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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee - 11 October 2016

**Subject:** Youth Justice Service

**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

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**Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a progress update on developments within the Youth Justice Service.

**Recommendations**

The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

None

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This is the first report from Youth Justice (YJ) to the Young People and Children's Scrutiny Committee although the service reports regularly to the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee as part of the Community Safety Partnership. This report provides an overview of how the service is operating, recent developments and future challenges.

## **2.0 Background Information**

2.1 Youth Justice Services were first established in England and Wales in 2000 under legislation within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 with the aim of preventing offending and re-offending by children and young people. The legislation gave Local Authorities and statutory partners the responsibility of setting up multi-disciplinary Youth Offending Teams to fulfil statutory duties in relation to the delivery and management of YJ services locally. The named statutory partners are: Health, Police and Probation.

2.2 In Manchester YJ, there are approximately 80 posts from a range of disciplines from public, private and voluntary sector organisations. These include:

- Local Authority
- Greater Manchester Police
- National Probation Service
- Central Manchester Foundation Trust
- Remedi (Restorative Justice charity)
- Work Solutions
- G4S
- Education

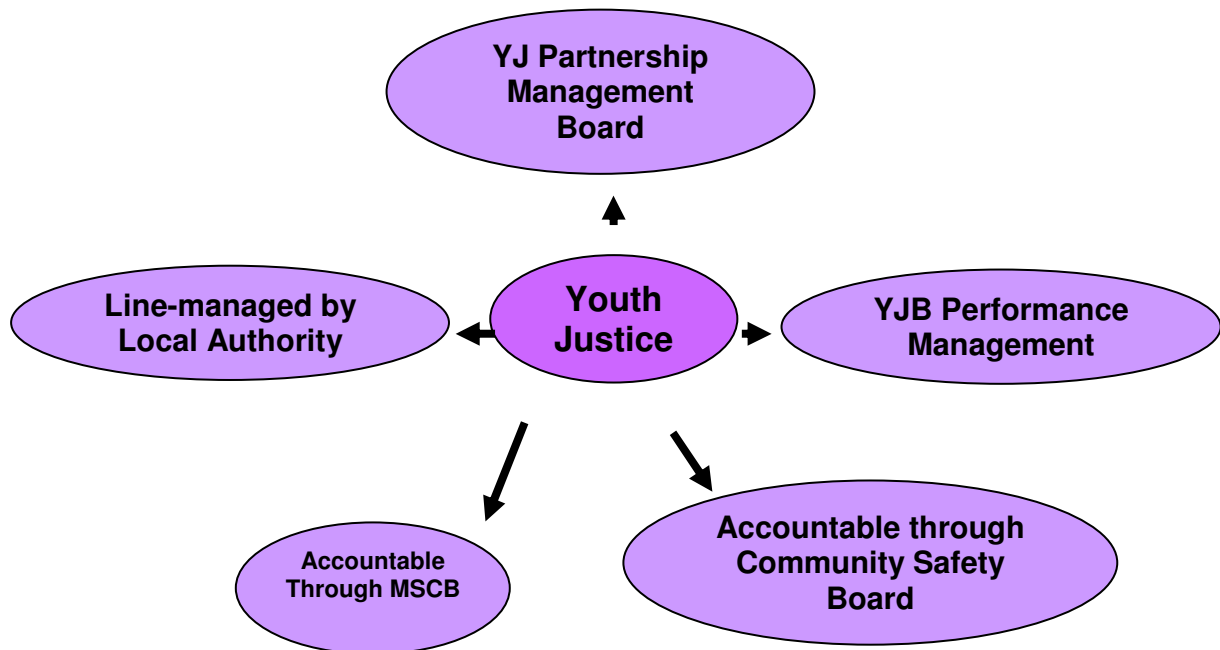
2.3 The Service is organised into three main teams in the localities. The North Team is based at the Fulmead Centre just off Cheetham Hill and the South Team is based in Longsight. A third team (also based in Fulmead) manages the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme and provides a service for the Courts. Each team is made up of YJ Officers, YJ Support Officers, Police Officers, Child and Adolescent Mental Health workers and other workers from commissioned services.

## **3.0 Governance and Accountability Arrangements**

3.1 The work of the YJ service is overseen by the YJ Management Board which brings statutory partners and other appropriate representatives together to agree on the resourcing and operation of the service as well as the formulation of the annual Youth Justice Plan. The Board monitors performance and finance as well as providing guidance on the strategic direction of the development of the service.

