



Report of: Interim Corporate Director Children's Services

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee	Date: December 2015	Ward(s): All
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SUBJECT: Youth Crime

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The Early Intervention Foundation has recently reviewed the risk and protective factors associated with youth violence and gang involvement and provided details of effective interventions in this area. They found that early family disruption, reported behavioural concerns in primary school, early substance misuse, low self-esteem, running away, truancy, attitudes to delinquency and involvement in ASB are strong risk factors in predicting which young people may become involved in youth crime and gangs.

The review found that what works with children, young people and families are school or community based or family focused programmes which address risk factors, are interactive and enable children, young people and families to practice skills and effective communication.

In the highest risk children, young people and families both family and trauma focused therapy was noted as effective. Key to the success of the programmes is skilled facilitators with experience of working with children and/or families.

In Islington services are arranged to address a continuum of need including the above risk factors through universal e.g. children's centres and schools, targeted e.g. Families First, Islington Families Intensive Services and Targeted Youth Support and specialist services e.g. children's Social Care and the Youth Offending Service.

The requirements of the national troubled families service embraces all these outcomes and provides a payment by results programme to achieving outcomes.

This report will explore current service responses to preventing and responding to local youth crime, sharing some examples of good outcomes and practice and identifying areas for future development.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note and comment on the work being delivered across Universal, Targeted and Specialist Child, Family and Young People's Services.

3. Range of Provision in Islington

3.1 Work in Primary and Secondary schools

3.1.1 Islington Police in collaboration with the Healthy Schools Team and Targeted Youth Support (TYS) will be delivering a Secondary Schools Engagement Programme which will work with years 7-10 and address the following areas:

- Safer Schools Officer Introduction and Personal Safety
- The dangers of online activity
- Hate Crime
- Stop and Search
- Prevention against exploitation by gangs and peer groups - Decisions and Consequences
- Joint Enterprise
- Knife Crime
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) within gangs and criminal groups

3.1.2 Islington's Healthy Schools Team share information with all primary and secondary schools on the borough on a termly basis which identifies suitable resources and evidence-based Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) materials they can utilise to address issues of personal safety, crime, anti-social behaviour and gangs. This includes the promotion of the Ben Kinsella Trust who are funded to work with 15 local schools.

3.1.3 There is a Safer School Plan for every secondary school in Islington and a dedicated Safer Schools Police Officer.

3.1.4 The majority of Alternative Education providers deliver a PHSE curriculum which addresses issues of personal safety, crime, anti-social behaviour and gangs.

3.2 Universal youth and play work in Islington

3.2.1 Youth provision in Islington consistently provides young people with opportunities to engage and participate in stimulating, fun and interesting activities and projects that contribute to their social and emotional development.

3.2.2 All universal youth work in Islington is commissioned and delivered within a co-production framework as set out in the *'Islington Outcomes Framework for Young People'*. Prevention through diversion is most effective when providing opportunities that are genuinely aligned with young people's needs and interests and is at its most powerful when young people are actively involved in the planning, design and delivery of their projects in partnership with youth workers and other professionals.

3.2.3 The Outcomes Framework governs how all universal youth work funded by the council is commissioned and provided and outlines 7 outcomes which the council purchases for each young person who takes part in the offer. These outcomes, for example, resilience and determination, confidence and agency are both of short / medium term value in relation to managing offending (a resilient young person is more likely to be able to make good decisions with regard to committing crime or Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)) and are linked to lifelong positive outcomes, for example better health, employability and being outside the criminal justice system.

3.2.4 Through effective commissioning against the Outcomes Framework, youth work in Islington provides engaging projects and activities that divert young people away from negative behaviours and peer groups and engages them in more positive opportunities and community

activities which play a key part in prevention.

