

Cabinet	FP/806/03/12
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Youth Offending Service Core Case Inspection outcome report

Report by Cllr Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

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Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to brief Cabinet on the outcome of the recent Her Majesty of Probation (HMIP) Inspection of Essex Youth Offending Service and actions being taken to implement the recommendations contained in the report. This inspection took place in February 2012 and the report was published on the 23rd May 2012. The inspection, known as Core Case inspection (CCI), was the final cycle of a national inspection program that commenced in 2009. There will be new risk lead inspection programme commencing in summer 2012.

Essex received a score of 73% for safeguarding work, 68% for risk of harm to others work and 77% for likelihood of reoffending work. In each category our score was higher than both the national average and our family comparator Youth Offending Teams. Only five recommendations were made which will be incorporated to the service improvement plan (see further detail below.)

Decision Areas and Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to **approve** the post inspection improvement plan which will be overseen by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

Background, context, and area of the County affected

Unlike the rest of Children's Social Care, Ofsted are not the independent Inspectorate responsible for Youth Offending Teams rather HMI Probation are the lead body. All Youth Offending Teams have been inspected over the past 3 years on a region by region basis. The framework for the inspection is based around 3 core areas:

Safeguarding work (action to protect the young person)

Risk of Harm to others work (action to protect the public)

Likelihood of re offending work (individuals less likely to reoffend)

The scoring approach is also very different to that of Ofsted. The range is:

Drastic improvement needed (scores of 44 and below)

Substantial improvement needed (scores of 45 - 59)

Moderate improvement needed (scores of 60 – 74)

Minimum improvement needed (scores of 75 and over)

The inspection process is based very much on the actual work of the service and as such for this framework; there were no interviews with managers in the service, multi agency partners or members of the Management Board. The whole focus was on what the case files 'told' the inspectors and the content of the interview with case managers.

Over the course of the 4 days that the 7 person team were on site, over 85 case work interviews took place reviewing a random sample of 85 cases held by the YOS. The sample was chosen by the inspectorate to reflect the total case load profile of the service.

The actual fieldwork week went well with a Lead Inspector (on secondment to HMI Probation from HMI Courts Inspectorate) setting a professional tone. There were no case work alerts raised, meaning that there were no cases causing significant concern during the inspection week. Along with the HMIP inspectors, there were 3 local assessors from YOTs across the Eastern Region. Similarly, Essex YOS provided 3 local assessors to other inspections. This added a helpful practice focus and enabled a better understanding of the reality of working in a large shire county.

Along side the case file read, young people and victims in contact with the YOS were asked to complete a survey about their experiences with the YOS. 92 young people completed the survey and the **overwhelming response indicated that they had a positive view of the YOS and understood why they were required to come**. More detailed information is available in the main HMI Probation report.

The head line scores for the inspection are detailed in the table, alongside the England average and Kent and Hertfordshire YOS (as our family comparator YOTs for benchmarking).

	Lowest	Highest	Average	Essex	Herts	Kent
Safeguarding work	37%	91%	67%	73%	60%	59%
Risk of harm to others work	36%	86%	62%	68%	49%	53%
Likelihood of reoffending work	43%	87%	70%	77%	67%	68%

Two areas were judged to need moderate improvement (Safeguarding and Risk of Harm to others) and one requiring minimum improvement (likelihood of reoffending.)

The report only made five recommendations:

1. A timely and good quality assessment and plan, using ASSET, are completed when the case starts.
2. Specifically, a timely and good quality assessment of the individual's vulnerability and risk of harm to others is completed at the start, as appropriate the specific needs of the case.
3. As a consequence of the assessment, the record of the intervention plan is specific about what will now be done in order to safeguard the child or young person from harm, to make them less likely to reoffend, and to minimise any identified risk of harm to others.
4. The response to changes in risk of harm to others is timely and appropriate.
5. Management oversight is effective in ensuring the quality of assessment and plans to manage vulnerability or risk of harm to others, and to ensure that planned actions are delivered.