3.2 Whilst the Local Authority has the primary responsibility for ensuring that appropriate YJ services are in place, the national Youth Justice Board (YJB) within the Ministry of Justice gives an annual grant towards the running costs of the service with terms and conditions that have to be fulfilled. The YJB sets standards, monitors performance and supports the development of services at a local and national level.

In Manchester, YJ also reports on performance to the Community Safety Partnership Board and on safeguarding matters to the Children’s Safeguarding Board. All serious safeguarding incidents must be reported to the YJB, the Manchester Children’s Safeguarding Board (MSCB) and to OFSTED, if the appropriate criteria are met.



#### 4.0 Funding

4.1 The statutory guidance sets out the responsibilities for the statutory partners to provide resources for the service. In Manchester, we receive funding and/or seconded staff from the Local Authority, Police, National Probation Service and Central Manchester Foundation Trust. We get additional funds from the Direct Schools Grant and the Community Safety Partnership.

4.2 Manchester YJ has experienced significant reductions in resources over the past five years and in 15/16, the YJB Grant element was reduced by 30%. During the same period, the National Probation Service reviewed all secondments and Manchester YJ lost three posts and the funding was halved. The gradual reduction in posts within the service has been offset by the continued reduction in First Time Entrants and so caseloads have not increased despite a smaller number of case-managers. A key risk for the service going forward is any change to the local police policy and practice of using ‘Community Resolutions’ as an alternative to charging young people that would lead to an increase in the numbers going through the courts.

## **5.0 Assessment, Planning and Delivery of Interventions**

5.1 The majority of the work of the YJ Officer or Support Officer comes from the criminal Courts, Magistrates and Crown. The exception to this are the referrals from police for an 'Out of Court Disposal' which are used mainly for those committing less serious offences or are on the edge of entering the Criminal Justice System. We also offer a support service to victims of the crimes of young people and we approach the victims directly to offer this.

5.2 The Courts will request for a Pre-Sentence Report in most cases so that we can carry out an in-depth assessment of a young person, their family circumstances, attitude and behaviour and the background to why they committed the offence/s. The YJ Officer will, having considered all the circumstances, make a recommendation to the Court on the most appropriate sentence. The main options for those appearing in Youth Court are:

- Referral Order
- Youth Rehabilitation Order
- Custody

5.3 All of these sentences require the young person to be supervised by the YJ Service and the Youth Rehabilitation Order will have conditions attached to it which will indicate a number of restrictions (such as curfews, electronic monitoring) and obligations (including Unpaid Work, Reparation, Attendance Centre). Those whose offending behaviour is more serious/frequent and heading towards custody, are often, as a last resort, given a condition to comply with an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance programme which can require 25 hours of face-to-face contact with the YJ Service. If the young person is in full-time education, the hours at school count towards this.

5.4 The Intensive Programme is designed to be demanding and challenging of young people all of whom are regarded as high risk and/or prolific in terms of re-offending. The team works with young people in groups and on an individual basis to address the issues that have led to offending, to engage them in more constructive activity and link them back into education or employment. An analysis of last years data shows that the caseload for this programme was predominantly 17 year old males who were high risk and had high levels of vulnerability. Many of them lead chaotic lives and 80% of the young people breached this order and were returned to court. Most were given second and third chances to complete the programme, such is the confidence of the Magistrates and Judges in this intervention. Half of the young people on the programme last year were Looked After or had previously been in care (although these are not all Manchester young people). The proportion who have not re-offended since completion is 71% which is significantly high.

5.5 Many of the young people known to Youth Justice are highly vulnerable and safeguarding is a key priority for the service. High proportions of the caseload have a learning disability and many have communication difficulties. Some young people have suffered abuse or have lived within an environment where there are abusive relationships and many continue to be exploited as they grow into young adults. Looked After Children make up approx 15% of the caseload and whilst some have

Looked After status due to being on Remand, the largest proportion were in care prior to remand or sentence.

5.6 Young people from Manchester who are remanded or sentenced to custody go to either a Secure Children's Home (eg Barton Moss in Salford), a Secure Training Centre (nearest one is Rainsbrook, near Rugby or a Young Offender Institute (Wetherby in Yorkshire is the local one). All young people who go into custody continue to receive statutory support from a case-manager and help to prepare for their release and rehabilitation back into their local community. When released after a custodial sentence, young people are placed on a licence with conditions about where they live, possible curfew, electronic monitoring and attendance at ISS.