- 3.2.5 For example, universal youth provision works closely with Targeted Youth Support (TYS) colleagues to share information and identify young people at risk of offending and works together with the young person to identify needs and interests to divert from ASB. The successes of partnership work between universal and targeted youth provision is reported in borough-wide projects such as Dr Bike and Wooden Spanner.
- 3.2.6 Of the current caseload of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) who live locally, 35% used youth provision funded by the council in 2014-15. This represents 1 in 3 of the current YOS caseload. In the general population, the equivalent figure using youth services is approximately 1 in 5.
- 3.2.7 In Islington, universal youth provision plays an important role in responding to early signs of youth crime and providing children and young people with opportunities to discuss and explore issues that may be worrying them or affecting them or someone they know. Projects can also play a part in rebuilding community confidence, especially amongst wider groups of young people whose neighbourhoods have been affected by youth crime and violence. Universal youth work can address issues around knife crime or bullying for example, and work to help young people to be more resilient and confident within their communities
- 3.2.8 Universal youth work will be supporting the implementation of the Youth Crime Strategy and specifically co-delivering the Knife Crime Prevention Programme with TYS staff across youth and community settings. It is anticipated that the first programme will be delivered at Lift Youth Hub.

3.3 Family Support work

- 3.3.1 Early help service reach 12% of Islington's population (age 5-17). Children's Centres reach 87% of the under fives population. The independent review of Early Help Family Support Services in April 2015 found that "both Families First and Islington Families Intensive Team (IFIT) have in place exemplar processes for assessing families. The two services provided thorough, proportionate, analytical and well documented assessments, which in most of the cases reviewed, led to clear, outcome focused support plans which were co-produced with families. The assessments allow support workers to build strong and trusting relationships with families, based on a clear understanding of their issues and the impact they have on families' lives."
- 3.3.2 Families First supports families with a very wide range of needs, from those with newly emerging problems, who have not received support of this nature in the past, to those being stepped down from Children's Social Care with complex histories. Based on a review of quantitative data, and from the reviews of twelve case files, support appears to be effective at improving outcomes for around 80% of families it supports.
- 3.3.3 Support was very effective at meeting the needs of early intervention cases or those with a narrower range of issues. Families were typically happy to engage in support and positive about how it had improved their lives, particularly with regards to improving home environments, building relationships with schools, accessing more specialist services and addressing financial problems. Families reported a sense of improved confidence, stronger family relationships and better parenting in households. Children were better engaged in their education (improved attendance), involved in positive activities and felt more emotionally secure following support. Whilst these changes are difficult to quantify, they give a sense of improved resilience following support.
- 3.3.4 Data available on outcomes achieved by families supported by Families First shows that 68% of children and young people with at least one unauthorised absence in the term preceding support improved their attendance, following support. Exclusions, both fixed and permanent, were not an issue for the majority of children and young people engaged with Families First. For the small number for whom this was an issue, 48% saw an improvement during the period Families First were engaged with the family.

- 3.3.5 Islington Families Intensive Team (IFIT) works with families who have very complex needs and have adolescents who are at high risk of entering custody or being looked after. It is acknowledged that meeting the needs of these families poses a significant challenge and often has not been achieved by other services prior to referral. They are also generally more difficult families to engage and resistance to support is common. The aim of support is to get families to a point which reduces risk to an acceptable level, and step them down to a targeted or universal service which can continue to improve their outcomes (such as Families First).
- 3.3.6 The IFIT model of assessment is the most comprehensive and in depth that researchers have come across. The data recorded on key outcomes shows that in 2013/14:
- **fixed term exclusions:** a total of 24% of children had been subject to a fixed term exclusion in the term before referral. On exit, this figure had reduced to 7% of all children in the IFIT cohort. For the first two quarters of 2014/15 exclusions reduced from 22% of the cohort to 10%;
 - **unauthorised absence** - of 81 children with any unauthorised absence prior to IFIT involvement 31% (25) saw an improvement in attendance during support by IFIT;
 - **offending behaviour** - the total number of CYP engaging in offending behaviour reduced from 33 before intervention to 19 during.

