

**CRIME & DISORDER COMMITTEE
SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

16 February 2012

The following report is attached for consideration and is submitted with the agreement of the Chairman as an urgent matter pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972

7 YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE (Pages 1 - 4)

Report attached.

**Ian Buckmaster
Committee Administration and
Member Support Manager**

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CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE

Report

16 February 2012

Subject Heading:	Progress on the Youth Offending Team Improvement Plan (following the Inspection of the Youth Offending Team in 2011)
CMT Lead:	Sue Butterworth
Report Author and contact details:	Ric Kashman
Policy context:	Youth offending Service

SUMMARY

This report updates the committee on progress on the Improvement Plan arising from the inspection of the Havering Youth Offending Team by HM Inspectorate of Probation.,

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the content of the report

REPORT DETAIL

The committee will be aware that Havering Youth Offending Service was subject to a Core Case Inspection last June, as a part of the London Region Inspection of Youth Offending Service. The results were published at the end of August, with an Improvement Plan approved in October 2011.

Update

A large number of the issues identified by the inspection related to process. For example, has a method for identifying risk to a child been followed?; how apparent was practitioners' assessment and thinking related to a child?; how clear was the management oversight?; how good was Havering YOT at obtaining sufficient information on a case being transferred to it? Therefore the Improvement Plan concentrates on these dealing with the issues. In addition, there is also work going on within the YOT with managers and practitioners to change the culture of the service whereby these ideas are widely known, issues recognised and acted upon.

A full time Operations Manager for statutory cases has now been appointed. She looked at the criticism from the Lead Inspector regarding management oversight and modified how information about management involvement in a case is recorded. This means that there is a clear, easily understood single record with a manager's concerns and actions required identified. In practice, the case record now includes, notes from case file readings together with work required from the case manager, notes from line management supervision where it pertains to the case and follow up notes where the manager has checked that work required of the practitioner has been completed. To supplement her understanding of management oversight, the Operations Manager has attended a two day training programme on this area of work.

In addition, the existing Preventions Manager decided to resign from her post in November 2011. I have been able to recruit a very experienced locum Operations Manager to provide both management input to the Team and increase the available knowledge about statutory work to assist in delivering the Improvement Plan

Work is being undertaken with practitioners to enable them to change their practice and meet the challenges resulting from the Inspection and the restructure. So far this development has been two parts:

- Practitioners have received two half day work shops on assessment and risk across the three domains (vulnerability/safeguarding, harm to others and likelihood of reoffending). This has already resulted in two identifiable changes in their assessments – risk is more clearly identified along with the reasons for the practitioners' assessments. This has resulted in more vulnerability and risk management plans being completed.
- Since the mid January 2012, the Youth Offending Team's practice meeting has been redesigned as a part of the investment in staff to improve the outcomes for children, The now involves staff being required to present their own cases or reports on a regular basis to enable other staff to identify / understand good practice, as well as enabling the case manager who holds the case to receive input on how their work with the child and family could improve.

Individual training issues have been identified with practitioners and are now being pursued through the Children and Young People's Training programme. Further training is planned on safeguarding and risk management from external trainers.

An integrated plan (covering case planning, risk of harm and safeguarding) has been investigated. A local version is currently on hold as this is an area of development that is being investigated jointly by YOTs across London (as this has been an issue in a number of the London YOT inspections). In addition, the change to the required assessment and planning package, proposed by the Youth Justice Board, which was on hold within the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), has been given more time by MOJ for development.

Requests for a case transfer have for nearly a year been sent to a manager to action. This has resulted in a clear requirement being placed upon the transferring YOT to provide supporting information / assessments, plans and risk management documents *prior* to the case being accepted. This has, in turn, improved the quality of knowledge / assessment of children transferred to Havering YOT.

Audit of individual areas of work is taking place. However, the whole case audit I envisaged when working through the Improvement Plan with the Local Management Board and this Committee have not occurred. To rectify this I have sought and gained agreement that the YOT is one of the recipients of the new Audit Officers work. This will extend the amount of audit being undertaken and provide external scrutiny of the Youth Offending Team's casework, ahead of future inspections. The first full case audit is currently being planned for mid February. This will provide a picture of the progress the team has made and provide a benchmark for future improvements.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks: Nil

Legal implications and risks: Nil

Human Resources implications and risks: Since the last Committee meeting changes in the court arrangements and the Service restructure have begun to impact on the staff available. These issues are a risk to the delivery of the Youth Offending Team's Improvement Plan.

Equalities implications and risks: Nil

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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