

Youth justice strategic plan

Surrey youth justice partnership

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Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the youth justice strategic plan for 2013/14. Youth justice is an area of public service which has been transformed in Surrey over the last five years and should be a source of pride for our residents and the professionals delivering these services. Surrey is at the forefront of best practice and achieving what the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales describe as 'exceptional performance'. 7,500 young people are entering adulthood in Surrey without a criminal record as a result of the changes delivered by the youth justice partnership, victims of crime are provided with better services which deliver a high level of satisfaction, and public money is being saved by successfully preventing youth crime.

A review of the partnership's performance for the past 12 months reveals impressive results. The county's courts continue to make exceptionally low use of custody making Surrey the fifth lowest user of this sentencing option in England, reflecting the continuing confidence that courts have in the partnership arrangements for managing young offenders in the community. At the same time we have seen exceptional reductions in the number of first time entrants to the formal youth justice system, making Surrey the authority in England and Wales which is least likely to see its young people receive a criminal record. This is the product of an innovative approach developed in collaboration with Surrey Police that introduces a restorative response to low level offending, and puts victims at the heart of a process that can see the harm caused by offending behaviour put right without recourse to the courts. The youth restorative intervention has contributed to a very significant reduction in first time entrants, retains the confidence of victims, saves tax payers' money and above all prevents young peoples' lives being unnecessarily blighted by the burden of a criminal record which may restrict opportunities throughout their adult lives.

During 2012 the Surrey youth justice arrangements were inspected by Her Majesty's Inspector of Probation using their 'short quality screening' format. This is a one week visit by a team of five inspectors that examined 34 cases across the full range of our work in courts, from entry level referral order sentences up to complex supervisory orders and a small number of young people sentenced to custody. Overall the results from this inspection were very pleasing with inspectors commenting positively on the improved scope that the new integrated service offers to improve the lives of vulnerable young people.

The year ahead will undoubtedly present further challenges. However I remain optimistic that with the support of our partners our youth justice partnership will continue to flourish within our newly configured Youth Support Service.

Nick Wilson

Chairman of Youth Justice Partnership Board and Director of Children's Services at Surrey County Council

Introduction

A comprehensive two year review of services for young people in Surrey was completed in January 2012. Existing services of Connexions, Youth Development Service and Youth Justice Service were integrated from 1 January 2012 within a new Youth Support Service (YSS) which was established to deliver improved outcomes for young people supporting two strategic aims – to increase participation in education, training and employment; and to reduce offending and re-offending. The new service offers an integrated case work approach to vulnerable young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or who are at risk of being NEET and to those involved in the youth justice system or who are at risk of becoming involved. The service draws on the skills of youth justice practitioners, youth workers and Connexions personal advisers and delivers support to young people through 11 local borough or district based teams within Surrey. The functions of the youth offending team (formerly the Youth Justice Service) are undertaken by practitioners and managers within the YSS. The deputy Head of Service role is designated as Surrey's youth offending team manager, carrying the service's strategic responsibility for youth justice.

The service is now into its second year of operation. The first year being very much one of transition with staff and managers adapting to the new opportunities afforded by the new working arrangements. Despite major organisational upheaval, headline youth justice performance continues to be very strongly evidenced by exceptionally low numbers remanded and sentenced to custody, further reductions in first time entrants and a continuing downward trend in re-offending. A 'short quality screening' inspection carried out by HMIP in December of 2012 found overall that staff in the Surrey Youth Support Service were delivering work of high quality and evidence of good multi-agency liaison and shared working, particularly in undertaking offending behaviour and victim work. Safeguarding and public protection work was considered 'good' but attention to improvements in relation to these areas of practice is ongoing to ensure these services are excellent.

The new service also continues to develop the radical changes brought about by the 2011 introduction in partnership with Surrey Police of the youth restorative intervention (YRI). The YRI provides a further step between arrest and the courtroom door and offers offenders and victims opportunity for fast and informal resolution of the harm caused by offending. As a consequence, the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system has fallen by 80% in the last two years. For the first time we are able to shift resource from processing relatively large numbers of offenders through the court system to working with those at risk of offending – intervening earlier to prevent problems escalating.

