

**Derbyshire
Youth
Offending
Service**

**Youth Justice Plan
2011-13**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Derbyshire Youth Offending Service was established by Section 39 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act which requires every top tier Local Authority to establish a Youth Offending Team. The service was launched on the 1st April 2000 and is a statutory partnership comprising:

- Derbyshire County Council
- Derbyshire Constabulary
- Derbyshire Probation Trust
- The National Health Service in Derbyshire

The Crime and Disorder Act also requires every top tier Local Authority to publish a Youth Justice Plan outlining how youth justice services will be delivered. This plan covers the two year period 2011-13.

2. REVIEW OF 2010-11

The service delivered strong performance against national indicators in 2010-11 with continuing low numbers of first time entrants to the youth justice system and reductions in the use of custody. There was also a significant reduction in the total number of young people receiving a criminal justice outcome. The service had seen a significant increase in throughput and workload in the period 2004-2008. However, changes in Police policy implemented in 2008 resulted in less serious offenders being increasingly dealt with informally. This led to a significant reduction in new offenders coming into the justice system, falling from 1,204 in 2007-8 to 470 in 2010-11.

The reduction in total number of young people in the justice system was reflected in changes in YOS workloads. This was greatest in the number of Referral Orders, normally given for first court appearance, where the numbers fell from a high in 2007-8 of 465 to 206 in 2010-11. The total numbers of young people receiving community sentences, i.e. the more serious and persistent offenders, also reduced but to a much lesser extent. The number of custodial sentences fell to the lowest level for many years with only 36 sentences in 2010-11 down from a high of 89 in 2007-8. The downward trends appears to have bottomed out as first time entrant numbers remained at a similar level between 2009-10 and 2010-11.

The workloads of 2007-8 had proved extremely challenging for the service with a number of non-caseholding staff being asked to hold cases. The reductions have enabled the service to focus on the quality of community interventions which has supported the reduction in custodial sentencing.

	2007-08	2010-11	Percentage Reduction
Referral Orders	465	206	56%
Community Sentences with YOS Intervention	318	262	18%
Custodial Sentences	89	36	60%

Fig 1. Sentencing 2007-8 & 2010-11

Re-offending data indicates that total re-offending by young people has risen although it should be noted that as low risk young offenders make up a smaller proportion of the re-offending cohort than previous years it is likely that re-offending rates will increase.

A restructure of the service was initiated in 2009 and the final appointments took up post in April 2010. Key practice developments in 2010-11 included the transfer of the Buddy+ numeracy and literacy mentoring project from Read on Right Away (ROWA) to the Youth Offending Service to be managed in house. 2010-11 was also the first full year of operation of Integrated Resettlement Support (IRS) funded by a ring fenced grant from the YJB which provides voluntary support beyond the end of periods of statutory supervision primarily for young people who have served custodial sentences. A time limited project was undertaken with Derbyshire Community Health Trust to provide training and consultancy in Speech and Language Therapy skills for YOS staff and will be developed further.

The service introduced robust quality assurance (QA) systems in 2010-11 which ensured that all high risk cases were reviewed independently and a dip sampling exercise undertaken with medium and low risk cases. The QA findings are fed back to case managers to ensure that they are aware of the strengths and any weaknesses in their work on the case being reviewed. The findings are also aggregated to identify training needs and to inform policy and procedure development.

3. PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

Within the County Council the service is located within the Chief Executives Department and the Head of Service is managed by the Strategic Director (Policy & Community Safety). The Head of YOS is based within the Safer Derbyshire Partnership in the County Council alongside the Drug and Alcohol Action Team and the County Community Safety Manager.

The Sustainable Community Strategy is the overarching guiding framework for partnership working in Derbyshire. Three of the five themes in the strategy link directly to the work of the Youth Offending Service i.e. safer communities, children and young people and health and well being.

The Community Safety Agreement sits below the Sustainable Community Strategy and outlines how local partnerships plan to tackle local crime and disorder priorities. The Youth Justice Plan outlines how the Youth Offending Service in collaboration with a wide range of partners addresses the particular issue of young people's offending and its impact on communities. All the strategies and plans have a commitment to reducing offending by young people, improving the lives of young people particularly where they are disadvantaged and making Derbyshire a safer place to live and work.

A Youth Offending Service Management Board, comprising senior officers of partner agencies, chaired by the Strategic Director (Policy & Community Safety) is in place. The board oversees the work of the service and monitors the implementation of the actions outlined in the youth justice plan.