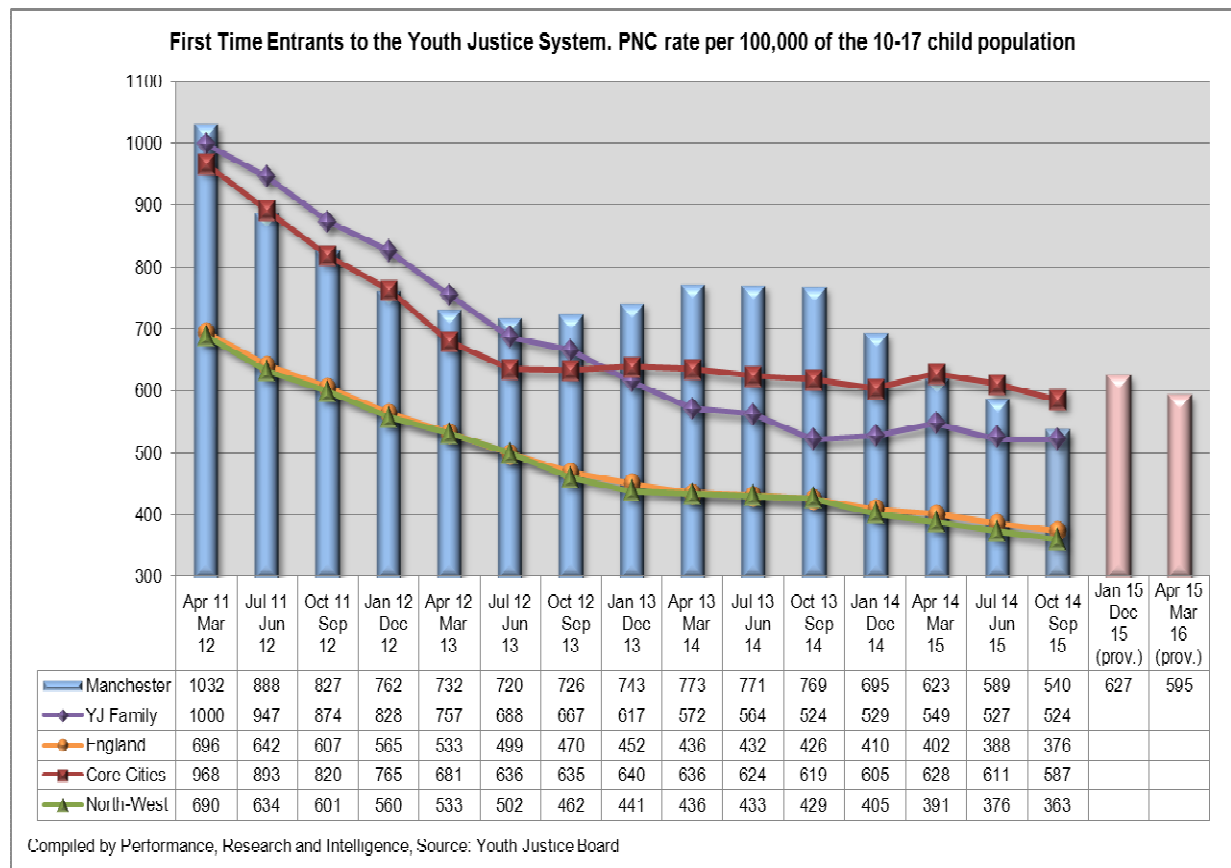
## **6.0 Performance**

6.1 YJ Services nationally are measured according to their outcomes in:

- Reducing the number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Criminal Justice System
- Reducing re-offending
- Reducing the numbers of children and young people sentenced to custody