Surrey continues to be a very low user of custody with just nine young people sentenced to custody in the last twelve months continuing a downward trend established over several years. Secure remands (to both secure units and prison custody) are also low with a total of 431 nights of such accommodation used last year. The Surrey system is therefore well positioned to take on the transfer of financial responsibility for young people remanded to youth detention accommodation following the implementation of the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act from April 2013.

The challenge ahead is to balance the architecture of the new service – offering an integrated one stop service locally delivered in 11 borough hubs – while maintaining the skills of key practitioners in the context of reducing demand for youth justice services.

Strategy

Our youth justice strategy is to embed restorative youth justice within an integrated approach to young people's needs, which ensures their successful transition to a productive, law-abiding adulthood. Surrey has strategically sited its youth offending services within a Youth Support Service which has the mission of full participation for all Surrey's young people. We know that those at greatest risk of offending are the least likely to be positively participating in the life of their communities; they are more likely to be out of education or employment, they are often marginalised from services and opportunities. By placing our youth offending services at the heart of an integrated approach to meeting the needs of a range of vulnerable young people we give ourselves the best opportunity of bringing them back into the heart of their communities and equipping them with the skills to become contributing adults. So far this integrated and restorative approach to meeting young people's needs has delivered outstanding results in youth justice arena.

To deliver the strategy we will:

- use restorative approaches to prevent offending, address offending effectively, improve victim satisfaction, raise public confidence and where appropriate to divert young people from the criminal justice system
- concentrate proportionately more resource on the smaller number of young people with more complex and higher risk issues where intensive support will reduce the risk of further offending and protect the public with particular attention to transitions to adult services for those with enduring needs
- maintain low use of sentence and remand custody by providing credible bail support and community sentence options
- deliver outstanding services to safeguard children and young people and ensure the protection of the public
- continue to focus on reducing the over-representation of looked after children in the youth justice system
- tackle four major risk factors in offending behaviour by supporting and enabling young people at risk of offending or re-offending to:
 - participate in purposeful activity including education, training and employment
 - live at home or find appropriate supportive alternative housing
 - lead lives free of dependency on drugs or alcohol
 - overcome the difficulties of emotional and mental health problems.

Outcomes for 2012/13

Youth justice is now part of the integrated Youth Support Service. Surrey's youth justice outcomes continue to be some of the best in the country as reflected by the three Youth Justice Board national performance indicators:

1. Use of custody rate per 1,000 of 10-17 population

	Custody rate			Surrey's ranking	
	Surrey	South East	England	against South East	against England
April 2012 to March 2013	0.08	0.28	0.55	3 of 19	5 of 142
Change from April 2010 to March 2011 baseline	-0.13	-0.16	-0.35		

Nine young people received a custodial sentence in 2012/13. This is the lowest per capita use of custody in England for any sizeable authority and represents a 73% reduction in the use of custody for children and young people in Surrey over the last five years.

2. First time entrants rate per 100,000 of 10-17 population

	First time entrant rate			Surrey's ranking	
	Surrey	South East	England	against South East	against England
January 2012 to December 2012	151	459	537	1 of 19	1 of 142
Percentage change compared to 2007/08 baseline	-90%	-74%	-71%		

Surrey has achieved a 90% reduction in first time entrants (FTE) to the youth justice system in the year 2012/13 compared to the 2007/08 baseline. Surrey has the lowest FTE per capita in England.

3. Re-offending of 10-17 population

	Re-offenders			Surrey's ranking	
	Surrey	South East	England	against South East	against England
July 2010 to June 2011 (offending in subsequent 12 months)	33.6%	33.9%	36%	9 of 19	43 of 142
Percentage change compared to July 2008 to June 2009 baseline	+1.4%	+2.4%	+3.5%		

The most recent Ministry of Justice figures (Jan 2013) for Surrey indicate a 32.7% re-offending rate for young people in Surrey. This figure only reflects offending by the 10% of young people remaining in the formal justice system, not those receiving youth restorative interventions (YRIs). The published re-offending figure represents a small upturn in re-offending which is attributable to the effect of reducing the overall number of young people convicted – those remaining in the system are a higher risk group who are more likely to re-offend. Re-offending rates for those receiving a YRI indicate a 26% reduction in re-offending compared with formal criminal justice sanctions (caution and prosecution) and overall offending and re-offending by young people in Surrey is reducing.