3.4 Targeted Youth Support (TYS)

- 3.4.1 TYS works with young people aged 10 to 21 years old (12 – 21 for Youth Counselling), who require additional support to enable them to make informed choices and maintain positive pathways. TYS is made up of 4 service areas that provide interlinking support: TYS area teams providing tailored support, 1:1 and group work support, education, detached youth work, Return Home Interviews, and the completion of all Out of Court disposals; Islington Young People's Drugs and Alcohol Service (IYPDAS); Young Parent Support Coordinator and the TYS Youth Counselling Service.
- 3.4.2 Targeted youth support is specific, tailored interventions aimed at young people and their families who need extra provision on top of universally provided services. They work with each young person from their own starting point, drawing in partners, peer and parents as appropriate, challenging and enabling them to understand the consequences of their actions.
- 3.4.3 TYS teams also deliver work in local secondary schools covering issues such as substance misuse, positive and healthy relationships, keeping safe, gangs, weapons awareness and joint enterprise. In the first 2 quarters of 2015 TYS delivered sessions in 4 schools to 78 pupils.
- 3.4.4 TYS retain a strong emphasis on community-based delivery providing support within local community settings and working with local neighbourhood services to enhance community cohesion and prevent escalation of anti-social behaviour (ASB). We deploy our youth trucks and detached teams across the borough based on intelligence and ASB reports, working with young people where they meet and congregate, encouraging them to participate in group work and connecting them into their local areas.
- 3.4.5 In 2014-15 TYS worked with 928 young people across all our teams. Data so far for the first 2 quarters on 2015 evidence show that over 500 young people have engaged with TYS.
- 3.4.6 TYS are turning off the tap through early identification and intervention with young people affected by or associated with gangs and group offending or coming to the attention of the police, housing and ASB officers. There has been a 34% reduction in rate of first time entrants (FTE) to the YOS since 2013 and an 8% Reduction in the number of FTEs (Apr 14- Mar 15) compared to London 0% and England. 7.8%. The average age of young offenders is increasing alongside the number of young offenders decreasing meaning that the flow of young offenders is being stemmed.

- 3.4.7 On average over 2 years of tracking 85% of young people who completed a Triage intervention (an out of court disposal following admission of an offence) with TYS did not go on to reoffend within 1 year of that intervention.
- 3.4.8 In 2014/15 TYS delivered over 500 group and detached youth work sessions. Examples of these include:
- **Girls Groups:** TYS have run 3 successful girls groups over the year in Canonbury, Elthorne and Angel areas. The young women have taken part in residential activities, self-defence sessions, engaged in discussions about DV and control in relationships giving examples of their experiences and learning from each other. The girls are more aware of situations they may find themselves in and more confident in how to verbally and physically deal with a variety of situations.
 - **Dr Bike:** TYS have run 2 Dr Bike programmes this year at Canonbury and Andover with 25-30 young people aged 11 – 18 yrs.' regularly attending. Young people involved in basic repairs, stripping bikes and rebuilding working together. Individuals have attended with TYS workers supporting and engaging in positive activity and building relationship/links with project. We managed to link up with Hackney and Hillrise Ward Police and obtain a number of bikes, with police also registering them. Individuals have been working each week on different bikes and getting scored on effort and behaviour with a view to receive a bike as reward at end of six weeks.
 - **Community Events:** TYS have participated in numerous community events such as: Highbury Fields Fun Day, Whittington Festival, Cally Festival, Police Open Day and the Peace Cup where over 100 young people took part.
 - **Young Dad's Group:** This new piece of work is in partnership with the Family Nurse Partnership, Pulse and the Children's Centres. This is held at LIFT where a range of services and support are offered to young dad's including parenting skills and employment, training advice from a Youth Careers Advisor.
 - **Boys Groups at Elthorne and Mildmay:** considerably harder to engage, TYS have managed to set up 2 small boys groups in the Elthorne and Mildmay areas targeting young men known to be gang associated and often involved in negative relationships with the young women, targeted in our Girls group.
 - **Islington Young Peoples Drug and Alcohol Service (IYPDAS) Group from Cally:** This small group of 4-5 young men arose due to concerns that we had regarding their substance misuse. In partnership with IYPDAS, this group meet weekly at LIFT to address drug use, raise awareness of the possible dangers of drugs, health and the law.
 - **Sexual Health in the Community:** TYS delivered Truck sessions for sexual health screening and C-Card registration both at Mildmay and Andover. This was provided jointly with TYS and Young People's Sexual Health Service to access advice and information. The Mildmay session took place directly adjacent to Red Pitch where young men in large numbers engage in football with Access to Sport coaches. Young men aged 14 – 21 years took part in boarding the Truck speaking with TYS workers and the nurse about sexual health services. 9 young men provided samples for screening, there were 4 new C card applications and several received condoms. There were a couple of follow up appointments for individuals and all the young men that took part were not accessing any other sexual health service previously.
 - **Wooden Spanner:** Together with Cape Play and Youth Project and police TYS delivered a 10-week Motorbike Maintenance programme for 7 young men where some were known to housing and police for causing ASB on their mopeds. This piece of work was a pilot to test whether by offering the young people a course that would teach them skills with a qualification they wanted, could prevent their ASB escalating by diverting them away from crime and ASB. Two of the young men went onto secure work with the support of TYS staff and all 7 have not been arrested for motorbike offences since completing the project.
- 3.4.9 TYS are working alongside YOS, Children's Social Care, Victim support, Abianda and the 18-24 Transitions Team to establish Islington's Integrated Gangs Team (IGT).
- 3.4.10 TYS are currently establishing work with Redthread Hospital youth workers and Street Doctors

