

Cabinet
16 July 2015**5. WEST MERCIA YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2015/16**

Relevant Cabinet Member	Mr J P Campion
Relevant Officer	Director of Children's Services
Recommendation	1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families recommends to the Cabinet that the West Mercia Youth Justice Plan 2015/16 be endorsed for approval by Council.
Background Information	<p>2. Under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 each Local Authority has a duty to produce a Youth Justice Plan setting out how Youth Justice Services in their area are provided and funded and how the Youth Offending Service for the area is resourced and composed. The Plan is submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB).</p> <p>3. West Mercia Youth Offending Service (WMYOS) was established on 1 October 2012 following a review of how youth justice services were provided across the West Mercia region. The establishment of the service was part of a phased approach to commissioning the service by 2016. As part of the transition plan it was agreed Worcestershire County Council would act as the host for WMYOS from June 2014 on an interim basis.</p> <p>4. Work is continuing during 2015/16 to evaluate and agree the longer term hosting and delivery arrangements for WMYOS.</p>
Youth Justice Plan	<p>5. The Youth Justice Plan is prepared on an annual basis on behalf of Herefordshire Council, Shropshire Council, Telford and Wrekin Council and Worcestershire County Council. The basic plan preparation is undertaken by the West Mercia Youth Offending Service according to the deadlines and content requirements of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.</p> <p>6. The Youth Justice Plan for 2015/16 was prepared in May 2015 in line with the guidance issued by the YJB. The Plan was agreed at the West Mercia Youth Offending Service Management Board on 1st June 2015, subject to each Local Authority full Council approval. The Youth Justice Plan sets</p>

out how youth justice services across West Mercia are structured and identifies key actions to address identified risks to service delivery and service improvement. The Plan is available electronically only.

7. The Youth Offending Service is subject to three national indicators:

- First time entrants to the youth justice system
- Use of custody
- Re-offending

- **First time entrants to the youth justice system**

The first time entrant rate is expressed as first time entrants per 100,000 youth population, a lower figure indicates good performance. The Worcestershire performance was 369 for the year ending September 2014, compared to 535 for the year September 2013, a reduction of -31%. This performance is better than for West Mercia, which is 408 and for England where the rate is 417.

- **Use of Custody**

The use of custody measure is expressed as the number of custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population, a lower rate indicates good performance. In the year 2014/15 the custody rate for Worcestershire was 0.23, compared to the rate of 0.29 for 2013/14. This represents a reduction in the number of sentences from 15 to 12 between the two years. The rate is slightly higher than for West Mercia, 0.21 but significantly better than for England where the rate is 0.42.

- **Re-Offending**

There are two re-offending measures both measuring re-offending in the same cohort of offenders over a 12 month period following the youth justice sanction that placed the young person in the cohort. The first, the frequency rate, is the average number of re-offences per young person in the cohort. The second, the binary measure, is the percentage of the young people in the cohort who have re-offended. In both measures a lower figure indicates good performance.

For the year ending March 2013 the frequency rate for Worcestershire is 0.76 which is an improvement on the performance for the year ending March 2012 where it was 0.85. The rate is better than for West Mercia, 0.89 and for England, 1.08.

The binary rate for Worcestershire for the year ending March 2013 is 31.3% compared to 31.8% for the year ending March 2012. This is in line with the West Mercia performance, 31.3% and significantly better than for England, 36%.

8. At the end of April 2015, 23% of young people on the YOS case load in Worcestershire were looked after children (LAC). This is in line with West Mercia where the proportion of LAC on the whole West Mercia YOS case load was also 23%. Only one area across West Mercia had a lower proportion of LAC on the YOS case load. There is no national comparative data available. The YOS Management Board has established a LAC Sub-Group of the Board. The group is currently engaged in scoping work, to encourage children homes across West Mercia to adopt restorative approaches to behaviour management, undertaking case audits to inform future work streams and, jointly, with the Police Service Children and Young People's Strategy Board developing a protocol to reduce offending by and criminalisation of LAC.

9. Performance is overseen by the West Mercia YOS Management Board and any issues reported through to the Children's Services performance board, chaired by the lead member for children's services.

10. The principal aim of the Youth Justice System is the prevention of offending and re-offending by children and young people. The Youth Justice Plan sets out an action plan to address the significant risks identified to future delivery to improve service delivery against the agreed priorities for 2015/16.

11. These are covered by the existing budgetary contribution

- West Mercia Youth Justice Plan 2015/16 (available electronically. A hard copy will be made available in reception and in the Members' area at County Hall.)

Financial Implications

Supporting Information

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

Worcester (01905) 763763, Kidderminster (01562) 822511 or Minicom: Worcester (01905) 766399

Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children's Services) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.