

Police and Crime Panel – 23 April 2018

**Update from the PCC on the Safer, Fairer, United Communities for
Staffordshire 2013-18: Focus Priority: Managing Offenders**

Report of the Police & Crime Commissioner

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Police and Crime Panel on the delivery of the Managing Offenders priority of the Safer, Fairer, and United Communities Strategy for Staffordshire.

2. Recommendation

That the Panel note the update on the delivery of the Managing Offenders priority and make comment as appropriate.

3. Background/Context

In support of the delivery of the priority the PCC, through his commissioning team, has brought together all key partners that have a responsibility or interest in the offending arena to support a whole system approach to reducing offending and re-offending in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent.

The partnership is the first of its type bringing agencies together to tackle offending and reoffending on a pan-Staffordshire basis and is one of only a few examples nationally where all agencies involved in the commissioning or delivery of services to offenders and their families have come together to agree a joined-up, whole-system approach to preventing offending and driving down offending and reoffending rates.

Governance arrangements for the partnership are now well established and partners have agreed an ambitious county-wide strategy – the Staffordshire Strategic Framework for Reducing Offending 2015-18 – to guide local action in relation to the agenda (the Strategy).

A comprehensive Action Plan has been produced to support implementation of the Strategy based around 3 key themes - Prevention, Diversion and Offender Management, Rehabilitation and Resettlement - and multi-agency delivery groups have been established to oversee the delivery of agreed actions under each theme.

Arrangements are in place to support the tracking of performance in delivering the Strategy's key actions with regular reports being made to the OMCDB on progress made.

4. Progress on Implementation

Overview

A copy of the latest Progress Tracking report used to monitor implementation of the Strategy is attached at Appendix 1.

Overall, progress on implementation to date has been positive with the majority of actions scheduled for delivery by this point (to 31st March 2018) having been successfully implemented. Of the 53 actions scheduled to be delivered 42 (85%) have been completed, with a further 11 in the process of being implemented.

In cases where progress has been slower than expected in many instances planned developments were starting from a low base. Where appropriate arrangements have been made for outstanding actions to be carried forward into 2018/19 as part of arrangements recently agreed as part of the strategy refresh (see below).

An update on recent activity under each of the strategy's themes is given below.

Prevention

Since the last report to the Panel partners have continued to develop the approach to prevention and early intervention. Significant progress has been made in particular in taking forward actions designed to prevent young people's exposure to/risk of involvement in offending behaviour and to reduce the incidence of intergenerational crime. Key developments have included:

- Work with partners to support the introduction of a nationally recognised preventative education resource (Values versus Violence) in schools across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. The resource is delivered by teachers and raises awareness of risks among children and young people and provides them with some of the necessary skills to keep them safe from the dangers of abuse, sexual exploitation and radicalisation
- Agreement of funding to support the completion of a time-limited piece of work with Staffordshire schools to scope what is currently being delivered around the PSHE curriculum, to ascertain the potential for introducing a stronger focus on risks among children and young people of possible exposure to/involvement in offending behaviour
- Commissioning of a review of YOS prevention/early intervention services. The PCC has commissioned Cordis Bright to undertake an independent review of YOS prevention services and to make recommendations for potential future delivery models. The review is due to report by the end of March.
- Agreement for the further development/expansion of the SPACE positive activities programme for young people, which has been successful in reducing incidents of ASB and low level crime during the school summer holidays, to cover additional age groups and school holiday periods
- Agreement of funding for a new prison family support worker post at HMP/YOI Brinsford to help maintain and improve Prisoners' Family Ties during custody

Diversion

Work under the Diversion theme is focused on the further development of diversionary approaches which allow low level offending (in appropriate circumstances and with the consent of victims) to be dealt with at an early stage and outside of the criminal justice system, in order to avoid unnecessary court proceedings and problems escalating. Since the last report to the Panel key developments have included:

- Introduction of a new multi-agency triage assessment process to improve collaboration and decision making between the YOS, Police and partner agencies when considering instances of minor offending and anti-social behaviour by young people to ensure consistent practice between agencies in identifying cases which might be suitable for an out of court disposal
- Establishment of a new Police-led strategic group with the aim of developing a cohesive approach to adult Out of Court Disposals, linked to appropriate interventions
- Agreement of a new multi-agency Looked After Children Protocol and Action Plan to guide joint action aimed at reducing the number of young people in care coming into contact with the criminal justice system.
- Establishment of a new multi-agency Strategic Board (the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Mental Health and Community Safety Strategic Board) to coordinate improvements in the operation of referral pathways between criminal justice and health agencies to improve the availability of diversionary services for those coming into contact with the criminal justice system with mental health needs and other vulnerabilities. The Board met for a second time in March to finalise terms of reference and to agree initial work areas.
- Work with NHS England and health partners to establish improved coverage of mental health Liaison and Diversion services in the county

Offender Management, Rehabilitation and Resettlement

Under the Offender Management, Rehabilitation and Resettlement theme further work has been undertaken with key criminal justice partners (the Police, YOS, MOJ, NPS and Staffordshire and West Midlands CRC) to develop and strengthen local offender management arrangements. Recent developments have included:

