

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD REPORT – NOVEMBER 2013

<b>Title of paper:</b>	<b>Reducing Offending Behaviour</b>	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Helen Blackman, Acting Director of Safeguarding Dave Walker, Inspector Kaur, Nottinghamshire Police, Sarah Day	<b>Wards affected: ALL</b>
<b>Contact Officer(s) and contact details:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PC Sam Flint, Children in Care Police Officer, Nottinghamshire Police</li> <li>• Kevin Hatherley, Case Manager and Youth Offending Team (YOT) Lead, Children in Care</li> <li>• Glynis Storer, Central Locality Team Manager, YOT</li> </ul>	
<b>Other officers who have provided input:</b>	Elise Darragh, Insight Manager (Analytical), Children and Families.	
<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 progress made in the reduction of the criminal behaviour of children in care (CiC). The aim of this report is to focus on the role of the CiC Police Officer and YOT Lead for CiC, and to explain how these contribute to this aim. It will also discuss achievements made during 2012/13, including the progress made around implementing Restorative Justice (RJ) within the care homes, the Quarterly Reducing Offending meetings held with the care home staff and the development of strategies to reduce the risk of sexual exploitation of Children in Care. Performance information is enhanced by the development of a local measure and is summarised.</p>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>1</b>	The Board to continue to acknowledge the importance of the role of the CiC Police Officer and YOT Lead for CiC in the drive to reduce the criminalisation of CiC and improve their outcomes	
<b>2</b>	The Board to approve the development of a further Safeguarding Children in Care event for 2014	
<b>3</b>	The Board to approve the continuation and Review of multi-agency Network Meetings with care providers.	
<b>4</b>	To acknowledge extensive work being carried out to reduce the risk of sexual exploitation of children in care.	

# 1 **BACKGROUND**

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

### 1.1 **Rate of offending by Nottingham CiC**

Performance information taken from the annual OC2 statutory return for Children in Care (CiC) shows the number of children and young people, aged over 10, who have been looked after for more than 12 months, and who have been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year, for an offence committed while being looked after. Performance results for 2013 (as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013) indicate a reduction in offending, with 8.7% (20 children) of CiC who were aged 10 or over being convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year.

Number of CiC aged 10 years old or older							
13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13
220	242	223	216	215	222	225	230
Percentage of CiC cautioned or convicted during the year							
13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13	13/13
19.1%	13.2%	9.40%	8.80%	9.80%	9.00%	9.80%	8.70%

The Department for Education (DfE) will publish at the end of September 2013 benchmarking data for all Local Authorities. Once this is available, additional analysis will be undertaken to show ranking positions and to highlight how our performance compares to national and regional averages.

The Children In Care Outcomes Group agreed that a local measure of offending was required to monitor offending within the children in care population, regardless of the time they have been in care. This includes Nottingham city young people placed within and outside of the city boundary. Officers have developed a new measure which will be reported on a quarterly basis going forward. Performance is reported two quarters in arrears to ensure that the most accurate and robust view of offending rates can be provided. Data shown below covers the period of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012.

During this period, 8 young people committed an offence while in care, representing 2.5% of the 10-17 aged CiC cohort. Some young people committed multiple offences and the total number of offences committed in this period was 48. By far the most common offence was Violence Against the Person.

<i>September to December 2012</i>			
<i>a</i>	<i>Number of yp aged 10-17 who were in care during the period</i>	326	
<i>b</i>	<i>Of (a), number that committed a proven offence while in care</i>	8	2.5%
<i>c</i>	<i>Number of offences</i>	48	

## **1.2 Role of CiC police officer/YOT Lead to address the criminalisation of CiC**

The role of CiC Police Officer and YOT lead for CiC play an important part in reducing the criminalisation of CiC. Both roles are keen to emphasise the interplay between a young person's risk and vulnerability, and the reduction in the criminalisation of CiC as sitting within the safeguarding agenda. Both roles are involved in work to highlight the positive achievements of CiC, such as the planning and development of the Big It Up Awards for 2013.

The Police Officer for CiC, PC Sam Flint sits within the Targeted Support Team based at Isabella Street. This has enabled close liaison with Children and Families, YOT, Social Care, health and placement providers. Acting as a central point of contact, this Police Officer has an overview of young people placed within Nottingham City, enabling a pro-active police response. The role assists in the management of offending by performing a preventative role in placement planning helping to ensure where possible that children are placed in suitable accommodation units (for example ensuring that children at risk of sexual exploitation are not placed near the Forest). The officer also supports the missing from care protocol and co-facilitates cross-authority training on this subject. The CiC Police Officer also ensures that the Multi Agency Guidance (see attachment) is implemented consistently.

Young people can relate to the commitment shown to them by the CiC police officer who acts as a positive role model; they will often refer to this officer as 'theirs'.

