

**Children, Young People & Skills Scrutiny Review Board
05 February 2024**

Present: Councillor Lonsdale (Chair)
Councillors Trehwella (Vice Chair), Cllrs Amin, Fowke, Kozlowski
and Wright

In Attendance: Ven. Matthew Trick, Co-opted Member Church of England
Tracey Churchill, Co-opted Member Catholic Diocesan Rep
Tracy Harrison, CEO Safe & Sound
Andrew Kaiser, Head of Specialist Services
Harman Kaur, Deputy Youth Mayor
Suanne Lim, Director Early Help and Children's Social Care
Muhammad Muntasir, Youth Mayor

31/23 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies from Cllr Pattison and Andy Smith, Strategic Director of Peoples Services

32/23 Late items introduced by the Chair.

There were none.

33/23 Declarations of Interest

The Ven. Matthew Trick declared he was a Director of Derbyshire YMCA.

34/23 Minutes of the Meeting on 11.12.23

The minutes of the meeting on 11.12.23 were agreed.

35/23 Youth Alliance Annual Evaluation 2022-23

The Board considered a report from the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care which provided an update on the Youth Alliance Annual Evaluation 2022-23.

The Derby Youth Alliance (DYA) was created by Derby's Stronger Communities Board. Members work together to reduce risk and improve wellbeing and services for young people in a collaborative and constructive way.

The focus of the DYA was around the needs of vulnerable and challenged young people and deprived communities. During 2022-23 funding came through grants from Derby Homes, Derby City Council and Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing. A Mentoring Project was part-funded through DYA partners. The DYA prioritised tackling issues affecting young people including abuse and exploitation, alcohol, and drug use amongst others.

An overview of DYA referrals was provided. The referrals come from Derby City Council, Primary and Secondary Schools and Derby Homes. There were 113 referrals, these were broken down into postcode, ethnicity, age, Special Educational Needs, and gender.

The officer described some DYA partner led projects:

Future Leaders Project Survey- participants of this programme prepared questions for Derby's young people, the aim was to make a better connection between Derbion Shopping Centre and disruptive youth. Results showed a need for a range of affordable and safe youth activities to be provided in the city. Young people felt they had nowhere to go, nothing to do and a lack of funding to access opportunities.

Elite Programme – The DYA were asked by an Academy school for help to support seven year 6 pupils who were hard to engage with. The school wanted provision of targeted intervention and wraparound support for the pupils during the summer term, school holidays and the lead up to moving to secondary school. Classroom and physical activities were provided for the pupils, day trips and outings took place during the summer break. The feedback was positive, and it was planned to further promote the programme.

Derbion – Concern about the shopping centre and the surrounding area had been raised. The DYA were asked to engage with young people during the 6-week summer period and advise on improving the current situation. Issues such as anti-social behaviour from young people aged between 11-16 years, damage to car parks, drug use, and the issues were spreading to the bus station and river gardens.

Other Partner Led Projects included the Schools Development Support Agency which was to support vulnerable pupils at risk of becoming not in education or training post 16. There were also Inspire and Innovate Projects which provided activity sessions and mentoring for younger people, with 9 groups being funded in 2022-23.

Children and Young People's Network (CYPN), meetings are held bi-monthly for strategic partners and the wider network of professional who work with children and young people. There are 80 organisations represented.

The Board thanked the officer for the report, and the impressive range of activities available were noted. Some possible improvements to representation of young people in the Annual Report were suggested. The officer thanked the Board for their comments some of which could be incorporated into next year's report.

The Board asked about engagement of young people (YP). They asked the officer to describe the work the DYA does to hear from children who are reluctant to provide feedback. The officer explained that the DYA work with children who were not in the mainstream areas. Surveys are circulated to all the organisations that are a part of the Youth Alliance, QR codes are also used. Schools and specific groups are contacted and asked for their views on how to do things better. One of the DYA partner organisations had undertaken surveys with young people as a part of workshop sessions.

The officer highlighted that life for young people today was hard, there are a lot of challenges such as deprivation, poverty, poor life expectancy. Families are doing the best they can for children in the circumstances. The Board were informed that several large local companies in the city were involved with and supported the programmes, projects and activities run by Youth Alliance.