2011-12 will see significant changes in partner agency's operations. Children's Services implemented a major re-structure in April 2011 which included the launching of 33 Multi Agency Team (MATs) providing integrated support services to children and families. The YOS will develop close working links with the MATs to ensure clarity of role when both agencies are involved and that duplication is avoided. Other changes include the reforms of the health service and partial tendering of some Probation Service functions.

The service saw a reduction in funding in 2011-12 of which the most significant reduction was the Youth Justice Board grant which fell from £1,326,874 to £1,096,593, a £230,281 reduction. A number of vacancies had arisen due to staff turnover and retirement in late 2010 and as a result the service was able to absorb the funding reduction. The reduced throughput of cases has resulted in workloads of the remaining staff staying at comparable levels to previous years.

The service saw changing patterns of demand across the county as total throughput rose in South Derbyshire and fell in other areas notably High Peak and Dales. The courts service announced changes in court boundaries and the service will review the current three area teams configuration in light of these developments.

The service is due to be inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation in early 2012. Further significant developments that will impact on the service include the introduction of payment by results (PBR) in 2012-13 where it is expected that 25% of the YJB grant (i.e. £275K) will be dependent on performance against the indicators for first time entrants, re-offending and use of custody. Elected Police and Crime Commissioners are due to be in place by 2012 and it is anticipated that a proportion of the YJB grant will be transferred to them from 2013 onwards with the Youth Offending Service required to bid to continue to provide services.

The service will seek to balance a focus on outputs necessitated by PBR with the development of delivery models that ensure best practice in areas not covered by PBR including safeguarding, high risk offenders, victims and public confidence. The Government has issued a Green Paper on the future of the criminal justice system, *Breaking the Cycle*, which indicates that Youth Offending Teams work well however it does intend to make some changes to the youth justice system although it is likely to be some years before they are implemented.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY

4.1 Community Supervision and Reducing Re-offending

In 2009 the service re-structured around the case management model of delivery. Three case holding teams are responsible for the overall management of young people's cases calling on specialist staff in the Programmes Team and Inclusion Team for additional support. Case Managers undertake an initial assessment using the Asset assessment tool, and deliver an intervention designed to tackle the risk factors identified whilst at the same time ensuring that safeguarding needs are also addressed. The Programmes Team provide a range of interventions including behaviour programmes, Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) Programmes for young people at risk of a custodial sentence,

The service will:

- Maintain initial assessments at a high standard in order that they identify the needs of young people and provide staff with training backed up with quality assurance feedback on the effectiveness of assessments
- Refine existing and develop new interventions delivered by specialist staff in the Programmes Team designed to tackle the wide range of needs and risk factors identified in young people.
- Implement an "Intervention Finder" which makes it easier for case managers to identify programmes designed to tackle issues identified in the assessment process.
- Continue to improve the compliance levels with community orders to ensure that young people are encouraged and supported to attend appointments and that the need for formal breach proceedings is minimised

- Further develop the relationship with the Derbyshire Speech and Language service to enable it to identify communication difficulties experienced by young people
- Develop closer links with the Attendance Centre to make it available for young people to undertake reparation and other activity
- Review transition arrangements to the Probation Service and ensure effective links with Integrated Offender Management arrangements

4.2 Custody

Young people who serve custodial sentences often face significant difficulties when they return to their communities and re-offending rates are high. The service is committed to ensuring that only those young people who have committed the most serious offences receive a custodial sentence. Where young people have received a custodial sentence the service will ensure that they receive regular contact with their supervising officer whilst serving the custodial element of their sentence and are well supported on their return to the community. The service has available post custody Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) focussing on serious and persistent offenders and Integrated Resettlement Support (IRS) providing support after license periods have ended

The service will:

- Continue to work with the courts to build and maintain confidence in community sentences through participation in court users groups and magistrates training events
- Develop a compliance procedure to reduce the small number of cases where young people who receive community sentences, but do not comply with their orders, subsequently receive a custodial sentence
- Develop a video conferencing facility in conjunction with the community safety unit to enable additional contacts to be maintained with young people in custody over and above the scheduled review and visits
- Provide post release programmes of Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) and Integrated Resettlement Support (IRS) for all young people leaving custody.