to identify young victims and also to educate and protect young people from carrying weapons and knife crime.

3.5 The Youth Offending Service (YOS)

- 3.5.1 The principle aim of the Youth Offending Service(YOS) is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people. The *National Standards for Youth Justice Services* are set by the relevant Secretary of State on advice from the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB), and are intended to provide a set of minimum requirements for those organisations providing youth justice services.
- 3.5.2 The YOS is a multi-disciplinary team made up of health professionals, Police, youth offending case managers and social workers. All young people are offered a comprehensive health screening and where required access to speech, language and communication support, mental health assessment and treatment, substance misuse assessment and treatment and sexual health services. The Youth Offending service was inspected during 2014 and has been following an improvement plan.
- 3.5.3 Most Islington children who receive an order supervised by the YOS do not reoffend, and reoffending in First time Entrants (FTE) is reducing:
- 3.5.4 However youth violence and gang related offences, principally violence, robbery and drug offences are increasing and reoffending and custody rates of Islington young people are much higher than national averages, this is in part due to the increased police presence in the borough of late.
- 3.5.5 The age of those supervised on YOS orders is getting older with 16 and 17 being most prevalent. A small but significant number of children and young people known to the YOS present a high risk to themselves and others; around 40 Young People of our current caseload of 120, have complex needs, including mental health and learning disabilities. This includes children and young people involved in sexually harmful behaviour, sexual offences and violence. These children and young people require high quality approaches and programmes that are evidence-based and effective. Those who work with them need to have a high level of expertise.
- 3.5.6 YOS staff have weekly staff training and development.
- 3.5.7 The YOS work with this group of children and young people must take into account both the *needs* and *risks* of a high risk child or young person. Identification, assessment, planning and management should be tailored to the needs, age and stage of development of the individual child or young person. Work to address the needs and risk of this cohort of young people includes:
- **Three intervention programmes addressing public order, robbery and motoring offences:** delivered to 25 young people demonstrated that those completing interventions were less likely to offend. Those in the cohort post 3 months had a reoffending rate of 0.19 compared to general cohort rate of 0.49.
 - **Knife Crime Prevention Programme (KCPP):** The KCPP tackles knife carrying among young people who offend. It is a mandatory element as part of any court order for 10-17 year olds who had been convicted of a knife-enabled offence. The intervention is delivered individually or in groups. The aim is that the young person will understand the impact of knife-carrying and change their behaviour; thereby reducing the likelihood of reoffending. Evaluation demonstrates that those completing the programme are less likely to reoffend and commit a further weapon enabled offence than those who fail to engage.
 - **Family Group Conference/Family Networking:-** All young people entering custody are offered the opportunity to have a family group conference in order to ensure that families are clear around expectations and how they can effectively support their child whilst in custody and assist in planning around resettlement including housing and education,

employment and training.

