



# Cabinet

**Date:** Tuesday, 28 July 2020

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Venue:** MS Teams Live Event

**Membership: (Quorum 3)**

Spencer Flower (Chairman), Peter Wharf (Vice-Chairman), Tony Alford, Ray Bryan, Graham Carr-Jones, Tony Ferrari, Laura Miller, Andrew Parry, Gary Suttle and David Walsh

**Chief Executive:** Matt Prosser, South Walks House, South Walks Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ (Sat Nav DT1 1EE)

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# **A G E N D A**

## **Page No.**

### **9      APPROVAL OF YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2020-21**

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To consider a report of the Portfolio Holder for Education and Early Help.

## **Extract from minutes of People Scrutiny Committee – 20 July 2020**

### **Approval of Youth Justice Plan 2020 - 21**

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Early Help introduced the report with regard to the Youth Justice Plan for 2020/21.

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 2020/21, 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 what was being done to increase opportunities available through training providers and colleges. In response it was noted that a lot of work was being focused in this area
- A question was asked about whether an Equality Impact Assessment had been carried out. An updated Equality Impact Assessment had not been completed as the Plan did not reflect a change of policy or new strategy
- Further information was provided about work undertaken by members of the Youth Justice Team in respect of education issues for those in the service and a concern noted with the range of current provision
- This was a significant area for development and exploring opportunities within Children's Services. Wider opportunities were being explored and it was hoped to utilise wrap around locality services in order to understand the requirements of young people better
- A question was asked in respect of resourcing for the service and a particular point made about the police contribution. In response, it was confirmed that the police contribution remained at the same level as previously but that this may not be clear due to the way the money was accounted for
- The importance of the speech and language therapy posts was highlighted which played a key role in understanding and responding to the needs of young people in the service. It was hoped that funding for these posts could be made permanent
- A discussion was held in respect of offending rates in the Dorset Council area. It was noted that the report was written from a pan-Dorset perspective and that the rate in Dorset was lower than in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area
- The report recognised nationally that young people from minority ethnic groups were over-represented in the youth justice system and in the youth custodial population. A point was noted that it was difficult to resolve issues in the criminal justice system alone but there was a need to be alert to potential issues in this area

- In response to a point raised, it was confirmed that information on the gender and ethnicity of staff in the service could be included in future plans. The workforce did not currently have any people from minority groups, however this was partly addressed through the use of mentors
- It was highlighted that it was hugely important to always consider if there was racism in a system. It was noted that there were staff within the Children's Services Department representing black and minority groups. All staff were challenged to recognise issues in their daily work
- The impact of the lockdown associated with the Covid-19 Pandemic was discussed in respect of the impact on the young people in the service and their wellbeing
- The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Early Help indicated that work would be undertaken with colleagues on opportunities for young people and how support could be given to reinvigorate economic platforms and provide meaningful employment for young people, who could be affected by a downturn in the economy
- The ability for the service to receive both positive and negative feedback was considered
- Issues around child exploitation were raised and the impact of the current Covid-19 Pandemic
- The Covid-19 Pandemic had impacted on the service and particular reference was made to access to education currently being difficult, incidences of anti-social behaviour and delays with the courts having been closed for three months. Alternatives to court processes had been used in some cases
- A concern was raised that some young people would not be able to cope when schools reopened in September. In response it was noted that ongoing conversations were being held with schools about issues in this area. It was recognised that it would be challenging for some young people and that the council was working with head teachers to develop processes. Work included talking to families and young people to assist with building a relationship base to provide for their needs, working with partners
- A point was noted that the plan did not include a section on risks to how the service would achieve agreed outcomes. In response it was noted that this had not been included in a specific section but that an obvious risk was around resourcing for the service. However it was felt that the service had managed its resources through having a pan-Dorset partnership and it was felt that the service had the resilience in order to continue.

It was proposed by J Somper seconded by M Penfold

### **Recommendation to Cabinet**

That the Youth Justice Plan be endorsed and recommended for approval by Full Council.