

**BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT TASK AND FINISH REVIEW**

**2pm - Friday, 2nd June, 2006  
Central House Annexe**

**PRESENT** – Councillors Armstrong, Copeland, Francis and Long; Rita Taylor, Youth Offending Service Manager, Dave Haddick, Operational Manager, Yvonne Scullion, Senior Democratic Support Officer and Paul Dalton, Democratic Support Officer.

The following issues were discussed :-

- Rita Taylor opened by explaining her role as Youth Offending Service Manager – she both adopts a strategic role, but very much a ‘hands on’ role too. Rita explained that she had worked in Youth Justice for two years.
- Rita stated that there are 3 main operational elements, or roles, to the Youth Offending Service:
  - **Restorative Justice**
  - **Prevention**
  - **Post Court**
- **Restorative Justice:** Concentrates mainly on reparations by junior offenders (‘Junior Community Service’) following a reprimand or a final warning. As part of this approach, offenders may meet victims of their crime so they are aware of the consequences of their actions – offenders are therefore less likely to re-offend.
- **Prevention:** This element mainly concentrates on interventions with vulnerable young people who are at risk of offending, anti-social behaviour or substance misuse. Work with parents, either on a voluntary basis or by Court Order, is also a significant part of this service.
- **Post Court:** Concentrates on Young Offenders who are going through, or have recently been through, the Court process. Such young people may be subject to Community Orders or Detention and Training Orders in custody.

In recent years a much greater emphasis has been placed on a Preventative approach.

- The Group highlighted their concerns on Bullying in Schools, and asked whether the Youth Offending Service had any input in that area. Rita Taylor explained that the service hoped to develop a ‘**Safer Schools Partnership**’ and obtain funding for at least one, possibly two, schools. The intention would be to identify areas where the level of first time offenders was highest (in line with Darlington Borough Council’s PSA target). 1 in 5 first time offenders come from the Eastbourne area. The intention of the scheme is to provide a safe and supportive atmosphere in schools, with a Youth Offending Service Prevention Worker and a Police Officer in the School.

- The Group expressed the wish to view the rates of first time offenders from other schools/areas. Unfortunately they were not available at the present time, but would be available at a later point. It was determined that Haughton and Branksome would probably also have high rates of first time offenders.
- The Group felt that it was important to remember that not only are young people offenders, but also have a high rate of being victims of crime. Rita Taylor highlighted that ‘Victim Support’ services are not available to children.
- Discussion returned to figures of young people who are remanded in custody. In previous years 100% of those young people remanded to custody re-offended, usually within the first 10 months of release. Dave Haddick explained that it can cost the Local Authority £1000 per week per young person on remand. The Youth Offending Service provides training for magistrates. The figure of those young people sentenced to custody who have re-offended within 24 months has reduced to 75%.
- The Group were interested in how many young people were on remand. In the last year there have been 17 remands, of which 11 went into custody. The National Target is 30% into custody.
- The Group asked for the total number of Young Offenders – 200 per annum.
- Discussion returned to the subject of those young offenders on remand. Dave Haddick explained that those young offenders that are remanded to the Local Authority are usually tagged or subject to a curfew, however unfortunately there is the perception that the Local Authority are not as involved as they could be in this area, but stressed that the Local Authority do not have the resources to monitor cases 24 hours a day. The Group were interested in the level of parental involvement in such cases and suggested that parents could sometimes be part of the problem.
- The Youth Offending Service do have a ‘**Parental Support Service**’ and contact parents offering assistance as soon as the case comes to the Unit’s attention. Assistance can be in the form of advice, Group Working and providing Parenting Mentors. Dave Haddick suggested that one of the problems is the stigma attached to working with Social Services, but the programme is geared toward removing this stigma and is approached in a non-authoritative manner.
- The Group enquired how strong the link was between the Youth Offending Unit and Schools. Rita Taylor explained that the Youth Offending Service was established to work in partnership with all stakeholders. Links with individual schools could be improved.
- The Group stated that they had recently attended a meeting at Hummersknott Comprehensive School as part of the Behaviour Support Task and Finish Review and ascertained that the School only had access to half a day a week Teaching Assistant for Anger Management and a half day every 2 weeks, every other half term, from the Outreach Service and EOTAS respite. Dave Haddick explained that Hummersknott Comprehensive School / Skerne Park Junior School had recently (3 weeks ago) been allocated a ‘Prevention Officer’ (Gary) from the Youth Offending Service who is available full-time to children at risk of offending, substance misuse or anti-social behaviour. There has been little feedback

