

## Corporate Parenting Board - 20 September 2021

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Reducing Offending Behaviour (Children in Care)		
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Helen Watson – Interim Director, Children’s Integrated Services	<b>Wards affected: All</b>	
<b>Report author(s) and contact details:</b>	Natalie Pink – Leaving Care Service 0115 8761333 PC Sam Flint BEM - Children in Care Police Officer, Nottinghamshire Police 07711443797		
<b>Other colleagues who have provided input:</b>	PC Rebecca Dalby – Children in Care Police Officer Boyd Livingstone - Navin – Youth Justice Service Principal Analyst		
<b>Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)</b>			
<b>Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:</b>			
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"/>
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To update the Board of the published data for 2019/20 regarding reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population.</li> <li>• To update the Board about the activity of the Children in Care Police Officers, with support from the Leaving Care Service Senior Personal Advisor 2020/21, working together to reduce offending and safeguard Children in Care.</li> </ul>			
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>			
<b>1</b>	For the Board to note the data regarding reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population.		
<b>2</b>	For the Board to recognise the importance of sustaining the work of the CiC Police Officers to continue to improve outcomes for Children in Care, supported by the Leaving Care Service Senior Personal Advisor.		

### 1 Reasons for recommendations

- 1.1 The role of Children in Care Police Officers, and developments in practice in this area supported by the now Leaving Care Service Senior Personal Advisor, has previously been suggested as a model of best practice. This has been recognised in repeat Ofsted inspections: “The dedicated children in care police officer successfully supports restorative justice interventions, and there have been impressive reductions in offending rates.” (Ofsted 2018) “Really appreciate your input and insight, it is priceless” (Ofsted July 2021)

## 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.
- 2.3 In 2019/20 we are pleased to report that we maintained the 3% figure, which sees us in the top half of performing authorities (table 1).

### 2.4 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%	3%

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

- 2.5 **Specialist roles:** Both Children in Care Police Officer posts continue to be jointly funded by Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham City Council. The Leaving Care Service Senior Personal Advisor holds a caseload of young adults, supports management and works in this area in partnership.
- 2.6 **Multi Agency Protocol:** The Leaving Care Service Senior Personal Advisor, Children in Care Police Officers and Nottinghamshire Police worked alongside the Crown Prosecution Service, 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 Crown Prosecution 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.
- 2.7 This 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 was 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. The national protocol asks “would this [response] be good enough for my child?” and extends a consideration beyond children and young people to care leavers. Stakeholders have been consulted and a draft revised document prepared. There has been some delay in sign off as we advocated for amendments to the 10-point checklist, which required national consultation. We now aim to move ahead to sign off using the original checklist. Recommendations from the National Review are incorporated in the review of the Local Offer for Care Leavers and will be included in training materials for Personal Advisors.
- 2.8 **Children in Care Arrest Screening:** The difficulty of early and effective identification of Children in Care on arrest was a concern in 2015, and an Arrest Screening Programme devised to pro-actively divert Children in Care from prosecution where appropriate. The Arrest Screening Programme is now embedded within the Youth Justice Service. In

addition there is also now a screening tool implemented by Nottinghamshire Police, which allows all reports from children's' homes to be monitored at the earliest possible opportunity, directly from the control room, to allow timely intervention by the Children in Care Police Officers.

- 2.9 **Multi Agency Working and awareness raising:** Practitioner Forums have been chaired by the Children in Care Police Officers and the Senior Personal Advisor, for the benefit of Local Authority, Private providers, foster carers and invited representatives of Childrens Services and the voluntary sector. Resources were promoted, guest speakers presented and best practice shared. Sadly these meetings were of a scale that has not been possible to safely replicate in person during the COVID-19 pandemic. Evaluation has always been wholly positive, and we have consulted with previous participants as to whether these should be held virtually as an alternative. Key themes were that what participants valued most was the opportunity to network in person and to share learning from sitting in multi-agency groups. Feedback was that participants would value these events returning at a time when they can be held COVID securely, in person.
- 2.10 Nottinghamshire Police, Children in Care Police Officers for City and County, representatives from the City and County Youth Justice Services, Crown Prosecution Service and City Leaving Care Service, now meet virtually to share information, develop services, identify and address any issues for offending behaviour by children in care across Nottinghamshire.
- 2.11 The Children in Care Police Officers have created a video package which is presented to all new police recruits to promote trauma informed practice and the vulnerabilities of working with children in care. This has resulted in much discussion and awareness raising.
- 2.12 **Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation:** The Children in Care Police Officers continue to liaise daily with homes, supporting workers to implement our protocol, identify indicators and promote the use of tools to safeguard young people. They have developed and delivered tailored resources for homes and young people to prevent offending and respond to need, making new links and sharing new resources, for instance working with the organisation 'Money Mules,' to prevent financial exploitation.
- 2.13 The Concerns Network Meeting, where over 20 agencies meet to share intelligence and implement disruption tactics, has been unable to meet in person during the pandemic. However, a Concerns Network Bulletin containing updated information has been distributed via email every 2 months to participating agencies, in conjunction with the NSPCC. Once this is possible, the Concerns Network will reform in person.
- 2.14 Young people have access to a specialist named person within Nottinghamshire Police who works closely with the Children in Care Police Officers. This person is able to provide careers advice, support around job applications and apprentice schemes. We have a number of young people now in the Police Cadets and on Access schemes with Nottinghamshire Police at Sherwood Lodge. A regular information pack is sent to all providers across the city sharing activities resources and job vacancies.
- 2.15 The Children in Care Police Officers lead a girls-only boxing provision in collaboration with Jawaid Khaliq, World Champion boxer, to empower young women. The Violence Reduction Unit are currently funding this project.

2.16 “I don’t know what I would have done without having the boxing as a focus it helped me get through a really difficult time!! 19 years (been attending 3 years)

“I love boxing I am here every week and will do anything to get here” 15yrs

“I love it. I now get to do a 10mins yoga session for everyone at the end of the class” 15yrs

2.17 **Restorative Approaches:** The Youth Justice Service has an Out Of Court Disposal Triage system and this Panel meet every week in an effort to reduce the numbers of young people entering the Youth Justice System. There are established protocols and working practice guidelines with Victim Care to ensure all ‘person’s harmed’ have a voice.

### **3 Other options considered in making recommendations**

3.1 None.

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

4.1 The CiC Police Officer are 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 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No

X

An EIA is not required because:

(The report does not contain proposals or financial decisions.)

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

8.1 Joint Protocol Reducing Offending Behaviour, 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>