The driving force behind the improvement in youth justice outcomes has been the implementation of a restorative justice strategy across the partnership. Central to this has been the development of co-located youth integrated offender management unit staffed by police and Youth Support Service personnel, which has oversight of the vast majority of youth offences in the county. The development of the YRI as an alternative to formal criminal justice disposal has been the mechanism which has underpinned improved youth justice outcomes in Surrey. This has not only delivered much of the reductions in first time entrants, it has meant that victims are now routinely participating in the resolution of youth offences and are reporting increased satisfaction in the youth justice process as a result. In total the reduction in first time entrants in the last five years has meant there are more than 7,500 young people beginning adulthood without the burden of a criminal record.

The YRI has also been critical to the success of Surrey's reducing looked after children's offending strategy which has halved the number of looked after children offending. Particular success has been achieved in preventing Surrey's looked after children entering the criminal justice system for the first time (getting a criminal record) with no Surrey resident looked after child being a 'first time entrant' in 2011 or 2012. Surrey is leading work across the south-east region in order to ensure wherever our looked after children are placed they get the protection they require from offending and being drawn into the criminal justice system.

The focus of the Youth Support Service on increasing participation, preventing homelessness, developing more effective responses to emotional and mental health problems, and delivering improved services to support families, further supports the drive to reduce reoffending. This in turn will promote a further reduction in both remands and custodial sentences. The implementation of restorative approaches within the youth justice system enables Surrey to redirect resources from reacting to re-offending through court ordered interventions, to working with young people to reduce the risk factors that lead to offending behaviour as part of a broader strategy to remove barriers to participation in education, training and employment.

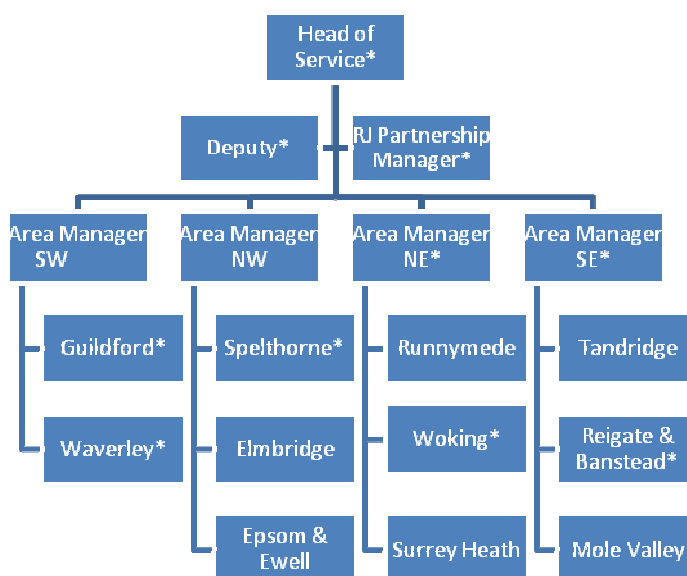
Resourcing and value for money

Outcome: efficient deployment of resources to deliver effective youth justice services to prevent offending and reoffending.

The youth justice strategic plan should provide an overview of how the youth offending team management board and wider partnership will ensure that the youth offending team has sufficient resources and infrastructure that are appropriately deployed to deliver youth justice services in its area in line with the requirements of the National Standards for Youth Justice Services.

Youth justice services are delivered in Surrey by the integrated Youth Support Service (YSS). This new service delivers youth justice services alongside a range of other support for vulnerable young people through eleven borough teams grouped within four operational areas of the county. The diagram below shows how the service is organised in terms of our capacity to support and deliver youth justice services with those managers marked (*) having significant youth justice experience. Other managers within the service bring complementary skills in youth work and careers guidance. Each of the eleven borough teams includes an appropriate complement of practitioners with youth justice skills and experience. We have three court locations at Guildford, Staines (in Spelthorne) and Redhill (in Reigate & Banstead).

