

Corporate Parenting Board - 18 January 2021

Title of paper:	Reducing Offending Behaviour (Children in Care)	
Director:	Helen Blackman – Director, Children’s Integrated Services	Wards affected: All
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Other colleagues who have provided input:	PC Rebecca Dalby – CiCPO Boyd Livingstone – Youth Justice Service Principal Analyst	
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:		
Nottingham People		X
Living in Nottingham		<input type="checkbox"/>
Growing Nottingham		<input type="checkbox"/>
Respect for Nottingham		<input type="checkbox"/>
Serving Nottingham Better		<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>To update the Board on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the published data for 2019/20 regarding reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population, published 21.12.2020; ii. the activity of the Children in Care Police Officers (CiCPO) and Leaving Care Service (LCS) Senior Personal Advisor 2020, in working together to reduce offending and safeguard Children in Care, (including how this has been impacted by COVID-19); iii. the review of the Multi-agency Protocol for Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire, to reduce the criminalisation of Children in Care. 		
Recommendations:		
1	To note the data regarding reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population.	
2	To note the importance of sustaining the work of the CiCPO’s to continue to improve outcomes for Children in Care, supported by the LCS Senior Personal Advisor.	

1 Reasons for recommendations

- 1.1 The role of CiCPO and LCS Senior Personal Advisor, (previously known as Youth Justice Service Lead for CiC), working in partnership, has previously been suggested as a model of best practice. This has been recognised in repeat Ofsted inspections: “The dedicated CiCPO successfully supports restorative justice interventions, and there have been impressive reductions in offending rates.” “Joint work with the police, youth justice service

and community-based services results in shared strategic approaches to providing swift and flexibly deployed resources, reducing the risk of young people re-offending.” (Ofsted 2018)

- 1.2 To our knowledge, Nottingham City is the only authority where CiCPO and LCS Senior Personal Advisor work in collaboration and to this model. One CiCPO is now in place for the County, and they are working with the City to develop the role. We believe that measures have contributed to the marked reduction in offending within the Children in Care population over time.

2 Background (including outcomes of consultation)

- 2.1 **National reporting data** is submitted annually, based on the Children in Care population whose home Authority is Nottingham City, who have been in care for a year or more, are aged 10-17, and have received a Youth Caution, Youth Conditional Caution or conviction within the year.

- 2.2 Up until (and including) the year 2016/17 we were able to report a 5 year trend in reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population. In 2017/18 we maintained our performance in terms of the numbers of Children in Care who offended. The figure for 2018/19 reduced to 3%. We can now report a figure of 4% for 2019/20. This is felt to represent a maintenance of performance. It may be noted that data is rounded to the nearest whole number, and figures are now so low that some fluctuation is likely.

2.3 Table 1

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
9.80%	9%	9.80%	8.70%	8.20%	6%	6%	5%	6%	3%	4%

(Source <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>)

- 2.4 We are encouraged that other Authorities continue to seek out advice and guidance around reducing criminalisation from Nottingham City, with a view to improving outcomes for Children in Care.
- 2.5 **Specialist roles:** Both CiCPO posts continue to be jointly funded by Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham City Council. PC Rebecca Dalby joined PC Sam Flint in the role of CiCPO in January 2018. We are pleased to report that capacity for the role in the City has now been permanently expanded to 2 Police Officers. It may be noted that in March 2020 Nottinghamshire Police also successfully recruited a CiCPO for the County, jointly funded by Nottinghamshire County Council. This was with a view to provide parity of service and improve outcomes for children across Nottinghamshire.
- 2.6 The LCS Senior Personal Advisor holds a caseload of young adults, supports management and performance. Elements of the previous Youth Justice Service Lead role are now embedded within the Youth Justice Service.
- 2.7 **Multi Agency Protocol:** The LCS Senior Personal Advisor, CiCPO and Nottinghamshire Police worked alongside the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Service Managers for Children in Care and Placements to develop and implement a protocol for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, with a view to further reducing the criminalisation of Children in Care. This Protocol embedded restorative justice and early intervention, including tools for carers. A renewed focus was placed upon the completion of a CPS 10-point checklist,

to provide information to the Prosecutor/Out of Court Disposal Panel, to ensure the most appropriate action is taken (if any), following offending behaviour by a Child in Care. The then Youth Offending Team Board ratified this document in 2017.