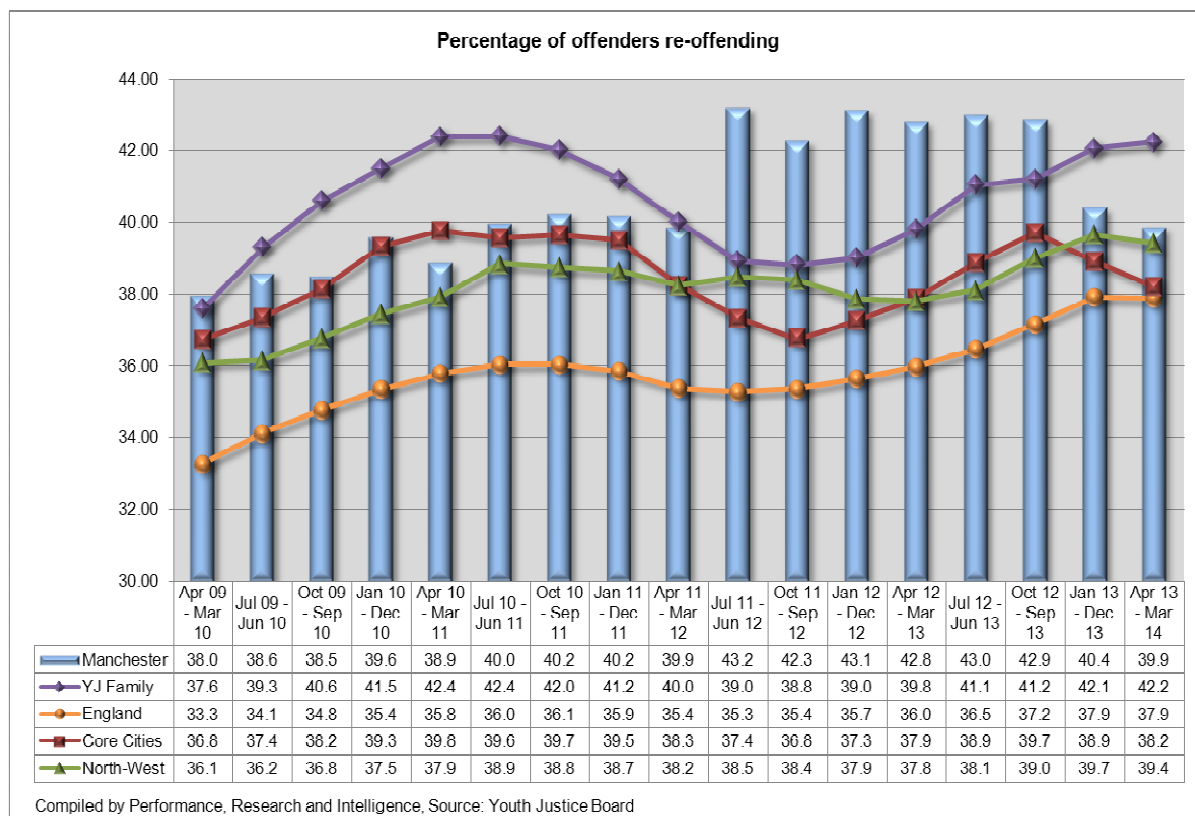
### **6.2 First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System**

There has been much discussion and debate at the YJ Management Board about the reductions in numbers of children and young people appearing before the courts. The most recent data available is to September 2015. The table shows that for the 12 month period, Manchester had a decrease in the number of First Time Entrants compared to the previous 12 month period. Manchester's rate is higher than the national, regional and YOS family averages, but lower than the Core City average rate. Please note that data for December 2015 onwards is provisional and for Manchester only.