The Board asked how help was allocated to YP. The officer explained that the referrer was asked to complete forms, giving information about hobbies and other areas indicating what they are interested/not interested in. Each application was individually dealt with and organisations which were best placed to support the young person were allocated. Community Action receive all referrals and they check with the information with the referring organisation. The officer agreed to provide information on where the referrals were signposted to, for example how many were sent to Safe and Sound.

The Board asked if DYA were pro-actively searching for YP to join activities or if YP could access their base from the street. They learnt that the DYA were pro-active about projects for YP, but not for individual referrals as there were already too many. There were not many off-the-street referrals, so far, they had only 2 self-referrals from YP. There was a website in place now, and this was being publicised. However, there was still work to do on communications, and it was suggested a Social Media aspect could be managed by YP. The Board heard that the Safe and Sound were currently progressing a city-based location for the service which will open access opportunities for YP.

The Board asked what information was available for YP who currently don't present to the DYA. The Board suggested that signposting was not in place and early intervention for children was needed. The current position of provision in the city was needed to identify any gaps, and they asked what was being done in terms of mapping activities. The officer clarified that work had begun on this by the DYA, once it had been completed it would be brought to other agencies for input. The board agreed to look to planning a workshop for statutory and voluntary organisations to collectively look for any gaps.

The Board sought clarification on funding arrangements for the YA now and in the long term. It was explained that the position was on a year-by-year basis.

The Board resolved:

- 1. To note the Report**
- 2. That Cabinet support the Youth Alliance with their mapping exercise and potential future workshops across agencies within the Council and beyond.**
- 3. That the Youth Alliance Annual Evaluation 2022-23 be circulated to all Councillors so that they are aware of the provision available for children and young people in the city.**
- 4. When funding opportunities are available Cabinet should consider a tender process for local service providers in the city before tendering to service providers outside of the city.**

36/23 Youth Justice Service (YJS)

The Board considered a report from the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Skills. The report provided an update on the Youth Justice Services in Derby.

The Board noted that Derby's Youth Offending Service (YOT) has been re-branded to a Youth Justice Service (YJS) to represent better the work being done to prevent children and young people from entering the criminal justice system. This aim was to ensure a "child first" and "offender second" approach.

The Governance and Leadership of YJS was detailed. The YJS was based in the Peoples Directorate of DCC, Governance and oversight was provided by a multi-agency Youth Justice Partnership Board (YJB) which meets four times a year. The Board scrutinises service performance and develops actions for improvement where necessary. The Board attendees are statutory and include wider partner organisations like the Police.

The officer outlined the staff resources. The YJS management team consisted of a HOS, Principal Service Manager and 2.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Service Managers, an Information Analyst and 4.8 FTE Social Workers. This group of staff are supported by a 0.8 seconded Probation Officer Manager with a focus on older children moving to the Probation Service. There were also 2 FTE Youth Justice Workers who manage pre-court cases, to increase pre-court diversionary work.

The service has a range of partnership/specialist staff who meet children's needs. These include a Criminal Justice Liaison and Division Team, Children & Adults Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Officer, a Speech, and Language Therapist and 2 seconded part time Police Officers who support intelligence gathering and risk management by engagement in missing children's groups, CRE meetings. There was a part-time Education Officer with links to schools and other secondary education activities including attendance at Secondary Placement Panels where placements for pupils who have been permanently excluded are discussed and possible managed moves for pupils at risk of exclusion are considered. There are 4 co-funded Youth Crime Prevention Workers for children at risk of offending who are based in locality Early Help Teams.

A "Turnaround" offer had been developed with the use of Ministry of Justice funding with the aim of diverting children from the formal criminal justice system by offering bespoke interventions based on assessed needs. Junior Attendance Centre arrangements have an additional 2 therapeutic mentors with the aid of YJB Funding.

The service has a statutory duty of complying with the "Victim Code of Practice" to ensure delivery of restorative justice and victim participation. A commissioned provider "Remedi" are contracted to provide restorative justice services like reparation activity. There was a full-time Victim Liaison Officer to provide victim-facing services.

Service performance was managed by 13 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), 3 of which are longstanding "First Time Entrants (FTE), Custody and Re-offending". Recently 10 more indicators have been added which all YJS's are expected to make returns on. The new indicators include access to substance misuse and mental health services.

