

# Family & People Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	25 November 2019
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	Westminster's Youth Justice, Strategic Partnership Plan, 2019-2022, A Pathway to Positive Choices
<b>Report of:</b>	Sarah Newman, Bi-Borough Exec. Dir. Children's Services
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	Cabinet Member Portfolio Family Services & Public Health
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Policy Context:</b>	City for All – Thriving Communities
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## 1. Executive Summary

1.1. This paper outlines Westminster City Council's (WCC) Youth Justice Strategic Partnership Plan for 2019-22: A Pathway to Positive Choices.

1.2. The strategy is underpinned by a relational and trauma informed approach. We believe that by focusing on understanding the reasons for the behaviour, rather than just the result of the behaviour, young people will be supported to make and sustain change.

1.3. We recognise that many of the young people known to the Youth Offending Team have complex needs which have impacted on their life choices. The number of young people receiving a service from the Youth Offending Team in Westminster has reduced over the last two years but the complexity, nature of the offences and rates of reoffending remain a challenge.

1.4. To ensure our staff are equipped with the best skills to meet local need we have invested in Attachment, Regulation, Competency(ARC) training, providing a trauma informed framework that complements our existing systemic practice approach.

### 3. Background

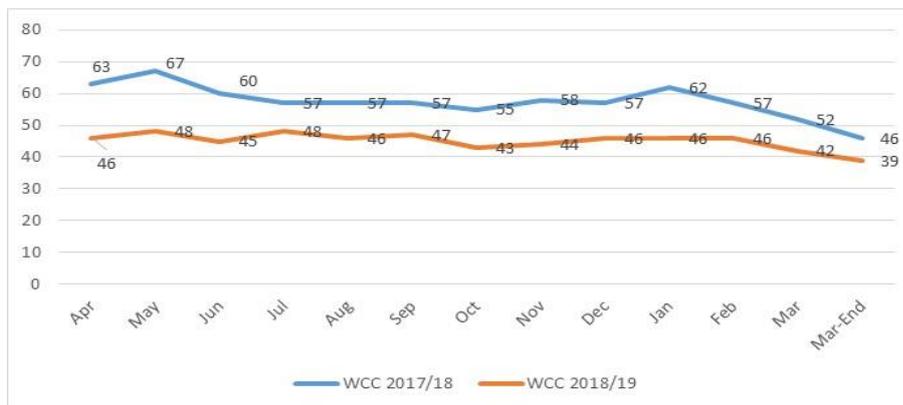
3.1. The Youth Crime Prevention Partnership (YCPP) acts as the management board that oversees the local delivery of responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for Youth Justice Services. This working group is co-chaired by the Superintendent for Neighbourhood Policing and Executive Director Children's Services and includes representatives from across the council, health and the voluntary sector.

As a partnership board, the YCPP provides an opportunity to develop localised responses to maximise outcomes for children and young people who are:

- At risk of offending and reoffending;
- Victims of offending;
- Entering Youth Justice System

3.2. The Youth Offending Team (YOT) is a multi-agency team which sits within Family Services and works closely with the full spectrum of Children's Services from early intervention through to more specialist services i.e. Child Protection, Looked after Children and Leaving Care, .

### 3.3. OVERVIEW OF THE YOT CASELOAD



3.4. In total there were 253 offences in 2018/19: drugs were the most common offence category (71 offences, 10 involving supply or possession with intent to supply, and 11 involving Class A drugs). Violence Against the Person is the second most prevalent (60 offences, of which 18 involved possession of a knife, blade or offensive weapon). Theft and Handling, Robbery and Public Order offences also feature highly.

3.5. In Westminster, 44 young people aged 10-17 years old entered the Youth Justice System for the first time between October 2017 and September 2018, a reduction of nine from the same period the previous year. Partnership working between the Youth Offending Team, Early Help, the Metropolitan Police and other partners is a key factor in both preventing young people from offending and seeking to ensure that those who do are offered targeted family interventions through Triage, Youth Cautions or Youth Conditional Cautions.

3.6. The proportion of young people re-offending over a one-year period between March 2016-March 2017 has decreased from 42.0% to 40.0% for the last two

measured cohorts. The latest rate is below both the London average 44.6% and the National average of 40.9%. The frequency of young people reoffending, measured as a rate of re-offences per re-offender, is calculated as 4.90 for the latest period. This places us above the London average of 3.68. In response, the YOT will be carrying out a targeted piece of work, following a scoping exercise, to look at the young people that have re-offended and determine any missed opportunities.

3.7. The YOT have historically had a strong relationship with the Courts, which has ensured a high level of magistrate confidence in the options provided. There has been a recent move of Youth Court to Highbury, however we will continue to strengthen these relationships and build new ones with partners at Highbury Magistrates Court in order to minimise custodial and remand outcomes for young people while ensuring that victim safety is prioritised and that they receive the best possible service.