### 6.3 Re-offending

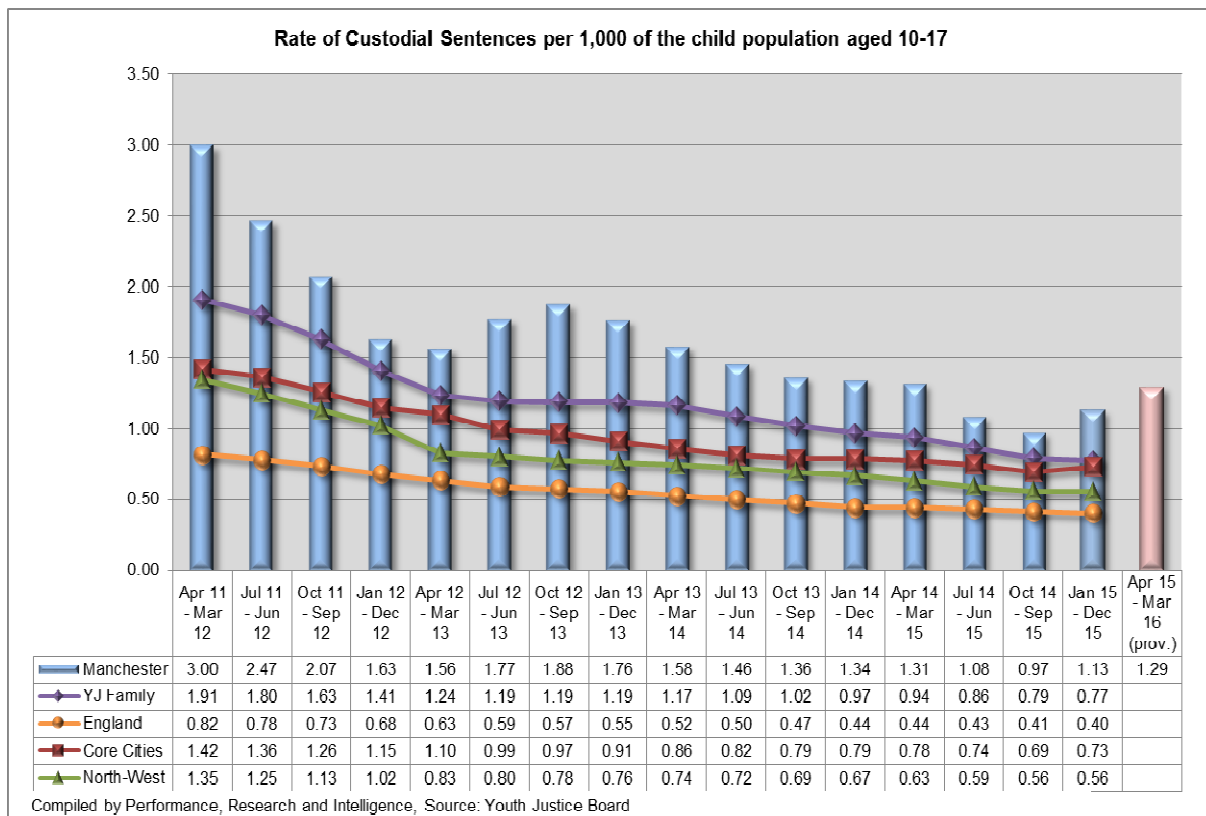
There are two measures of re-offending, a frequency rate which considers the number of re-offences per child, and a binary rate which considers whether a child has re-offended or not. Data is published by the YJB two years in arrears. The percentage of re-offenders offending had been fairly stable between 42% and 43% for six 12 month periods in a row and above comparator groups. There has since been a decrease in the last two 12 month periods and Manchester's performance is now better than the YOS Family average but remains higher than the national, regional and Core City averages.



#### 6.4 Use of Custody

Provisional data shows an increase in the rate of custodial sentences in the 12 month period Apr 2015-Mar 2016. After nine 12 month periods in a row of decreasing rates, there has now been an increase in two consecutive periods. Manchester’s rate remains higher than the national, regional, Core City and YOS Family averages although the gap has narrowed considerably since 2012.

Nationally, the numbers of young people sent to custody has been reducing year on year and have fallen to their lowest level – just 861 for July 16. This is 73% less than in October 2002. This data does not include the numbers of young people who are remanded into custody, usually on the most serious charges or for breach of conditions of bail. Responsibility for paying for remands now sits with the Local Authority and there have been some lengthy and expensive remands of young people which has meant that the budget provided by the YJB has not covered the total cost.



## 7.0 Preparation for Inspection

7.1 HMI Probation (HMIP) is the inspectorate for Youth Justice Services nationally. Other inspectorates are increasingly interested in areas of overlap including OFSTED, HM Courts Inspectors, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and HM Inspectorate of Prisons. Manchester Youth Justice had a Short Quality Screening Inspection by HMIP in June 2013 and the findings were mixed. Good practice was highlighted including the quality of Pre-Sentence Reports, the introduction of Compliance Panels to reduce the numbers of breach appearances at Court and the YJ approach to ensuring that sentences are served as the court expects. Inspectors however, recommended that middle managers needed to provide greater oversight of case-management to quality assure and develop the work of their staff.

