

LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD

17th MARCH 2023

LSCSB UPDATE: YOUTH JUSTICE, LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Background

1. The purpose of this report is to appraise members of the Board of relevant Youth Justice updates. This relates to those children who are engaged with the Service through a voluntary prevention offer or through statutory work directed by the Out of Court Disposal Panel or through Court.
2. Leicestershire County Council is commissioned to deliver prevention and statutory youth justice work on behalf of Rutland County Council.

Developments

3. **Performance** against the national indicators of first time entrants into youth justice, re-offending and the use of custody all remained low in comparison to comparison youth justice teams, regional and national data. This highlights the strength of collaboration with the Police, particularly around the opportunity to divert children away from Court and for interventions to be offered at the earliest opportunity. The partnership is always developing this offer.
4. **Restorative Justice** - Victim voice and that of children who have committed offences and their parents and carers is now routinely gained prior to children being discussed at an out of court disposal panel. This has enabled victims to understand what is happening in relation to the offences that have been committed against them and also for their voice to be at the panel where they are represented by the Restorative Justice Co-ordinator. They will also be contacted following the panel so the outcome can be fully explained to them and any signposting for support is made. In relation to children and their families, the voice work captured pre-panel has enabled an improved understanding of what is happening in the child's life since they were arrested, to explore their views on the victims of their offending and make an overall assessment of risk of harm to other, the likelihood of re-offending and their safety and wellbeing. The Service is proud of these developments and the commitment to diverting children away from Court, where possible.
5. **Child First Practice** – The principle of Child-First practice is to promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop a pro-social identity, focusing on positive child outcomes rather than just trying to manage

offending. This practice is focused on under 18 year-olds being seen as children and through a lens of trauma and neurodiversity. There is a risk of services adultifying 16–18-year-olds and losing the lens of them being children. This is a theme particularly for Black, Asian and multi-ethnic boys. It is a difficult balance to deliver on child-first practice when managing the risks that are posed in the community.

Key issues for partnership working or affecting partners

6. **New Youth Justice Board Key Performance Indicators (KPI)** – The Youth Justice Board have issued 10 new performance indicators that a Youth Justice Service will need to commence reporting on from 1st April 2023. The KPI's concern access to mental health support, substance misuse, appropriate housing, education training and employment, contact with victims, data on out of court disposals etc. The data from the new KPI's will be shared with and overseen by the Youth and Justice Management Board providing those Board Members with the information that they need to ensure that children within the Service have fair access to appropriate services. The Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board will continue to receive the usual data around national indicators for the purposes of performance reporting.
7. **Serious Violence Duty (SVD)** – Planning for the new SVD is underway and Youth Justice Teams have a duty to provide a response, as does the Local Authority. This is being undertaken with the Violence Reduction Network and Leicester City Children and Young Peoples Justice Service. A self-assessment is being undertaken against the requirements of the duty and then any required actions will be managed within a Service Plan.
8. **Youth Justice Plan** - The Youth Justice Plan 2023-2026 has been produced and is being consulted on by stakeholders at the Youth and Justice Management Board until 10th March 2023. A final draft will then be published prior to it being presented to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 12th April 2023 and the County Council meeting on 25th April 2023. Following this, the final report will be available on the County Council website and will be updated annually in terms of actions and progress.
9. **Child Exploitation** - This continues to be a significant challenge for the Service and the wider partnership including Leicestershire Police and Children's Social care and is impacting across communities. Whilst the number of first-time entrants has remained low, there has been an increase in offences of violence against the person and this is of concern. There is a multi-agency partnership framework in place to address this across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland that has both operational and strategic meetings focused on support and disruption.
10. **Disproportionality** – This is a focus for youth justice and concerns the over-representation of groups of children within Criminal Justice. The Youth Justice

Board (YJB) prepares a Summary Ethnic Disparity Tool on yearly basis that provides over-arching data across the Local Authorities, Police and Crime Commissioner areas, England and Wales. The focus of this work will be managed across the partnership within the Youth and Justice Management Board. Work within the Service is focused on race inclusion, with a particular spotlight on Black and mixed-heritage boys and also with girls involved in youth justice.

Recommendations for the Board

11. It is recommended that the Board notes the content of the report.

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