#### **4. Some of Our Key Achievements**

- All staff have attended trauma informed training based on the ARC framework.
- Refresher Systemic training has been delivered to all staff.
- The submission to the DfE / YJB ( Youth Justice Board) to pilot a new assessment model has been successful. The pilot has three key components:
  - Staff training in a systemic approach to assessment in the youth offending context.
  - On-going support from systemic clinicians to embed and develop skills and learning.
  - Use of a systemically-based assessment tool.
- We are increasing the range of evidence-based interventions in the team and this year introduced the Non-Violent Resistance Programme (NVR).
- A joint policy and protocol between YOT and LAC (Looked After Children)/Leaving Care Service has been established.
- In line with national recommendations, our Board has agreed a local multi-agency protocol on reducing unnecessary criminalisation of LAC and care leavers.
- There is a shared process between YOT, LAC and Probation to monitor and improve practice for Looked after Children transitioning from YOT to Probation Service and quarterly tracking meetings are in place.
- Introduction of a Speech Language Therapist to the YOT as of April 2019.
- Introduction of an Education Psychologist to the team.
- A review of restorative practice within YOT has taken place and a strategy has been written to embed restorative principles in YOT.
- Joint Strategy between Met Police and Westminster to focus on three strands: Community Involvement, Communication and Schools is now in place.
- Local Strategy has been developed to outline our commitment to responding to County Lines.
- A YOT Open Day took place in July 2018. Over 60 partners attended.
- We have introduced an Out of Court Decision Panel joint decision on disposals for all OOCDC cases.
- Introduction of the Health Consultation meetings in YOT consisting of Substance Misuse practitioner (SMU), Youth Justice Learning and Diversion

practitioner (YJLD), Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist and CAMHs (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service).

- Developed and refreshed a partnership knife crime action plan, and aligned this with pan-London approaches to tackling weapon enabled crime
- A multi-agency Serious Youth Violence Task Force was established in 2018 to ensure an effective joint response from all key partners and to review Westminster's response in relation to the public health approach used successfully in Glasgow. We have agreed to test a similar approach in the Church Street area of Westminster.
- One of the outputs from this Serious Youth Violence Taskforce has been a serious youth violence toolkit for parents and carers in Westminster.
- The Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU) has expanded its operation following a successful bid to the Early Intervention Youth Fund.
- The bi-borough Health and Well-being Board has adopted Serious Youth Violence as a priority in 2019.

## **5. Priorities for 2019-2022**

### **5.1. First Time Entrants, Summary of Priorities**

- Early identification and support offered to young people, who are at risk of being excluded from school.
- To continue the Out of Court Disposal Panel
- As a part of this, to strengthen our earlier intervention work by ensuring that Early Help provide robust whole family interventions to those offered triage or a community resolution and to regularly audit the outcome of this work to ensure that we are diverting young people away from crime.
- Screening for speech and language for every young person entering the YOT on first appointment to ensure early identification of need and support. Assessment and intervention to be tailored to meet this need.
- Broadening our trauma informed practice within the team and thinking of new and creative ways of working with young people and families through a trauma informed lens. Looking at seeking opportunities for therapeutic engagement and activities to get young people involved in.

### **5.2. Reducing Re-offending, Summary of Priorities**

- The latest live re-offending tracker indicates that re-offending rates for Westminster have increased. This is an area that will be focused on through analysis of data.
- Board members will lead a piece of work that does a 'deep dive' into the cohort of repeat offenders.
- Family therapy clinical support will be embedded in the team to support the development of systemic and trauma informed practice.
- Conduct review on disproportionality and develop local approaches to working with young people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups.
- To achieve Restorative Quality mark within the YOT by 2020.
- To put a greater emphasis on creating sustained change in the planning of work.
- Exit planning for every young person starts at the beginning of their order, they are part of planning leaving the YOT.

- We want to explore peer support interventions and the benefits of introducing these into our YOT to reduce reoffending.
- Westminster's IGXU (Integrated Gangs and Exploitation Unit) analysis of County Lines operating from the borough has pin pointed that young people are going to 20 counties with offenders travelling as far as Norfolk and Hampshire. We will continue to work together with our colleagues from IGUX to offer alternatives for young people.

### **5.3. Reducing Custody, Summary of Priorities**

- Resettlement support to begin from custody.
- From 31st July 2019 ISS will be brought back into a single borough model. The priority is to develop and strengthen a multi-agency local approach.
- Ensure plans of managing risk and safety are robust and address both public protection and young person's safety.
- Deliver on our promise that every young person entering the Criminal Justice System has aspirations and we get young people to 'dream big' that they are able to see their own personal development goals. Young people are in ETE (Education, Training or Employment) by the end of their Order and we hold an award ceremony for young people once a year to congratulate them on their achievements.
- To host open evenings and events for parents and carers to understand the journey of their child through the criminal justice system.
- We are working with local businesses to tap into their corporate responsibility and provide opportunities for YOT young people.

### **5.4. Serious Youth Violence, Summary of Priorities**

- To develop a Task Force meeting focussed on schools and explore how the partnership can support young people in education and in addressing serious youth violence.
- Lead on the Council's Public Health approach to serious youth violence.
- Pilot the Public Health approach using evidence-based interventions in Church Street. Preventative education sessions for pupils and professionals in primary and secondary schools are being developed, alongside linking in opportunities for positive activities and consultation with young people as part of planning for the Church Street Regeneration programme.
- A Serious Youth Violence Engagement Officer will begin work at the end of July 19.
- The group will strengthen links with Sports and Leisure services
- To continue to develop City Lions which is an enrichment scheme for 13-16-year olds.
- In recognition of the changing nature of gangs and groups, where membership is becoming more fluid, the Integrated Gangs and Exploitation Unit is expanding its focus to work more broadly with young people at risk of serious youth violence and exploitation rather than working only with young people who are part of recognised gangs.

## **6.0. Five Local Pledges**

6.1. The YOT have developed five local pledges for young people to support in the delivery of a high-quality service against the associated Key Performance Indicators.

- 1- We will build on a young person's strengths and help them develop a pro-social identity
- 2- We will contribute to reducing the exploitation of Young People
- 3- We will be assertive and proactive in reducing Serious Youth Violence
- 4- We will put a focus on improving Education, Training or Employment opportunities and attainment for young people
- 5- We will work in partnership with young people to improve their health and well-being. Together we will look at ways of improving an individual's quality of life, through high quality healthcare and personal support.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Jayne Vertkin x5745**

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