Historically Derby had a higher rate of “First Time Entrants” (FTE) compared to comparator authorities. The number of FTE in Quarter 3 had reduced from 18 to 13. A new Prevention and Diversion Clinic had been designed to ensure all children who could be charged with a crime were triaged. Performance for “Re-offending” was strong. There was a good operational team in place offering intervention to children and young people based on good relational Social Work skills. Performance against “Custody” was dependent on what was occurring in the city; after lockdowns there was a rise in serious offences, but this had decreased in the last 12 months, as had the numbers of secure remands.

The service was quality assured (QA) internally. His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) provided external QA. The last thematic inspection activity was in June 2023. The last “full” inspection of Derby YJS was in 2018 and the service was rated “Good”. The service must submit a Youth Justice Plan annually as part of its conditions of grant from the YJB.

The officer indicated that many children open to the service have additional needs such as Education Health Care Plans. There are challenges with children’s part time timetabling, exclusion from school and speech and language issues. A health pathway had been developed to ensure children entering the service were triaged by health practitioners. Often older children enter the service having not had their needs identified at an earlier point in their lives, leading to involvement in criminal or anti-social behaviour. Part of the service’s work was signposting families to other support services especially if there were younger siblings. Multi-agency arrangements have been developed with partners for CONCORDAT arrangements to avoid unnecessary criminalisation of children in care.

The Board welcomed the comprehensive report on the service and the re-branding which denoted a change of narrative in terms of children and young people (CYP).

The Board were interested in schooling including permanent exclusion of children from schools which can work as a pipeline into criminality. They wanted to know the service worked with schools and also suggested that Faith schools are good at minimising school exclusion. The officer explained the service tried to reach CYP at a younger age because even at secondary school it was too late. With the right education in primary school, CYP can make more informed decisions. The service tried to provide services like speech and language and health resources at the earliest possible time.

The Board were mainly concerned about part-time timetabling for CYP. The challenge of part-timetabling was that CYP might only be in school for one hour per day, this would put them at risk of exploitation. The challenge had been identified but it was unlikely to change overnight. The officer confirmed that the Service was aware of every child in the system who was on part-time timetabling.

The Board were informed about the importance of reviewing children on part-time timetables, as they were not designed to be used as a long-term measure but only in the short term. A Board member highlighted that part-time timetabling varies school by school, and review of the timeline has slipped away. Faith Schools tend to only place the youngest children on part time timetabling. It was key to put in place review arrangements with part-time timetabling as they were designed as to be used as a support mechanism and were an interim measure.

The Board asked if the 6-week monitoring cycles of part-time timetabling could be re-established.

The Board asked about children excluded through undiagnosed neuro-diversity issues, they were concerned that provision was made for them as exclusion would make it even harder for them to catch up and would trigger behavioural issues. It was explained that it was the school's responsibility to put arrangements in place for excluded children. However, the service does challenge the school with the help of an Education Officer, to try and ensure the educational arrangements put in place are correct for CYP.

A Board member asked about Speech and Language Therapists, what age of child do they work with. It was explained that the Youth Justice Service works with children from age 8, but they cannot be penalised until they are 10. Speech and Language Therapists usually work with the older group of children.

The nature of Youth Justice workers intervention was of interest to one Board member. It was noted that remand into custody rates were down, but where are young people in the city remanded to and how can stay in touch with positive networks. The officer explained children under 17 are placed in Secure Children's Homes either by local authorities or the YCS. Local authorities place children in SCHs when children are a significant risk to themselves or others, and no other type of placement can keep them safe. The local unit was based in Stoke on Trent. The YJS take parents on visits to see their child in custody, the importance of the parents' relationships with CYP were recognised. It was important to put in place good resettlement plans, housing etc. Any interventions would depend on the type of offence, they might also undertake community projects.

The Board resolved:

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. That the 6-week monitoring cycle of part-time timetables be re-established by officers to understand the impact of part-time timetables and school exclusions on children and young people.**
- 3. That 3 to 4 case studies should be looked at by officers for learning and understanding and to identify good practice, and some example case studies should be produced for future good practice going forward.**

37/23 Work Programme 2023/24

The Board considered a report which allowed the Board to study its Terms of Reference and Remit for the forthcoming Municipal Year. The report set out key work areas, issues, and potential topic review subjects within the service areas, for discussion or inclusion in the work programme.

The Board discussed and agreed the work programme set out in Appendix 1 to the report. It was noted that work on the Topic Review would begin shortly.

The Board agreed the Work Programme

MINUTES END

