

# COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

## REPORT

**Subject:** Youth Offending Service Update

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### 1. Improvement Journey

- 1.1 The Barking and Dagenham Youth Offending Service has been through an improvement journey over the last 18 months after concerns were raised by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) in July 2015.
  - 1.2 The service has been through three audits by the YJB in July 2015, Jan 2016 and October 2016 to measure progress against the improvement targets set by the service. Over the three audits performance has improved, however there are still further improvements to make and these have been highlighted and responded to.
  - 1.3 In addition to the audits conducted by the YJB the service has also received a short quality screening (SQS) visit from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in April 2016. This also highlighted a number of areas for improvement for the service which have been integrated in to the Annual Youth Justice Plan.
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### 2. Changes

- 2.1 As part of the improvements needed to ensure that the service functioned adequately a full restructure of the service was undertaken.
- 2.2 The Youth Offending Service structure previously had three principal practitioner posts that were responsible for the supervision and oversight of case managers within the service.
- 2.3 One of the issues identified in the improvement work was that the principals did not maintain quality or standards and there was a disconnect between the principal

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level and operational manager level. This level between the operational manager level and case managers has not enabled clear and consistent direction for staff.

- 2.4 Therefore, it was proposed that the principal practitioner posts within the YOS were deleted.
- 2.5 Within the new structure the three operational managers have taken on the oversight, supervision and daily monitoring of the case managers and quality assurance to ensure that the work is of the expected standard.
- 2.6 Previously the YOS had been managed by a Group Manager who has covered a wider set of services within Community Safety. To maintain high standards and continue to lead the service the YOS needed a Service Manager who has a strong track record in youth justice work and can focus on this area and the work needed to ensure this service maintains quality and is able to manage change effectively.
- 2.7 Performance plays a key role in the YOS being able to effectively understand, analyse and develop its service accordingly. It has been difficult for the service to effectively collect the data needed and unable to interrogate the system appropriately to support quality assurance processes or inform service development on an ongoing basis. Therefore, within the new structure sits a performance officer to complete this task.
- 2.8 The YOS has been successful in the recruitment and training of 30 new volunteers this year and are starting to develop ways in which these volunteers can be utilised in a much wider capacity than previously. The consistent recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers needs, oversight and support to effectively ensure that the volunteers continue to remain with the service and are utilised to their full capacity. Therefore, a part time volunteer co-ordinator has been recruited to manage, train and support the volunteers on an ongoing basis.
- 2.9 Under the victim's code of practice, victims of crime should be engaged and supported to deal with the effects of crime. A victim worker has now been recruited to complete this work.
- 2.10 All staff have been involved in this restructure and appropriate consultation with the staff and unions has informed this process in line with council policies.

### **3. Next Steps**

- 3.1 The recruitment is now completed and those staff recruited have just started within the service or are due to begin within the next month.
- 3.2 It is anticipated that the Youth Offending Service will move across to sit within Children's Social Care within the next six months.
- 3.3 The oversight of the YOS manager will move from the Director of Public Health to the Director of Operations Children's Care and Support.
- 3.4 Prior to this move the staff will be consulted regarding the anticipated changes.

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