

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD REPORT

17<sup>th</sup> January 2011

<b>Title of paper:</b>	<b>Reducing Offending Behaviour</b>	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Chief Inspector Andy Rooke, Nottinghamshire Police Satinder Gautam, Director Safeguarding	<b>Wards affected: ALL</b>
<b>Contact Officer(s) and contact details:</b>	<b>Chief Inspector Andy Rooke</b>	
<b>Other officers who have provided input:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PC Sam Flint, Children in Care Police Officer, Nottinghamshire Police</li> <li>• Natalie Pink, Youth Offending Team</li> <li>• Glynis Storer, Team Manager, Youth Offending Team</li> <li>• Aaron Doyle, Youth Offending Team</li> <li>• Shelley Nicholls, Service Manager, Youth Offending Team</li> </ul>	
<b>Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:</b>		
World Class Nottingham		
Work in Nottingham		
Safer Nottingham		
Neighbourhood Nottingham		
Family Nottingham		
Healthy Nottingham		
Serving Nottingham Better		
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):</b>		
<p>This report explains the improvements made in the reduction of the criminalisation activity of children in care. It focuses on the role of the CiC police officer in improving outcomes for young people, and the effectiveness of multi-agency meetings/forums to drive improvement. Performance information is summarised and shows positive progress and enhanced outcomes.</p>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>The Board to acknowledge the importance of the role of the CiC police officer in the drive to reduce the criminalisation of CiC and improve their outcomes</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>The Board to offer commitment for the need to continue annual multi agency events, and quarterly Reducing Offending meetings with a view to reducing the criminalisation of young people in care. To ensure that attendance at these forums is more inclusive</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Development of new quality assurance checks to allow field staff to feedback positive and negative experiences and enhance commissioning arrangements</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Local performance measures to be developed to ensure improved monitoring of the CiC cohort, to further reduce criminalisation and to provide more local analysis</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>The Board to offer commitment to using the restorative justice principles within residential units in the city</b>	

# **1 BACKGROUND**

## **Reduction in criminalisation of Children In Care - performance**

- 1.1 Performance information taken from the annual OC2 statutory return for Children in Care (CiC) indicates that performance results for 2006 to 2009 have positively reduced. These figures relate to the number of children and young people within the following criteria:
- aged over 10
  - who have been looked after for more than 12 months
  - who have committed an offence within the year while being looked after
  - who have been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand in that same year
- 1.2 The latest available data for 2009 shows that nationally, 8.7 percent of CiC (around 2,600 children) who were aged 10 or over had been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year. This compares with a figure of 3.5 percent for all children; i.e. CiC are more than twice as likely to be cautioned or convicted of an offence as others. 9 percent of CiC aged 10 or over in Nottingham were cautioned or convicted in 2009, consistent with 2008, and around half the rate seen in 2006. Performance is in line with England (8.7 percent, down 0.1 percentage points from 2008) and mean of SN comparators (9.3 percent, up 0.3 percentage points from 2008). CiC in Nottingham City in 2009 were more than twice as likely to be cautioned or convicted as their non-looked after peers. There is a reversal of the improvements made from 2007 to 2008, although the 2009 ratio (2.5) is in line with the figures for England (2.5) and statistical neighbours (2.3). Additional data for 2010 performance will be available at the end of December 2010. (See Appendix A for detailed analysis of performance).
- 1.3 Local intelligence from the CDP and local authority children homes shows that in April 2007, there were 160 missing reports compared to 11 in February 2009. This improvement can be attributed to the introduction of the new missing from care protocol and the continued work from the CiC police officer. The Looked After Children Analysis Report (CDP) for October 2010 shows the number of calls to police from the three residential care homes have remained static or reduced compared to the previous year.
- 1.4 The development of local performance measures to regularly monitor the criminalisation of CiC will provide a more accurate view of performance and evidence outcome improvements. Unlike the OC2 statutory reporting framework, we will focus on monitoring all children who are in care and their criminalisation activity regardless of their time in care. In early 2011, discussions between YOT and social care representatives will take place to identify improvements to performance reporting, which will be supported by more regular data sharing between both areas.

## **Reduction in criminalisation of Children In Care - partnership**

- 1.5 Annual events centred on reducing the criminalisation of CiC were held in 2007, 2008, and 2009 providing a multi agency group of professionals and stakeholders with a forum to identify action points, and discuss ways forward to improve outcomes for children in care. The importance of placement planning, the appropriate matching of young people, and multi agency good practice guidance were raised at these meetings.

