YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM IMPROVEMENT

1.1 To update on the progress and implementation of developments within the Youth Offending Team focussing on the “Getting to Good” Journey for Youth Offending.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 • To note the contents of the report and to ensure that current work continues to meet statutory obligations, is delivering change in Youth Offending and that work to prepare for external inspections continues.
• To continue to meet statutory monitoring, challenge and support obligations.
• To identify any further information and actions required.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 For Members of the Scrutiny Committee to be fully informed as to the day to day work of the Youth Offending Service and have assurance that Blackpool is continuing to meet its statutory obligations for future inspection requirements.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options considered:

Services are subject to national and statutory frameworks.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:
• Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.
5.0 Background Information

5.1 Introduction
There are 62 young people who are working with the Youth Offending Team (YOT). Over the first two quarters of this year an average of six interventions have closed per month, with the majority of these being completed successfully. Just under a quarter of the caseload have been cases which have transferred to Blackpool from other local authorities on a caretaking basis. This is when a young person is looked after by another authority and placed in Blackpool with a private provider.

5.2 Governance
For the past year the governance structure for the YOT Executive Board has been supported by a shadow board and a number of operational groups led by key members of the partnership who have accountability within the plan.

The Executive board met monthly, and regularly reviewed progress against the plan and received reports from the operational leads by exception.

Over the past year the joint work and operational scaffolding for the YOT service has been significantly strengthened. To reflect this, it has now been agreed to introduce an operational group which brings together the key leads for each of the strands of work in the plan and supports them to share and coordinate their work, minimises duplication of effort and resources and maximises the opportunity to work to common goals and outcomes. The operational group will be chaired by the Head of Service and made up of the YOT manager, operational leads for each of the YOT National Standards and key representatives from all partner agencies involved in the operational activity of the YOT.

The National Standards Youth offending work streams are:

- Out of Court Disposals
- At Court
- In the Community
- In Secure
- On transition and resettlements

The operational group will meet monthly and monitor, challenge and support activity to further the plan in each of the group areas. The Executive will meet bi-monthly and as a minimum standing agenda receive update reports on:

  - Outcomes and Impact (including Key Performance Indicators)
  - Exceptional items from the plan (achieved, not achieved in timescale, proposed variations)
  - Feedback from the shadow board

The Executive will also review any actions which were outstanding from two consecutive
operational boards. Minutes from the operational group will be shared with the Executive membership and reciprocated.

5.3 Staffing
During the last two quarters, the team has had two vacant YOT officer posts. The new YOT Team Manager started in September 2019 and they have successfully appointed to two new YOT Officer posts to commence in January 2020. Sickness has improved, with no members of the team having long periods of absence between April-September 2019.

5.4 Diversion
A new diversion pathway for Blackpool has been developed alongside Lancashire Police. This preventative work will see Blackpool children and young people being referred through to the Early Help Hub for screening and the development of a bespoke package of intervention developed to meet their individual needs. The new pathway is being launched on Monday 16 December 2019.

5.5 Key Performance Indicators
First time entrants
There were five young people who entered the criminal justice system as first time entrants (FTEs) in quarter one and eight in quarter two.

As the graph above shows Blackpool continues to see a decline in the number of young people exposed to the criminal justice system as first time entrants.

Although there has been a slight increase in the numbers of FTEs during quarter two, the YOT Police Officer has recently started to facilitate sessions with Blackpool police officers to help them explore alternative Out of Court Disposals, rather than bringing
young people unnecessarily into the criminal justice system.

**Reducing demand for custody**

During quarter one the YOT had five young people in custody. By the end of quarter two this had reduced to two. There have been no remands (open or secure) made during the periods.

As the graph below shows, Blackpool’s custody rate continues on a downward trajectory and at its lowest rate since April 2015.

![Graph showing Blackpool's custody rate](chart.png)

**Cross Cutting themes**

**Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Multi-Agency Risk Management Meetings (MARMM)**

During quarter one there were six young people who were MAPPA eligible and five during quarter two.

By the end of quarter two there were 21 young people open to the service assessed as either high or very high risk of serious harm to others and 19 assessed as high or very high risk regarding safety and wellbeing concerns. These cases are reviewed through the YOT MARMM process.

MARMMs are currently being chaired by the YOT Service Manager, with monthly dates to discuss and review all cases in a timely manner. A review of the MARMM approach including attendees, paperwork and recording is currently underway. This will ensure a more effective and timely approach to risk management oversight.
**Accommodation**

Data shows that the majority of young people open to the YOT were deemed to be in suitable accommodation during the two quarters. The young people whose accommodation was assessed as unsuitable were in custody.