It is important to note that recommendations in all HMI reports will (regardless of how well a YOS has scored) relate to:

- Good quality / timely Assets
- Good quality assessment of vulnerability and Risk of Harm
- Good quality Intervention Plan
- Effective management oversight of all of the above
- The response improvement plan has been prepared and will be overseen by the Youth Justice Board.

The key foci of the improvement plan are to:

- build on effective quality assurance work already underway across the service, to continue to deliver intervention programmes based on proved evidence (of impact)
- work harder at involving parents and carers of young people in contact with the service to promote greater joint responsibility for reducing the risk of the young person continuing to offend.
- apply more focus on promoting the concept of professional ownership of 'quality' by front line staff to promote continuous improvement.

Relevance to ECC's corporate plan and other Strategic Plans

There are links to all aspects of the Corporate Plan (2012 – 2017) but most specifically:

Improving Public Health and Wellbeing

Protecting and Safeguarding Vulnerable People

Giving people a greater say and greater role in building safer and stronger communities.

Through the work taking place to reduce harm caused by crime, the Youth Offending Service aims to promote Essex as one of the safest places to be by ensuring we:

- have responsive services to victims of crime
- address the factors leading to youth crime such as fractured family relationships, substance misuse and a lack of key employment skills.

Internal and External Consultation

N/A

Legal Implications (Monitoring Officer)

N/A

Finance and Resources Implications (Section 151 Officer)

The YOS is a statutory multi agency service which receives funding and seconded staff from ECC, Essex Police, Essex Probation, Health Trusts and the Youth Justice Board.

There is no direct financial impact arising from the implementation of the improvement plan since the existing funding is being utilised to deliver the plan.

Human Resources Implications

As above, there are no anticipated human resource implications arising from the implementation of the improvement plan. Effectively, the plan builds on the existing models but further develops some elements, most especially the roles of team managers and practice supervisors.

Equality Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken as there has been no significant change to service delivery arising from implementation of the improvement plan.

Background papers

The full report can be accessed from <http://www.justice.gov/about/hmi-probation/>

A copy of the YOS improvement plan is attached as appendix 1.

Essex YOS Service Improvement Plan (incorporating Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation recommendations May 2012)

Recommendations

- (1) a timely and good quality assessment and plan, using Asset, are completed when the case starts (YOS Manager)
- (2) specifically, a timely and good quality assessment of the individual's vulnerability and *Risk of Harm to others* is completed at the start, as appropriate to the specific case (YOS Manager)
- (3) as a consequence of the assessment, the record of the intervention plan is specific about what will now be done in order to safeguard the child or young person from harm, to make them less likely to reoffend, and to minimise any identified *Risk of Harm to others* (YOS manager)
- (4) the response to changes in *Risk of Harm to others* is timely and appropriate (YOS Manager)
- (5) management oversight is effective in ensuring the quality of assessment and plans to manage vulnerability or *Risk of Harm to others*, and ensures that planned actions are delivered (YOS Manager).

In addition to the recommendations made to Essex YOS, additional areas have been incorporated into this plan based on the service's self assessment of strengths and areas for improvement. Where this is the case, these are referenced in the plan as 'EYOS'.

Area for Improvement/	Link to other plans	Actions	Timescales	Success criteria/impact	Costs and Resources
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Development					
Timely and good quality assessment plan, using Asset, completed when the case starts . This to include an assessment of vulnerability and risk of harm to others (HMIP)	SCF Business Plan	<p>Review and amend in house training - APIS 1 and 2, and delivering interventions module to reinforce links between assessment and intervention plan.</p> <p>Reflective supervision and reflective practitioner training commissioned to promote 'learning' within supervision.</p> <p>Review and amend QA tools – Practitioner and Manager (supervision) and auditing process to further promote compliance with agreed Essex standards and YJB requirements.</p>	<p>May 2012</p> <p>September 2012</p> <p>May 2012</p>	<p>Assessments are of a consistently good quality leading to more relevant intervention plans</p> <p>Case managers embrace a self assessment approach to quality assurance taking professional responsibility for their own practice outcomes.</p> <p>Consistent and timely use of the QA framework to both ensure accurate and relevant assessment of risk and need and evidence of impact of learning from practice workshops.</p>	None in house resource
The intervention plan	SCF Business	Implement revised	September	Case managers actively	None – re