4.3 Education Training and Employment

Being in education or employment is one of the most significant protective factors in reducing risk of re-offending. The service has three staff responsible for supporting young offenders into education, training and employment. They have effective relationships with schools, careers advisers and a range of providers. Their focus is on identifying young offenders out of ETE early in their involvement with the YOS and working with case managers to find suitable provision. The service has a mentoring programme focusing on numeracy and literacy known as Buddy+.

The service will:

- Ensure compliance with new requirements of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learners Act in relation to the education of young people sentenced to custody
- Further develop and implement screening processes that identify current ETE status, literacy levels and speech and language issues to be undertaken early in court orders.
- Implement information sharing protocols with schools to ensure education needs are met and that risks in the school environment are managed effectively
- Develop effective links with the new Multi Agency Teams (MATs) who have taken over many of the functions previously undertaken by the Youth Service, Connexions and the Education Welfare Service.

4.4 Substance Misuse

There are high levels of substance misuse among young offenders. As well as impacting on health, substance misuse lies behind certain offence types including alcohol related violence and property crimes used to fund a drug habit. The service employs 2.5 substance misuse workers who screen young offenders receiving a service for drugs use. Depending on their assessment they may provide basic drug education, advice where there is some limited substance misuse or they may refer to the specialist drug services.

The service will:

- Continue to screen every young person referred to the YOS for substance misuse.
- Maintain the Service Level Agreements in place with the young people's drug treatment services in the county and maintain current collaborative working arrangements
- Continue to be a member of the Drug and Alcohol Action Team Young People's Commissioning Group and ensure that the service is represented on other DAAT subgroups as appropriate.

4.5 Health Services

Young offenders have a wide variety of health needs some of which impact directly on their offending behaviour such as mental health issues. Other health concerns are indicative of an unhealthy lifestyle such as obesity and untreated minor ailments. There are currently four health workers in the YOS, two Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) specialists and two former school nurses focussing on physical health. The CAMHS specialists focus on wide range of mental health issues including serious sex offenders and other high risk groups, young people who may be at risk of suicide or self harm and also lower levels issues such as self esteem and body image.

The service will:

- Ensure that sexual health advice is available to young offenders and in particular to contribute to maintaining the downward trend in teenage pregnancy levels
- Continue to identify significant health issues through screening using specialist assessment tools.
- Review and update recording systems to ensure effective communication between health specialists and case managers whilst adhering to NHS standards of patient confidentiality
- Continue to ensure that practitioners are aware of the mental health needs of young offenders in order that issues such as self harm, self esteem and depression are identified and responded to effectively

4.6 Parenting

Parents have a very significant impact on their children's behaviour and good parenting skills make offending less likely. The service has a parenting officer whose role is to hold the small number parenting orders issued by the courts and take a lead in the delivery of a range of parenting interventions. The service works closely with Children's Services in running parenting group work programmes.

The service will:

- Continue to monitor the extent to which parenting interventions are used within the service
- Maintain case managers awareness levels of parenting programmes and other support services available in local communities
- Deliver high quality parenting programmes that meet the needs of parents and carers of offenders in collaboration with Children's Services

4.7 Offending by Children in Care

Young people in care experience many of the similar risk factors of young offenders e.g. disrupted family life or educational underachievement. Once in the care system however these factors should reduce. Although the number of children in care offending has reduced in recent years it does not appear to have reduced to the same extent as many of the other categories (e.g. first time entrants or custodial sentences).

The service will:

- Continue to closely monitor children in care who have offended providing appropriate interventions to prevent further re-offending
- Maintain the children in care protocols with key criminal justice agencies including the police and crown prosecution to ensure that diversion from prosecution occurs where appropriate

4.8 Accommodation

Many young offenders are unable to live with their families and find that they are living independently at a relatively young age. The service combines the role of bail supervision officer and accommodation officer in each of the three operational teams. Those staff work with local housing authorities to develop referral routes, suitable accommodation options and support services for those young offenders living independently. The service works closely with a number of agencies e.g. Children's Services leaving care team, Supporting People, Multi Agency Teams and the DAAT to develop new accommodation services for vulnerable young people.

