have a low rate of re-offending, first time entrants and children in custody.

**2 Current position**

- 2.1 At the last inspection of Youth Justice Services the outcome was that services were deemed to be 'good'. So this plan continues our journey towards being an 'outstanding' service.
- 2.2 Progress against the actions in last year's plan has been good with most actions being achieved and just two actions carried forwards into this year's plan.

**3 Priorities**

- 3.1 Serious Youth Violence continues to be a focus of our work and holding a prevention conference in Oldham involving practitioners working with children from across the borough in as many services as possible is a key part of this work. The conference will provide participants with a 'toolkit' to help them have conversations and undertake very early intervention work with children to prevent them becoming involved in crime and violence. The conference will also explore the impact of this work being completed by the professional who first recognises the needs of the child in this area.
- 3.2 The aim of the conference will be to increase understanding across the borough of how children become involved in crime and violence and to give practitioners the tools they need to reduce the risk of children becoming involved.
- 3.3 We will continue our work to ensure that our re-offending rates, first time entrants and children in custody numbers remain low and our involvement in the Greater Manchester Remand Pilot will continue to inform our practice and improve outcomes for our children.
- 3.4 We will be enhancing our work with the victims of crime ensuring that we are offering the support at the right time and in the right way by reducing barriers and providing signposting. Our restorative justice work will also continue, and we will further increase the number of places that children can 'give back' to the community.
- 3.5 We are also going to be focusing on further enhancing our co-production of the service with children, parents and carers.

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- 3.6 Our work to reduce disproportionality within the youth justice system will continue and we have undertaken cultural awareness training which has further enhanced the service's understanding of racial trauma and intersectionality. During the next year this work will continue to become embedded within the service.
- 3.7 Oldham Youth Justice Service is a key partner with Kingsland Alternative Education Provision and two staff members will be seconded to Kingsland to work three days a week as part of the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce project. The Speech and Language Therapist who is seconded to the Youth Justice Team will also be part of the taskforce and will be working one day a week at Kingsland (this is in addition to the 3 days a week they are seconded to the Youth Justice Service.) The aim of this project is to reduce the numbers of children being exploited and becoming involved in crime who are in alternative education in Oldham.
- 3.8 We will continue to enhance working with partners and a good example of this is the plan for the lead practitioner for complex safeguarding in the Youth Justice Service being embedded within the complex safeguarding team within children's services on a regular basis to develop the relationship and improve information sharing. We have a close relationship with the Police and have a Police Officer seconded to the team. During the next year we will also have a CAMHS practitioner seconded to the team and the interviews for the post will be taking place shortly.
- 3.9 The plan for 2024-2025 links to the vision of Oldham Council and to the strategic plan of Children's Services ensuring that there is continuity and a shared vision for children in the borough.

#### **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1 Oldham Youth Justice Service is in a strong position to continue to improve the outcomes for the children that it works with by continuing to focus on prevention whilst still meeting the needs of the children who do become part of the criminal justice system.