Simplified organisation chart showing management posts with youth justice expertise:



Bail and remand

An out of hours rota operates to provide cover for Surrey courts sitting on Saturdays and bank holidays. This enables the service to respond to unscheduled remand hearings and ensures that where possible young people are not remanded to youth detention accommodation (remand to prison custody or remand to secure facilities). The service has responsibility for youth homelessness prevention and is the single point of referral for all young people aged 16-18 presenting as homeless. The service commissions a range of supported accommodation options to meet the needs of young people combined with a strategy to enable young people to return home wherever it is safe and

feasible to do so. The availability of these resources enhances the service's capacity to meet the needs of young people who are at risk of being denied bail and help position the service to respond to the opportunity of the transfer of financial responsibility for young people remanded to youth detention accommodation following the implementation of the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act from April 2013.

Youth restorative intervention (YRI)

The YRI is a joint initiative with Surrey Police and extends the range of pre-court diversionary options and is generally (but not exclusively) deployed prior to either the youth caution or youth conditional caution. It offers offenders and victims the opportunity for timely and informal resolution of the harm caused by offending. As a consequence, the number of first time entrants (FTE) to the youth justice system fell by 59% in the year 2011/12 (564 in 2010/11 falling to 230 in 2011/12) and falling by a further 35% (to 149) in 2012/13.

Internal evaluation of the first year of the YRI's operation provides evidence of improved victim satisfaction, a 26% reduction in re-offending and value for money calculated at a speculative £4.2million lifetime saving to the Surrey tax payer since the YRI began. Furthermore, the 52% reduction in the overall number of 'youth disposals' in the last four years strongly supports a case for the YRI to continue to contribute to crime reduction and community safety. A more detailed external evaluation of the YRI has been commissioned to better understand the social and financial impact of the YRI.

YRI quality control and assurance includes quarterly reporting to the integrated offender management board; quarterly victim satisfaction survey; six monthly surveys of young people receiving YRIs; and a scrutiny panel that sits four times a year involving 'deep-dive' scrutiny of YRI casework. Membership of the scrutiny panel includes youth court chairs (magistrates), community panel members, Crown Prosecution Service, HM Court Service, and the assistant police and crime commissioner for victims.

Referral orders

As with overall numbers of young people brought before the courts the number of referral orders has also been reducing. This is not least as a consequence of the introduction of the YRI described above. Furthermore, the introduction of the YRI and the associated lengthening of the road to the court door has meant a change in the profile of young people now made subject to referral orders. These young people are more likely than before to have complex needs and vulnerabilities, are more likely to have committed more serious offences, are less likely to have made full admissions at the outset and more likely to be subject to a referral order made for a longer duration.

Furthermore the YSS is mindful of the YJB review of 'panel matters' training for community panel members (and restorative justice facilitator training for youth offending team staff), and new legislation introduced during 2012 that removes the previous restrictions on the availability of the referral order in the youth court and implications for referral order practice brought about by our own service transformation.

For these reasons a short-life referral order review group has produced a review report with 39 recommendations for referral order practice improvement. This review report is currently subject to consultation with an anticipated timetable for implementing service improvements from January 2014.

The focus for change will be the accessibility of the referral order for victims of crime and to address the involvement and confidence of the local magistracy in the referral order practice.

Youth rehabilitation order

The youth rehabilitation order (YRO) is a generic community sentence for young offenders and combines a number of sentences into one generic sentence. It is the standard community sentence used for the majority of children and young people who offend. It simplifies sentencing for young people, while improving the flexibility of interventions. The YRO represents a more individualised risk and needs-based approach to community sentencing, enabling greater choice from a 'menu' of requirements which include supervision (regular meetings with a supervising officer), groupwork, community reparation and unpaid work, curfew and intensive supervision and surveillance (see below). Within Surrey the YRO is used by courts to provide a bespoke supervisory community based programme for young people with an emerging pattern of criminality. The intensive supervision and support requirement is reserved for young people who present an elevated risk to the community and for whom courts are considering a custodial sentence.

Intensive supervision and support (ISS)

ISS is delivered through our eleven borough teams which have access to a wide range of resources to support alternative to custody programmes. These include the group work programmes run in partnership with two local prisons ('Can do' at HMP Coldingly and for females only, 'New leaf' at HMP Send); the community reparation scheme and the Ready for Work programme (R4W) and access to an extensive outdoor learning and development programme. Together these resources can form the bulk of the ISS programme requirement. The number of ISS requirements in the last twelve months was exceptionally low at five orders (with low custody numbers also).