The service will:

- Continue to work with statutory and voluntary partner agencies to ensure the availability of a wide range of placement options and support services for young offenders
- Continue to ensure that young people leaving custody have suitable accommodation through the use of the Integrated Resettlement and Support funding stream
- Develop and maintain links with each of the eight District Council Housing Departments
- Maintain membership of Derbyshire Young Persons Housing Forum

4.9 Restorative Justice & Victims of Youth Crime

The service undertakes a range of restorative activity including providing a range of direct and indirect reparation, victim consultation work and more recently an increasing focus on victim safety. The service contacts victims of youth crime to establish if they have a wish to take part in mediation with the offender, would like to receive direct reparation or have a view as to what reparation the young offender should undertake. Where the victim was specifically targeted they will be asked if there is any continuing threat and given the opportunity to seek exclusion requirements where they are available. Any information that indicates continuing risk to victims is fed back to case managers to be incorporated into risk management plans.

The service will:

- Ensure that all individual victims are contacted and given the opportunity to participate in a restorative process
- Ensure that where there is a continuing risk of victimisation that the risk is managed effectively and the range of resources available are used including Exclusion Requirements on court orders

4.10 Reducing Disproportionality and Tackling Discrimination

The service is committed to reducing improper discrimination in the youth justice system. Staff have received diversity training and a diversity checklist is applied to all young people. A Diversity Group has been established within

the service whose purpose is to identify further training, policy and practice issues. The service is actively involved in the Criminal Justice Board Disproportionality sub group which analyses information across the justice system to identify trends and develop action plans.

The service will continue to:

- Identify diversity issues requiring policy development
- Undertake specific training in relation to the travelling community in response to findings from quality assurance audits
- Monitor decision making within the youth justice system for potential disproportionality

4.11 Prevention

There was a sharp decline in first time entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system in 2009-10. Numbers have since levelled out however benchmarking of FTEs across the East Midlands region indicates that Derbyshire has relatively low numbers with the second lowest number per 100,000 10-17 population in the years 09-10 and 10-11. The reductions are largely attributable to changes in Police prosecution policy however the work of the YOS prevention team and other preventative services has contributed. The team work across the county covering children's services localities and works in partnership with all relevant agencies.

The service will:

- Work closely with the 33 newly established Multi Agency Teams (MATs) to ensure a specific offending prevention referral route is available to them
- Update the prevention team referral process to focus the service on young people identified as being at risk through the criminal justice and community services
- Continue to develop and provide group programmes geared towards those young people and areas of the county identified as having highest levels of offending
- Proactively identify young people who would benefit from intervention at the earliest opportunity using information available from colleagues in Police anti social behaviour services

5. RESOURCES

The Youth Offending Service receives funding from three sources; the statutory partner agencies, the Youth Justice Board and bids to a range of funders. Partner agencies provide resources to the service in a number of ways including the secondment of staff, a cash contribution to the running costs of the service and other direct support such as the provision of premises, management support, financial and personnel services. Contributions for the year (subject to final confirmation) are proposed at:

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Derbyshire Constabulary	£171,173		£55,582	£226,755
Derbyshire Probation Trust	£111,899	£8,000	£48,805	£168,704
Derbyshire PCT	£127,226		£48,036	£175,262
Derbyshire County Council	£1,536,302	£249,130	£290,652	£2,076,084
Youth Justice Board			£1,096,593	£1,096,593
				£3,743,398

7. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The service now has one half time training manager overseeing learning and development for both contracted staff and for volunteers. Two training plans are created each year detailing the priorities within the service reflecting local and national developments.

Training priorities for contracted staff in 2011-13 include:

- Specific, skills-based training to reflect legislative and practice changes.
- Reducing self harm and suicide prevention
- Working with young people who sexually harm others
- Service improvement activity e.g. Enforcement and Case Review

Training priorities for volunteers in 2011-13 include

- Health and safety when working with young people
- Safeguarding
- Drug and alcohol awareness

The YJB have developed a range of qualifications for staff operating in the Youth Justice sector as well as a range of online modules with the Open University through the Youth Justice Interactive Learning Space (YJILS). Staff are supported in undertaking YJB training and encouraged to keep updated on training modules published on the YJILS site.

The Individual Development Review (IDR) element of Investors in People (IIP) serves the function of an appraisal and development scheme for the service and is used to identify training needs. An electronic version based on the council's Employee Personal Development and Review (EPDAR) system has been implemented to ensure that aggregated training needs are captured.

In touch arrangements are maintained for seconded staff to ensure that they remain up to date with developments in their parent agency. A review of service career structures will be undertaken to ensure that it is consistent with latest guidance and recognises the emerging qualification framework.

A training budget of £40,000 is allocated within the service budget.