- Completion of a review of statutory YOS services. Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council have recently undertaken a review of statutory YOS services in each authority – led by the two YOS Managers – with a view to identifying scope for increased collaboration between the two YOSs and enhancing links between each YOS and local early help services. Phase 1 of the review has been completed and an interim report produced.
- Ongoing meetings with the NPS and CRC to improve the delivery of offender management services and to ensure that services are more effectively tailored to local needs. Following discussions between partners the CRC is in the process of recruiting additional management and front-line staff to increase local capacity and to improve the CRCs performance in key areas.
- Discussions with the MOJ and NPS regarding the co-commissioning of a new, bespoke community sentencing option for women offenders

In terms of resettlement, further work has been undertaken to improve offenders access to housing, employment and other key resettlement support services. Recent developments have included:

- Agreement between partners to maintain funding for the current co-commissioned county-wide housing support service for offenders into 2018/19.
- Establishment of a new Steering Group to improve offenders access to employment and training opportunities. On behalf of the group, the OPCC recently commissioned Grant Thornton to undertake a feasibility study to ascertain the viability of establishing a new social enterprise in Staffordshire with the aim of offering employment opportunities for offenders in the construction sector. The feasibility study has now been completed and the Steering Group is currently reviewing the results of the study and deciding next steps.
- Discussions with local authority commissioners regarding the future use of PCC funds allocated to support the delivery of local substance misuse treatment interventions, with the aim of ensuring that resources in future are targeted more directly on services and interventions that are proven to reduce offending and improve recovery outcomes.

5. Progress Against Outcomes

The specific, high-level outcomes that the strategy is seeking to achieve are:

- A reduction in first time entrants to the youth justice system
- A sustained reduction in youth and adult reoffending

The tracking of performance in relation to reoffending since the launch of the strategy has been difficult due to the delay involved in allowing for proven reoffending rates to be established. In terms of youth and adult reoffending (calculated as the number of offenders convicted of another criminal offence within one year of being released from prison or completing a community sentence), the main source of data on reoffending trends is currently the national Ministry of Justice reoffending data system. Under the system, a period of two years is required to elapse before 'proven' reoffending rates can be published, to allow for all cases to pass through the court system and for conviction data to be validated.

Reoffending data for cohorts of offenders having been released from custody or commencing orders in the year of publication of the Strategy is now becoming available however and based on the data available an initial assessment of the impact of the strategy on local offending and reoffending rates can be made.

Results indicate that since the launch of the Strategy (in October 2015) in both Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent there has been a reduction in first time entrants to the criminal justice system, and a measurable, albeit small, reduction in adult reoffending. Youth reoffending levels have remained fairly static with evidence of a recent rise in Stoke on Trent.

The above results should be viewed as interim results, but provide an indication of the impact of joint work undertaken across agencies in support of the delivery of the strategy, suggesting that work undertaken to date is broadly on track.

6. Strategy Refresh

With delivery of the strategy now into its final year, partners have recently undertaken a comprehensive refresh of the strategy.

Whilst it is felt that the objectives of the strategy, and the priority actions designed to achieve them, remain appropriate it is considered that in certain areas more needs to be done to ensure that the strategy remains relevant and on course to deliver against its key outcomes.

To enable more effective joint working across agencies, it has been agreed that going forward the strategic themes of the Framework should be reduced from 3 to 2 with actions and priorities being focused/grouped together under the following key themes:

- Prevention/Early Intervention
- Offender Management, Rehabilitation and Resettlement

To reflect this change, the existing Prevention and Diversion Delivery Groups are to be discontinued with the two Groups being replaced by a new, single Prevention/Early Intervention Group.

Under the Prevention/Early Intervention theme the content of the strategy has been strengthened to ensure closer alignment with local early help strategies and initiatives. A number of new actions have been added to explicitly link to the priorities of the strategy with early help plans and to enhance connections across the local early help system

Under the Offender Management, Rehabilitation and Resettlement theme, the strategy has been updated to include a stronger focus on initiatives to tackle youth reoffending, and on improving services for women offenders. Proposals have also been included for a review of IOM multi-agency offender management arrangements and new actions included with the aim of improving offenders access to housing, employment, mental health and substance misuse rehabilitation support services.

Finally, whilst the current Strategy was produced in collaboration with a range of different stakeholders, it is considered that more can be done to increase the extent to which it is collectively owned – particularly across third sector organisations and the community at large. To this end over the course of the next phase of delivery of the strategy it is proposed to further develop links with the voluntary sector to help build capacity to develop innovative approaches to reduce reoffending and to respond to new and emerging issues, building on learning and best practice nationally.

Further attention will be paid to communicating news of the work of the partnership to key audiences locally and nationally, to building links across sectors and to exploring opportunities for increased collaboration in the delivery of services to tackle and reduce offending.

Full details of changes are outlined in the refreshed plan, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 2.

7. Future Delivery Arrangements

With the above changes incorporated it is intended that the refreshed strategy will provide a basis for joint work to prevent and reduce youth and adult offending in the county for the next 2-3 years - to the end of 2020/21.

Delivery will continue to be coordinated via the OMCDB and its associated Delivery Groups with reports being made to the SSSB, Police and Crime Panel and other relevant partnership Boards on a quarterly basis to ensure effective oversight of progress on implementation.

All stakeholders engaged in partnership arrangements have pledged their continuing support in taking forward the next phase of delivery of the Framework to ensure that the good work already undertaken is consolidated and built upon and that the shared ambition to reduce reoffending and deliver safer communities across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent is realised.

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