

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

24 July 2012

Report of the Strategic Director – Policy and Community Safety

YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE INSPECTION (Public Health)

Purpose of the Report

To consider the report by HMI Probation on the Derbyshire Youth Offending Service.

Information and Analysis

The Youth Offending Service (YOS) is a multi-agency partnership hosted by the County Council and supported by the Police, NHS and Probation as statutory partners, reporting to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

The service was subject to an inspection undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation in March 2012. This was towards the end of a three year national rolling programme of inspection, the East Midlands being the final region to have its services reviewed.

The inspection methodology involved an audit of 62 cases through a case file review and case manager interviews. In addition, questionnaires were completed by young people and by victims of crime, although these did not contribute to the overall findings. Although the inspection had been expected for some time, the 62 cases were not finalised until one working day before the inspection commenced.

Inspections focus on three keys areas of service:

- safeguarding;
- reducing risk of harm;
- reducing the likelihood of reoffending.

The Inspectorate considers the extent to which each of the three key areas require improvement and awards a judgement based on four improvement categories – minimum, moderate, substantial or drastic. Minimum improvement is the best judgement that can be awarded and reflects strong performance, followed by moderate improvement.

Derbyshire Youth Offending Service was judged to require minimum improvement in safeguarding; minimum improvement in likelihood of re-offending and moderate improvement in risk of harm. The table below sets out the audit score and provides a regional and national comparison.

	Derbyshire Average Audit score	East Midlands Average Audit Score	National Average Audit Score
Safeguarding	78%	74%	68%
Risk of Harm	72%	66%	62%
Likelihood of Reoffending	79%	75%	71%

The Inspectorate made a number of positive comments about the service including “the service has much to be proud of - it shows particular strengths in partnership working and in sustaining outcomes for young people” and “the service has good quality staff. They are very enthusiastic, knowledgeable and show a high degree of commitment to young people”.

Overall this was a commendable outcome and there were areas where the service was judged to have excelled. Work with victims received one of the highest satisfaction rates achieved across the national programme. The Inspectorate also judged a sub-section of their audit on sustaining outcomes for young people as scoring 94%. This was one of the highest scores achieved nationally and was based on the judgment of the inspector in each case as to whether circumstances had improved for a young person during the Youth Offending Service intervention and the likelihood of these improvements being sustained beyond the current court order.

A small number of areas were identified for improvement and they related to the thoroughness and timeliness of initial assessments of young people. The inspectorate also viewed some of the intervention plans drawn up by staff as overly complex and requiring simplification. A short improvement plan responding to the inspection findings and recommendations will be submitted to the Inspectorate.

The Service is also subject to a performance management programme led by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales where the Service also performs well against national indicators. The indicators relate to the number of young people offending for the first time known as first time entrants; use of custodial sentencing; and proven re-offending. The first time entrants and use of custody figures are calculated on a per population basis to allow ease of

comparison between local authority areas. The following table illustrates Derbyshire's strong position at March 2012.

	Derbyshire	East Midlands Average	National Average
First Time Entrants (per 100,000 youth population)	658	887	749
Use of Custody (per 1,000 youth population)	0.53	0.66	0.80
Re-offending rate (% after 12 months)	32	32.3	34.1

The Cabinet is asked to note the findings of the inspection conducted by HMI Probation which indicate that the Service is one of the highest performing in the country.

Financial Considerations

The council contributes £1.6million to the total funding of the Youth Offending Service of approximately £3.0million.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, legal, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, personnel and property considerations.

Background Papers

Derbyshire Youth Offending Service Inspection Report 2012

Key Decision - No

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the inspection report published by HMI Probation for the Derbyshire Youth Offending Service be noted.

David Lowe

Strategic Director – Policy and Community Safety