- 2.8 The existing Protocol was agreed prior to the publication of the National Protocol on Reducing Unnecessary Criminalisation of Looked-After Children and Care Leavers, November 2018. Though this protocol is already reflective of the spirit and many of the practices put forward in this national document, it was felt its publication should prompt a multi-agency review, including a consideration for Care Leavers.
- 2.9 The CiCPO for the City and County, LCS and the Youth Justice Service have been working together with the CPS to implement and review the current Reducing Offending Behaviour Protocol. Amendments have been made, following consultation with all agencies, to include risks such as Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). Together the agencies have consulted on changes to the 10 point list to consolidate and make this a more user friendly document. This is being consulted upon nationally for consistency. Once this has been approved the amended Protocol can proceed to sign off by respective Leads. CPS, Youth Justice, Nottinghamshire Police and the LCS now all meet regularly using Teams to discuss good practice and address any issues.
- 2.10 **Children in Care Arrest Screening:** The difficulty of early and effective identification of Children in Care on arrest was identified as a concern in 2015, and an Arrest Screening Programme devised to pro-actively divert Children in Care from prosecution where appropriate. The arrest Screening standard email has been improved and gives concise guidance. The Arrest Screening Programme is now embedded within the Youth Justice Service, with the LCS Senior Personal Advisor providing consultation only.
- 2.11 With the help of an analyst the CiCPO now receive a daily incident list of all reports from children's homes and semi-independent providers. This allows the CiCPO to intervene immediately, offering advice and guidance to officers to prevent unnecessary criminalisation of Children in Care.
- 2.12 **Practitioner Forums:** These Fora are chaired by the CiCPO and LCS Senior Personal Advisor, for the benefit of Local Authority, Private providers, foster carers and representatives of Children's Services and the voluntary sector. Resources are promoted, guest speakers present and best practice is shared. We aim to offer participants 2 Fora per year. Evaluation has been wholly positive, with key themes being the opportunity to network and share learning from each other and guest speakers. The last meeting was held in person on 28.02.2020 and focussed on CCE, LCS and the review of our Protocol. Due to COVID Practitioner Forums have been frozen and the CiCPO have focussed on doing work with homes on Teams. We have discussed holding these virtually and will progress this in 2021.
- 2.13 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE):** The CiCPO sits on the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) Panel. They continue to liaise daily with Children's homes, supporting workers to implement our protocols, identify indicators and promote the use of tools to safeguard young people. Although Concerns Network Meetings are on hold due to the impact of COVID-19, a bulletin is sent to members to maintain partnership working, and those partners continue to share information.
- 2.14 Creative practices have been implemented and CiCPO meet staff teams on Teams to discuss any issues and offer advice. CCE and CSE packages have been created which are shared with staff at the homes and CiCPO facilitate a training input, also through

Teams. These packages educate staff and show the correct pathways to use when there are CCE/CSE concerns. Packages around internet safety and healthy relationships have also been created for staff teams to use in key-work sessions with young people. Nottinghamshire Police are recruiting dedicated CCE Co-ordinators who will work directly with young people identifying risks and attend the multi-agency CCE meeting to provide a coordinated approach. These officers will sit within the same team as the CiCPO.

2.15 **Diversionary work with young women:** The CiCPO lead a girls-only boxing provision in collaboration with Jawaid Khaliq, World Champion boxer, to empower young women. Nottinghamshire Police continue to fund this project. The class has thrived and even through Lockdown the girls have maintained participation through Teams. The CiCPO facilitated a trip to the Galleries of Justice Choices and Consequences exhibition for the girls boxing group. Organisers of the exhibition commented on how engaged, informed and confident the group were, representing our children in care brilliantly.

2.16 “I’ve never had any real friends. The boxing girls are now like a supportive family to me. I don’t want to let them down!” NW 2020.

2.17 We are delighted to share that we now have 3 police cadets and a trainee coach!

3 Other options considered in making recommendations

3.1 None

4 Finance colleague comments (including implications and value for money/VAT)

4.1 The post of CiCPO is jointly funded by Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham City Council. Reduction of offending and missing reports have both a short and long term financial benefit across the authority and partners, as well as safeguarding Children in Care and improving outcomes.

4.2 “The rate at which a minority of children move from care into the criminal justice system is not inevitable.....“Good practice can dramatically reduce the long term costs that arise when young people get sucked into the criminal justice system unnecessarily – one study calculated a return of £3.41 for every £1 invested.” (In Care, Out of Trouble 2016)

5 Legal and Procurement colleague comments (including risk management issues, and legal, Crime and Disorder Act and procurement implications)

5.1 None.

6 Strategic Assets & Property colleague comments (for decision relating to all property assets and associated infrastructure) (Area Committee reports only)

6.1 None.

7 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

7.1 An EIA is not required because *(Please explain why an EIA is not necessary)*

8 List of background papers other than published works or those disclosing confidential or exempt information

8.1 Joint Protocol Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire

9 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

9.1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-protocol-on-reducing-criminalisation-of-looked-after-children>