

**Extract from draft minutes of People Scrutiny Committee 10 September 2019**

**Approval of Youth Justice Plan 2019/20**

The committee received and considered a report with regard to the Youth Justice Plan for 2019/20. Councillors were informed that there was a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. The report summarised the Youth Justice Plan for 2019/20, with a copy of the Plan appended. It was noted that the Youth Justice Plan needed to be approved by Full Council.

Councillors considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion, the following points were raised:

- A point was raised with regard to the closure of youth clubs, including youth worker arrangements and whether this had an impact in this area. It was noted that some work had been done in this area and although it was hard to pinpoint reasons, it was reasonable to assume that this had an impact
- The Executive Director for People – Children, provided information with regard to the restructure within the Children’s Services Directorate and noted that feedback from partners and young people was being taken into account. Part of this was the establishment of an adolescent service including Cabinet approval for a residential hub for children and young people
- A discussion was held about the link with schools and how resources would be deployed and work undertaken with schools moving forward. The focus was on prevention and early intervention. It was noted that there was a need for better links with schools and for there to be a broad and diverse approach
- The link with mental health issues was raised and in response it was noted that the importance of mental health was recognised and that the service had a strong mental health team and in addition, worked closely with the Looked After Children Team. A part-time psychologist provided consultation to the nurses and the whole service and a training programme was in place
- In response to a point raised with regard to the use of restorative justice, an example of work undertaken was provided. Work was being undertaken with the Head of Youth Services for Dorset Police to put forward a proposal
- The potential impact on a persons’ life chances if they received a youth caution was noted
- It was suggested that the committee could undertake more in-depth work with regard to looked after children
- Councillors considered the figures for first time entrants to the service during the previous year and the number of custodial sentences received. It was noted that these figures included the area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The situation nationally was also referred to
- No custodial establishments were available in the South West of England

## Appendix 2

- A query was raised with regard to a cost of £65,000 set out in the report for performance and information gathering. In response it was confirmed that this represented the cost of the case management system and the salary of a Performance and Information Management Manager. It was noted that the service relied on a good quality of information
- It was noted that a lot of young people in the service had been excluded from school. The service had an education officer whose remit was to ensure that the right education provision was in place. There had been an increase in the number of children being excluded from school
- In addition the service worked with the parents of a number of young people who were electively home educated
- Work was being undertaken with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) with the aim of producing a plan which could be supported by the PCC. A question was raised with regard to the PCC election and it was confirmed that spending commitments could continue beyond the term of office
- There was a need for relevant organisations to have a holistic and shared approach to their response in this area
- A question was raised as to how information was shared between different geographical areas and how it could be ensured that a young person arrested for an offence would be safe once they returned to their local area. In response it was noted that the local Police and Social Care Service would communicate with their respective service in the area the young person was from. However it was noted that there was a lack of a coordinated approach in this area at a national level and this was the subject of current lobbying to the Government. At a local level, useful discussions had been held with the Children's Society to provide support in this area
- A suggestion was made that the Local Government Association Children's Board could be looking at this issue
- Currently there were no Dorset children in custody. In the case where there were, the service had a requirement to visit the at least once a month and this would also include a visit from a nurse.

The Chairman suggested that in addition to the recommendation set out in the report, an update on this area should be received in 6 months-time on progress made with the plan.

It was proposed by Councillor Roberts seconded by Councillor Sutton

### **Recommendation to Cabinet**

That the Youth Justice Plan be recommended to Full Council for approval.

### **Decision**

That an update be provided to the People Scrutiny Committee in 6 months-time on progress with the plan.