**Education, Training and Employment (ETE)**

The data shows that education, training and employment for children and young people open to the YOT is low. Quarter one and two data indicates that, on average, less than a quarter of children open to the service are recorded as receiving 25 hours per week education. For those young people aged over 16, again there is, on average, less than a quarter of young people recorded as receiving 16 hours or more education, training or employment per week. Work has commenced with the Head of School Improvement and over the next quarter work will be completed with the YOT ETE officer to analyse the data further to establish whether the current ETE data is reflective of the current position, or whether this is a recording issue.

**Audits**

In July 2019 the YOT Service Manager completed an audit of Team Manager’s supervision records. Some of the areas of concern related to the lack of monthly supervision; newly qualified social workers not receiving fortnightly supervision; lack of evidence of reflective supervision taking place; a lack of management direction being evident within records; staff learning and development needs not being fully explored; a lack of practice observations taking place and a lack of performance issues being discussed in supervision.

There have been changes in the YOT Management group since this audit and ensuring improvements in the quality of supervision is a main priority. The YOT Service Manager has arranged a date with Team Managers to discuss the quality of Supervision to ensure standards are raised. The YOT Service Manger will complete quarterly audits of Team Manager’s supervision records and will report progress to the Board.

**Case study of effective practice**

The case study relates to a young male, aged 17 years old who had appeared before the Youth Court for an offence of threatening a person with a blade (kitchen knife) and received an 11 month Referral Order. At his initial panel his referral order contract was developed and included sessions around knife crime, anger management, substance misuse, victim awareness, healthy relationships and
indirect reparation sessions.

This was the young man’s first experience of the YOT and he engaged well throughout his order, developing a positive and supportive working relationship with his YOT Worker.

Shortly after the start of the Referral Order the young male experienced a huge upheaval in his life, resulting in him becoming estranged from his family and moving to live in a semi-independent living facility. Despite this he continued to fully engage with his YOT sessions. During his order he completed all aspects of his contract; he secured employment in a hotel in the local area; he assisted with the YOT Team Manager interviews and actively engaged with the candidates by asking them questions. Most importantly, he did not re-offend and he started to re-build his relationship with his family.

As a result of the excellent progress this young person had made, the YOT returned the order to court for early revocation. The young person attended the court hearing and appreciated the positive feedback he received from the Magistrates.

5.6 Summary

Whilst the data over the first two quarters has evidenced improvements in national measures of reducing first time entrants and reducing custody, there are clearly further improvements the service can make. The introduction of the new diversion pathway should reduce the overall YOT caseload, providing case manager’s more time to focus on working with our most complex children and young people at highest risk of re-offending and receiving custodial sentences.

There are clearly improvements required regarding accommodation and education, training and employment opportunities available to our children and young people. These two areas will be a priority for the service during the next quarter to really understand where the issues lie.

A peer review is planned for February 2020 which will see partners from the National Association of Youth Justice Managers coming to Blackpool to examine the work of the YOT. This will provide some rigour and external overview of the improvement journey experienced by the YOT over the past 12 months, and support the development of priorities and plans for the next stage of partnership development. In addition the developments of case audits over the next six months will assist the service with identifying specific improvements required.
Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

6.0 List of Appendices:
None

7.0 Legal considerations:
7.1 None

8.0 Human Resources considerations:
8.1 None

9.0 Equalities considerations:
9.1 None

10.0 Financial considerations:
10.1 At the last scrutiny, the meeting requested more detailed information about the funding of the YOT. This is broken down in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Staffing Costs</th>
<th>Payments in kind</th>
<th>Other delegated funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>43,674</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>41,941</td>
<td>85,615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>45,000</td>
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<td>Health</td>
<td>39,974</td>
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<td>15,444</td>
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<td>Local Authority</td>
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<td>597,425</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,294,312</td>
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<td>YJB</td>
<td>357,141</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54,251</td>
<td>411,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,078,214</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>714,061</td>
<td>1,891,737</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.2 The budget breakdown in the table is YOT specific, as requested. However this contributes to a wider Blackpool Young People’s service budget which covers Care Leavers, Not in Education Employment and Training and Substance Misuse and Sexual Health Services. Taking account of the vacancy factor across the whole service, the budget allocation across the service is projected as being within budget at this point in the financial calendar.

11.0 Risk management considerations:
11.1 None
12.0 Ethical considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Internal/External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 None

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None