- 1.6 Quarterly Reducing Offending meetings were initially held within local authority children's homes, and have since been extended to include some private providers. The designated YOT Lead and CiC police officer attend meetings with providers looking to promote a consistent and quality approach to communication, behaviour management, substance misuse issues, and responses to children and young people missing from home. A wider attendance at these meetings would be beneficial.
- 1.7 A 'concerns group' has been created this year to address concerns raised by any agency in a timely fashion, in relation to placement of young people in residential care. The group consists of key individuals within Social Care, Police and Health whose remit is to take appropriate action and act with assertion.
- 1.8 Learning from a Serious Case Review has enabled better communication with partner agencies. Improved and new policies and procedures are being developed and embedded. This work includes the role of Social Care when young people enter and leave custodial establishments.

### **Reduction in criminalisation of Children In Care – role of CiC police officer**

- 1.9 Nottingham City Council is the only Local Authority in England to benefit from having a dedicated CiC police officer. The police officer for CiC sits within the Targeted Support Team and has enabled close liaison with Children and Families, YOT, Social Care and placement providers.
- 1.10 Acting as a central point of contact, the police officer for CiC has an overview of young people placed within Nottingham city, enabling preventative work and a pro-active police response. The officer implements the missing from care protocol and collates information from return interviews. The officer has provided training for generic police officers and staff.
- 1.11 The role has assisted in the reduction of offending by children and young people in care by performing a preventative role in placement planning, promoting the use of alternative (non-criminal) disposals to divert, and enabling generic police time to be used more efficiently through the deployment of systems. The post has expanded to include private care providers throughout the city.

## **2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

- 2.1 It is proposed that the role of CiC police officer is a model of best practice, and that this has contributed to the reduction of offending behaviour, and instances of missing reports for children in care. Nottingham city is the only authority with this specialist role, and therefore could be considered a national lead in this area. The continuation of this role is considered instrumental in consolidating and building upon work in this area to date, to strive for better outcomes for children in care in Nottingham.
- 2.2 There has been positive feedback from participants at both annual events, and quarterly Reducing Offending Behaviour meetings. It is proposed that these events and meetings encourage good communication and multi agency working between agencies, assisting problem solving at an operational level. Attendance by a wider range of professionals would further enhance these benefits across the authority.
- 2.3 Procedures for fieldwork staff to feedback information allows for greater workforce participation and empowerment, and the effective collation and analysis of this information, in order to identify and address areas of best practice, or any issues of

concern. By having a clearer picture of how placements are functioning, the authority is better placed to ensure placements are offering value for money and better outcomes for our children in care.

- 2.4 The drive for local measures is motivated by the desire to present an accurate and valid picture of children in care who offend in Nottingham, in order that issues or patterns can be more clearly identified, and action taken to resolve these.
- 2.5 Restorative justice approaches are used where appropriate to prevent and divert young people from management within the Youth Justice System. A commitment to this approach would assist residential staff to provide a consistent approach across statutory and private providers.

### **3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

None

### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY)**

- 4.1 The post of Children in Care Police Officer is jointly funded (Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham City Council). The 50% contribution from NCC is funded by Area Based Grant – Care Matters.
- 4.2 Roll out of restorative justice training across all children’s homes to include external residential will necessitate an initial outlay. However, there are benefits both for young people and financially in appropriate diversion. Proposal that costs for training form a part of new placement contracts from 2011.

### **5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS)**

- 5.1 The Children in Care Police Officer post minimises risks to both organisation and young people in care. To minimise risk detailed succession planning and business continuity needs to be considered and developed.
- 5.2 The CiC police officer has reduced the risk of children and young people committing crime and disorder within their communities (neighbourhood work) and has actively improved outcomes and life chances for this vulnerable group. As a corporate parent we would wish children in care in Nottingham city to have the same opportunities to enjoy and achieve as any other young person.

### **6 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Multi Agency Good Practice Guidance
- 6.2 Missing Protocol (Nottinghamshire Police/Nottingham City Council)
- 6.3 Looked After Children Analysis (CDP) – October 2010

### **7 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

7.1 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2

7.2 Outcomes Indicators for CLA: Twelve Months to 30 September 2009