to date as Gary has only been in post for 3 weeks. Gary only works with the children – if Gary receives any requests from parents for parental support they are referred to the Unit.

- The Group enquired whether it was proposed to roll this scheme out in all schools. Unfortunately this is dependent on LEA funding. The Group wondered whether funding for Youth Offending Services Prevention Services ever ran out? Yes, it can do, however funding comes from a number of different sources, some with stipulations, so on some occasions it's a balancing act and can mean realigning the direction of the service (ie. From a 'Preventative' approach to a 'Restorative Justice' approach). Dave Haddick stated that if he had the funds available he would like a Preventative Officer in every school.
- The Group expressed the opinion that Schools appeared to have difficulties accessing services. This can be as a result of parental problems – the Unit support the use of 'extended schools' and the promotion of schools as part of the community, and are keen that schools are not seen as punitive institutions. The Youth Offending Service did state it was only a small percentage of parents who are not prepared to work with them, and the Youth Offending Service are developing ways to create opportunities to encourage interaction.
- The Group asked if there were any schemes that worked particularly well in the area. One of the most successful schemes is the **'It's Going to Work' programme**, which is a scheme across the Tees Valley area. The scheme targets those young people with a low standard of education. The scheme is a 4 week programme – highly intensive to encourage an individual to obtain NVQ1 – each young person has a mentor who is with them all day – each young person gets paid £40.00 per week - the scheme encourages young people into employment. The success rate of the scheme: 78% of young people go onto employment or Further Education following the scheme. The Group observed that the one-to-one approach was an approach that obviously got results. Rita Taylor also observed that in some cases a large problem can be the lack of a positive male role model within the household.
- The Group enquired about the replacement for Inspector Reeves. It was explained that a replacement had been appointed – Inspector Brian Maudley, who is very proactive. Inspector Maudling was previous a 'Community Safety Inspector' from the Bishop Auckland Area. The Youth Offending Service also have access to 2 Police Constables: PC Angela Moran and Fiona Cunningham, who can issue final warnings on behalf of the Youth Offending Unit. The Neighbourhood wardens are still based at Central House, and the Youth Service have recently moved into Central House with effect from 1st June 2006.
- The Group enquired about the EOTAS development at Rise Carr. Rita explained that the development was running up to two years behind schedule. The Group felt that it was important that they addressed this in their report.
- Discussion ensued on the used of MUGA's – who was responsible for administering the use of the MUGA's in the town and who was responsible for collecting the fee's for their use.
- **'Prolific and Priority Offenders Strategy'** – Discussion moved onto the 'Prolific and Priority Offenders Strategy'. The strategy is based on 3 areas:
  - **'Prevent and Deter'** – The Youth Offending Service target the 20 most likely career criminals. (90% of offences are committed by 10% of offenders)
  - **'Catch and Convict'** – this element is the responsibility of the Police Authority and includes mostly adult offenders.

- **Rehabilitation and Resettle** – this element is the responsibility of the Probation Service.
- The Group were interested in substance misuse. Dave Haddick explained that the main problem was alcohol, although there are still problems involving Cannabis, Cocaine, Ecstasy, Coke and Amphetamines.
- Rita then provided the Group with a large amount of statistical information (see attached documents).

**IT WAS AGREED:** That a further meeting for the Group be arranged with the CAMHS Service.