is specific about what needs to be done in order to safeguard the child, minimise any risk of harm and reduce the likelihood of further offending (HMIP) .	Plan	young person and family planning process to enable improved relevance of intervention to young person.	2012	provide opportunities for young people and their families to not only contribute to assessment but also critically appraise the progress made via an improved system of review of work.	ordering of current managerial roles within the YOS
		Reissue practice requirements around sequencing of interventions, for example that all reparation requirements are completed by the half way point of the order.	June 2012	There is an appropriate balance between RJ aspects of Court ordered intervention and other work to address offending behaviour. In particular, that there is improved recognition of the impact of offending on the victims by young people and case managers.	
		Continue to ensure that the YOS plan links with other relevant plans including care plans.	June 2012	Improved joint working with other relevant services/ agencies to maximise outcome opportunities for young people.	
Management oversight is effective in ensuring the quality of assessment and plans (HMIP)	SCF Business Plan	Trial a new role of Independent Reviewing Officer within the service with specific remit to ensure that all young	July 2012	Improved monitoring of practice and provision of additional case work support as well as providing peer challenge to locality Team Managers	None – re ordering of current managerial roles within the YOS

		people subject to a YRO have quality assessments and intervention plans and along with their carers have the opportunity to contribute to these plans and assessments. And that this process is overseen by management. .			
Develop practice in custodial and community plans to be more holistic (not just ETE S/M and MH) and ensure RMP and VMP is integrated into this (EYOS).	SCF Business Plan	At least 2 full thematic reviews per year, where viable to include multi agency partners and case managers as peer reviewer.	July 2012 and December 2012	Outcomes of reviews used to improve practice guidance to staff.	None in house re modelling
Court team remodelling (EYOS)	SCF Business Plan	Implement YOS court new model	April 2012	Reconfigured service for courts at 'supersites' to be created and rolled out Colchester and Chelmsford. (Harlow court will be closed 2013)	No additional investment needed Court remodelling complete
Improve joint working with Children's Social Care teams IRO's and Foster carers (EYOS)	SCF Business Plan	Clear protocols / practice guidance for YOS and CSC Team Visits / Information	September 2012 Sept 12	Updated protocols / practice guidance on CLA practice standards / joint working YOS and CSC quadrant team. YOS contribute to Assessed	None in house resource

		<p>exchange at management and team level.</p> <p>Operational Team Managers to proactively build key relationships</p> <p>Head of Service / Deputy Head of Service to monitor impact / outcomes</p>		<p>Year in Practice programme and delivery to foster carers ECC and Commissioned services.</p> <p>YOS to contribute to quadrant development days for S/W</p> <p>Operational Managers to formally link with quadrant Directors and ensure S/W in teams are P&Q manager to review changes in structure inc Dbit and HRT</p>	
Develop knowledge for YOS staff who case manage children looked to update re new teams processes and provisions and IRO role Dbit HRT Quadrant panel processes and foster care provision.(EYOS)	SCF Business Plan	<p>Development day for social work and other relevant YOS staff.</p> <p>CSC to deliver on development days to YOS S/W</p> <p>YOS S/W to undertake shadowing of CSC and quadrant panels</p>	September 12	Improved joint working between YOS and Independent Reviewing Service in line with new Children Looked After regulations. And CSC quadrant, Dbit and HRT teams	None in house resource