- **Spark Inside:-** Life coaching for young women. Whilst there are currently, no young females in custody across the consortia Spark Inside are now intending to offer their service to all females currently on licence.
- **Freephone Number:-** All YP have access to a free phone line to contact their families or case managers.
- **I-Con:-** The implementation of the clinically led outreach trauma service is progressing. The aim is to get YP who are resistant to acknowledging their own trauma and mental health- treatment ready. Islington have referrals ready to commence and it is anticipated that I-Con will be physically working with young people by the start of the new year.
- **Risk Management Panels:** identify and disseminate good practice on multi-agency responses to managing high risk young people. The YOS has a dedicated risk panel which links to the overall borough Integrated Offender Management Systems. At present it's too early to evaluate effectiveness as they only commenced in October.
- **Alternatives to custody:** Work to ensure that children do not go to prison by exhausting all alternatives including intensive community programmes and treatment fostering. In Islington by maintaining stable long term relationships with our looked after children-we have reduced reoffending from 9.5% to 4.5% for looked after children. Social workers undertake direct work with children to help build their resilience, promote their education, employment and training, positive relationships and activities and reduce risk.
- **Transitions work:** we know effective resettlement and support into probation are crucial in preventing young people remaining in the criminal justice system. Therefore we have an embedded probation worker and work closely with the 18-24 Gangs Team.
- **Victims and Community Confidence:** the victims of crime by young people are most likely to be other young people. In addition, there is strong evidence that many young people who commit crimes have, before they became offenders, been victims themselves. This of course includes all the children who come to the attention of services, and some brought into the criminal justice system, on welfare grounds as victims of neglect and abuse, many as a result of domestic violence or parental substance misuse. Strengthening the response to young victims is therefore imperative, in its own right and to prevent offending and other negative outcomes. This means taking appropriate, proportionate and timely action to identify and support young victims. There is a close link here to the work of schools to combat bullying and problem behaviour

3.5.8 National findings show that a significant proportion of those being released from custody are likely to reoffend. Islington currently has high numbers of young people in custody and it therefore important that new interventions are developed to reduce their likelihood of reoffending on release. We are working with the North London Resettlement consortium to develop new methods of intervention to reduce reoffending in this cohort, e.g. anger replacement therapy, employment opportunities and good accommodation options for those that cannot return home.

4. Implications

Financial implications:

4.2 There are no financial implications from this report.

Legal Implications:

4.3 Section 39 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the co-operation of statutory partners to form a YOS. Section 38 identifies the statutory partners and places upon them a duty to co-operate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to Islington.

The principal statutory functions assigned to the YOS in Section 39 (7) are to co-ordinate the provision of youth justice services for all those in Islington who need them and to carry out the functions assigned in the youth justice plan.

By providing the youth justice services set out at Section 38 (4) of the Crime and Disorder Act, the Council also addresses its duty, under paragraph 7(b) of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989, to take reasonable steps designed to encourage children and young people within Islington not to commit offences.

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment

" The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding."

Family poverty and experience of trauma are risk factors in youth violence and gang involvement. Islington has high rates of reported domestic abuse and 34% of children live in low income families. The borough has the second highest proportion of children living in low-income families out of all the local authority areas in England. Black and minority ethnic young people are over represented in youth offending and custody rates. It is therefore essential that the council continue the work to reduce domestic abuse and improve employment prospects of our residents and that all sections of the community are able to access services to address identified risk factors and to strengthen protective factors.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Reducing youth violence and gang involvement is one of the council's highest priorities and continues to be a challenge in Islington, as in the rest of the Capital. Whilst Islington have a good range of preventative services and there is some evidence of their effectiveness in reducing the over all number of children who are offending, there is no doubt that there is considerably more to do in improving our effectiveness in reducing youth crime in the borough.
- 5.2 Islington's Youth Crime strategy and the Integrated Gangs team will provide a more cohesive, multi disciplinary and co ordinated approach across the partnership to address these challenges, together with a range of specialist expertise that will enable the partnership to target and intervene with those who are deemed at greatest risk of offending or reoffending.

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