Custody

During 2012/13 nine young people received a custodial sentence. There are two custodial sentencing options for courts, the detention and training order which offers sentences of up to 24 months (we had eight such DTOs in 2012); and longer section 90 and 91 sentences available to the Crown Court, for more serious crimes (we had one section 91 order in 2012). The number of custodial sentences in Surrey is the lowest per capita use of custody in England for any sizeable authority and represents a 73% reduction in the use of custody for children and young people in Surrey over the last five years.

Priority young persons

The priority young person (PYP) scheme was introduced in Surrey in May 2012, as an evolution and improvement to our previous deter young offender (DYO) arrangements. It involves case managing Surrey YSS's most prolifically offending young people in partnership with police colleagues located within the youth integrated offender management (IOM) unit. The focus of this joint approach is on identifying these young people at the earliest opportunity and engaging them in restorative approaches wherever possible, in order to change behaviour. Early indications are that this scheme is supporting those young people identified to reduce their overall level and frequency of offending, in comparison to before the scheme was launched. The scheme and partnership approach will continue to be embedded over the coming year and its effectiveness will also continue to be monitored. A key measure of this will be the impact of the scheme on re-offending rates amongst our PYPs over a 12-month period.

Resources for 2013/14 - contributions from partners:

Partner	Cash contribution	Value of seconded posts	Total
Police	0	88,000	88,000¹
Probation	0	132,000	132,000
Health	183,000	88,000	271,000
YJB	839,000	0	839,000
PCC	54,495	0	54,495
SCC	2,618,505²	0	2,618,505
TOTAL	3,695,000	308,000	4,003,000

¹Police contribution: The cash figure quoted understates the value of the Surrey Police commitment to the youth integrated offender management unit supporting co-located joint decision making and joint delivery of the youth restorative intervention the full costs of which are not fully reflected here.

²Surrey County Council: Estimate based on 2011/12 historical budget for youth justice service.

Structure and governance

Outcome: Integrated strategic planning and working with clear performance oversight to ensure effective delivery of youth justice services.

Youth justice partnership board

The youth justice partnership board has a clear focus on the principal aim of reducing offending and re-offending and maintains strategic oversight of performance of the youth justice system. The membership of the board provides senior representation from key partners to ensure that young people involved in the youth justice system have access to universal and specialist services delivered by partners and other key agencies in particular in support of the local authority's responsibilities under the Children Act 1989 and Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to:

- discourage children and young people within their area from committing offences
- take reasonable steps designed to reduce the need to bring criminal proceedings against children and young people in their area
- avoid the need for children within their area to be placed in secure accommodation.

The partnership board priorities for young people in the youth justice system in 2013/14 are:

1. improving participation rates
2. ending the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds
3. improving emotional and mental health of young people
4. reducing offending and re-offending with a focus on the most persistent and prolific
5. reducing an preventing offending by looked after children and young people
6. address the findings of the 'short quality screening' by HMIP in relation to safeguarding and public protection on non PSR cases
7. ensure that the risks presented by young people aged 18+ (the point of transition) are effectively managed by strong partnership work between the Youth Support Service and the Surrey & Sussex Probation Trust using seconded transitions probation officers.

Board membership

Name	Post	Agency
Chairman: Nick Wilson	Director of Children's Services	Surrey County Council
Mary Angell	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Surrey County Council
Garath Symonds	Assistant Director for Young People	Surrey County Council
Frank Offer	Head of Commissioning	Surrey County Council
Ben Byrne	Head of Youth Support Service	Surrey County Council
Gordon Falconer	Community Safety Unit Senior Manager	Surrey County Council
Norman Fullarton	Area Head, Surrey Children's Service	Surrey County Council
Toby Wells	Deputy Head, Youth Support Service	Surrey County Council
Gavin Stephens	Assistant Chief Constable	Surrey Police
Lin Pedrick	Surrey Local Delivery Unit Director	Surrey & Sussex Probation Trust
Geoff Harris	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner	Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

Meg Webb	Magistrate	SW Surrey Bench
Douglas Spinks	Deputy Chief Executive	Woking Borough Council
Vicky Stobbart	Associate Director Children & Families	Guildford & Waverley CCG
Julie Cook	Chief Housing Officer	Elmbridge Borough Council

Partnership arrangements

Outcome: Effective partnership arrangements are in place between youth offending team (YOT) statutory partners and other local partners that have a stake in delivering local youth justice services, and these arrangements generate effective outcomes for children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending.