## **1.3 Restorative Justice (RJ)**

The use of RJ disposals within the care system to avoid involving children in Court processes has continued to expand during the past year. We have been able to divert children from the criminal justice system enabling generic police time to be used more efficiently. On-going training of restorative justice for residential staff has continued and a further RJ course has been secured free of charge for November 2013. This consists of 12 places for staff from both private and statutory homes and also a representative from the 15 Plus team within the Nottingham city council. The YOT staff group have been extensively trained in RJ and are also prepared to offer training to residential staff.

## **1.4 Quarterly Reducing Offending Meetings**

Quarterly Reducing Offending meetings were initially held within local authority children's homes, and were extended in 2011 to include the growing number of private providers. These meetings resumed on a quarterly basis in 2013. Whilst this has been a very positive step, it has had a resource impact for the CiC police officer and YOT lead.

The YOT Lead collates information and feedback about care homes from YOT staff and brings this and any concerns to the meeting where they are discussed with residential staff. He co- chairs the Quarterly Meetings with the CiC Police Officer.

The purpose of the meeting is to promote a consistent and quality approach to communication, behaviour management, health, education, and responses to children and young people who go missing from care. These meetings compliment Quality Assurance processes, help to identify any concerns or themes, and provide an opportunity to share information and reflect, to prevent the unnecessary escalation of concerns.

Administrative support is now provided by the Targeted Support Team and minutes are copied to the Placements Team. Any safeguarding concerns are reported directly to the young person's Social Worker and Social Worker's Manager. Progress is reported periodically to the CiC outcomes group and annually to the corporate parenting board.

## 1.5 **Sexual Exploitation**

The importance of addressing the issue of sexual exploitation has been established not least because children experiencing this can become involved in offending as an expression of their extreme distress. For example the YOT has evidence that violent, as well as sexually aggressive behaviour can sometimes be triggered by young people's engagement in this activity. The CiC police officer represents Nottinghamshire Police at the **Cross-Authority Child Sexual Exploitation Meetings**. One of the actions from this group's action plan is to "reduce the risk of sexual exploitation of Children in Care" and the CiC PO has been given the responsibility of setting up a **subgroup** specifically aimed at reducing the risk of sexual exploitation of children in the care system. Amongst the membership of this group are OFSTED, the City Council Children's Placements Team and a specialist Independent Reviewing Officer. PC Flint and the YOT lead worker has also established a **Concerns Network Meeting** for multi agencies to attend and has set up a direct channel for information to be fed into. These meetings are held to discuss any concerns agencies may have about young people in Nottingham who may be at risk of or are being exploited. They are held quarterly and hosted by the NSPCC, with nominated attendees from Police, Health, CAMHS, YOT, NSPCC Project and Residential care (both statutory and private). At these meetings any concerns that are based on low level intelligence and not yet at referral level are discussed, information is shared and a multi agency strategy is put in place.

PC Flint has also helped with the securing of funding and planning to commission a bespoke theatre production which tackles the issue of sexual exploitation of children, showing how they can easily be drawn into this world, and which has been presented to both city and county Schools and to children in care within the city. Also attached to this is a catalogue of resources for staff to use in residential settings.

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

It is proposed that the role of CiC police officer and YOT Lead working in close partnership is a model of best practice. This was recognised within Ofsted inspection processes in both 2010, 2011 and 2012. It is believed that this has contributed towards protecting our children in care from criminalisation and from sexual exploitation in Nottingham city. This has also provided a more efficient response to children missing from care. Nottingham City is the only authority where the CiC Police Officer and YOT lead work in close collaboration, and therefore Nottingham City could be considered a national lead in this area.

It has not been possible for a Safeguarding Event to be organised in 2013 due to workload issues. However a further Safeguarding Event is proposed for 2014. Positive feedback from participants at the 2012 event felt their aims were achieved. Such events provide an opportunity to evidence multi agency working and participation, to identify issues for consideration, and to share knowledge and developments in the field.

### **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 by Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham City Council. Reduction of offending and missing reports has a financial benefit across the Authority and its partners, as well as safeguarding CiC and improving their outcomes.
- 4.2 The YOT Lead role is a specialism incorporated within a case management post. Whilst this does have resource implications no additional funding is sought for this role. The YOT lead has also become involved in the reduction of sexual exploitation of children in care.
- 4.3 Sponsorship of any future Safeguarding event (venue, lunch) will be sought through our private providers and has no cost implications.
- 4.4 The RJ course has been secured at no cost to the authority by PC Flint. The YOT has trained trainers who will also be offering to facilitate RJ training to residential social workers, at no cost.
- 4.5 Through the planning and implementation of the theatre group in relation to sexual exploitation, training has been expanded to include residential staff in both private & statutory providers. We are seeking to incorporate this training as a mandatory requirement for OFSTED registration.

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

- 5.1 It is proposed these roles minimise risks to both the organisation and young people in care. The sustainability of these roles are considered instrumental in consolidating and building upon work in this area to date, in an effort to strive for better outcomes for children in care in Nottingham.

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

- 6.1 Annual statutory return (903) for CiC.  
Multi Agency Guidance