7.2 Since the inspection, there has been a focus on training and development of middle managers specifically on effective management oversight. HMIP provided a two-day training workshop for the YJ Management Team and two managers successfully applied to be HMIP Local Assessors who assist inspectors when they visit other YJ Services. This has helped to raise the level of skill and knowledge into the service and as well as some insight into what is expected by HMIP. A management restructure assisted with the establishment of a Quality Assurance and Performance Management post in 2015 to support and scrutinise the quality of case-management in the Service. Recently and in preparation for a future inspection, there has been an audit of all management oversight of casework and a third of cases in each team have been examined in detail. The findings show that whilst there is clear evidence of effective oversight by some managers, this is not consistent across the management team and further work is required.



## 8.0 YJ and Devolution

8.1 There are 9 YJ services in Greater Manchester as Bury and Rochdale are presently managed together by Rochdale. The Heads of Service collaborate closely, meeting each month to discuss practice, policy, local and national developments and Manchester's Head of Service chairs these meetings. The GM YJ services have been engaged for some time in developing joint initiatives. For example, they jointly commission Appropriate Adult services and specialised training across GM, respond jointly to national and Greater Manchester consultations and have set up a GM team of Peer Reviewers to strengthen quality assurance in each service.

8.2 As part of the wider GM package of Children's Services Reforms, YJ has been identified as one of the key areas to benefit from transformation. This work is being led by Jill Colbert, Interim Corporate Director in Trafford Children's Services and the work-streams that are in place include:

- Better integration of the YJ diversion and prevention work with the Early Help offer
- The development of a joint commissioning framework for all YJ interventions
- The establishment of a GM Safeguarding post within HMYOI Wetherby
- A new GM Court Service to meet the needs of re-organised Youth Courts across GM

## 9.0 Future Challenges and Developments

9.1 The YJ landscape is continuously changing and services nationally have had to adjust and adapt. The funding reductions are just one aspect of this and changes in legislation, policing practice and court restructures also have a significant impact on operations, policy and planning. A recent change in case-management system from YOIS to Childview has been problematic in Manchester and has required a team of ICT specialists to work with managers to address the unresolved issues. A new case-management tool, AssetPlus, has been rolled out nationally by the YJB and in Manchester; this was implemented in June/July.

9.2 A key area of development has been the drive to reduce numbers of Looked After Children on the YJ caseload. A themed YJ Management Board met in July to consider the recommendations in Lord Laming's report, 'In Care, Out of Trouble' and to look at the progress that has been made in Manchester. There have been significant reductions in the numbers of Looked After Children appearing before the Youth Courts in the past three years. YJ staff have led Restorative Justice Training in local Children's Homes and have worked with the police to find better ways to manage the challenging behaviour of some young people who live there. The service works in partnership with the Care Leavers Association and together, are developing a new programme, the Clear Approach, to support Looked After Children to speak about their experiences of being in care and in the criminal justice system. Due to their experiences prior to becoming Looked After, the needs of this group are many and complex. As a service, YJ is determined to reduce the numbers further and following discussion at the themed YJ Board, an agreement was made to collaborate with partners and bid for additional resources to the Cabinet Office's Life Chances Fund.

9.3 Young people who offend are often stigmatised as a burden on the community. Remedi, a Restorative Justice charity, is commissioned by the YJ service to work with young people, victims and communities to help restore the balance when offences have been committed. A new partnership has launched in South Manchester which allows young people to become an asset to the communities in which they offend, and improve the lives of people living there. The project has been developed by Remedi and local provider, Southway Housing Trust, allows young people who have committed offences to help people in the communities they harmed, receive support from one another through the local TimeBank. The partnership means that the 'Reparation' hours the young people must complete are donated to the 'Community TimeBank', a community development project that supports local people to share their skills and abilities with one another for free. The time that is donated is therefore used on community-led support and activities, meaning the young offenders are helping on work ranging from assistance with the housework and gardening for those who find it difficult, to classes in Computer and English Language skills which improve confidence and employability.

## **10.0 Conclusion**

10.1 The Youth Justice Service has changed considerably to meet the needs of the courts and the young people who appear before them. There have been a number of challenges not least of all, the reduction in funding and staffing resources but this has not impacted upon the good performance of the service which is showing falling numbers of young people coming before the courts, re-offending and custody figures. This report highlights only some of the developments taking place within Youth Justice and the work with Looked After Children and Restorative Justice are key priorities within the service.

Members of Scrutiny will be interested in reparation projects that are taking place in local communities and your support for these would be welcomed.