The youth justice arrangements in Surrey are fully integrated within the new Youth Support Service which is involved in a range of partnership opportunities through formal and informal arrangements as follows:

Partnership	Benefits to the YOT/YSS
CAMHS Strategy Board	Opportunity to influence priorities and planning for CAMHS related services including maintaining commitment to existing resources (2 x band 7 health post) and access to universal and specialist mental health resources.
Criminal Justice Board	Board membership provides significant access to key decision makers and opportunities for influence on youth related matters.
Corporate Parenting Group	YSS representation on the corporate parenting groups ensures that we can promote strategies to reduce looked after children's involvement in the criminal justice system.
Youth Justice Advisory Committee	Quarterly meeting with the Resident Judge, Youth Panel Chairmen, legal advisers and CPS prosecutors which builds and maintains the confidence of sentencers in the Surrey youth justice offer.
Integrated Offender Management Unit (Youth)	Effective integrated working between YSS staff and Police Officers to administer and support the delivery of the Youth Restorative Intervention to both victims and offenders.
YRI Quality Assurance Panel	'Deep-dive' scrutiny of YRI casework. (Membership of the YRI QA Panel includes panel chairs (magistrates), community panel members, CPS, HM Court Service, and an independent 'Victims Champion').
DAAT Executive and DAAT Commissioning Group	Board membership provides opportunities to influence priorities and shape provision for young people.
Community & Public Safety Board	Range of community safety responsibilities, linkages to 11 Community Safety Partnerships. Opportunities for YSS to influence priorities and resource allocation.
Safeguarding Children's Board	Promote an appropriate focus on vulnerable teenagers including runaways and child exploitation as well as involvement in serious case reviews and quality assurance of safeguarding and public protect reports to the YJB.
14-19 Partnership Board	Increasing participation for vulnerable learners with

	opportunities for the YSS to shape and influence the 14-19 agenda.
Children's and Young People's Partnership Board (Surrey's Children's Trust)	An overarching group that promotes the well-being and achievement of Surrey's young people (3 board members also sit on the Children's Alliance board).
MAPPA Strategic Management Board	Ensures effective management of a very small number of high risk offenders (including some young people) who pose a risk to the public.
Health & Well-being Board	We anticipate that this board will be critical to developing the health and well-being of young people, especially those in more marginalised groups.

Risks to future delivery

Outcome: The youth offending team has the capacity and capability to deliver effective youth justice services.

Risk	Action
The routing of a portion of YJB/MoJ funding through the police and crime commissioner could lead to a reduction in grant funding as youth justice may have to compete with other priorities for a smaller pool of community safety grant. This impacts on MoJ funding that in 2012/13 was around £110k.	The service will work with the police and crime commissioner to identify where service goals coincide with those of the PCC.
Difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified/experienced staff in a high cost area close to London where higher salaries are on offer.	Promote the benefits of an integrated service, offering wider scope for professional development and a work environment that offers a joined up approach to supporting vulnerable young people, including those involved in youth justice.
Proposed probation service reforms may require the partnership to work with a number of providers with the risk that the transitions work will become marginalised or fall victim to financial cuts.	Promote the profile of the transitions work within the partnership especially the benefits of effective management of the risks presented by complex cases moving from the youth to adult system.
Inspection – will the YSS be sufficiently in tune with the expectations of the inspectorate in view of strong emphasis (and considerable success) on pre-court diversion.	Maintain inspection preparedness with reference to inspection framework published by YJB/Ofsted.
Loss of focus on youth justice skills and focus within integrated service.	Support opportunities for practitioners and managers to maintain and develop youth justice skills. Lead responsibilities for youth justice identified within senior management portfolio.

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