

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 17 July 2019

**Subject:** Update on the Youth Justice Service

**Report of:** Strategic Director, Children and Education Services

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**Summary**

This report is an update to the report presented to the Committee in March 2019 and is focused on the work and progress that has been made against the action plan arising from the HMIP Inspection of Manchester’s Youth Justice Service undertaken in November 2018.

**Recommendations**

Scrutiny Committee members are asked to;

- Consider and scrutinise the progress that has been made against the action plan and seek assurance as the impact that has been achieved.
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**Wards Affected:** All

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**Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)**

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective Children and Education Services are critical to ensuring our children are afforded opportunities and supported to connect and contribute to the city’s sustainability and growth.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success	Ensuring children and young people are supported and afforded the opportunity to access and achieve in the City; empowered and supported by the delivery of a strong and cohesive system that works for all children.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Improving education and social care services that are connected to the wider partnership build the resilience of children and families needed to achieve their potential and be integrated into their communities
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit,	Improving outcomes for the children and families across the City, helps build and develop whole

work	communities and increases the livability of the City
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Successful services support successful families who are able to deliver continuing growth in the City

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

The following documents provide the context that has informed the preparation of this report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Report on the Youth Justice Service presented to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 5 March 2019
- HMIP Inspection Report on Manchester Youth Justice, February 2019

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. This is an update to the report presented to the Committee in March this year. It is focused on the work that has taken place and is underway within the service to improve the offer to our young people and practice. The service remains focussed on improving practice to address areas for development highlighted in the HMIP Inspection report in November 2018 and as identified during the review of the Youth Justice Service. This is important work to ensure that a high quality service is delivered to our children and young people. This report also provides updates on work undertaken to create a stable workforce and manageable caseloads.
- 1.2 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) are the appropriate body that inspect Youth Justice Services across England and Wales. This followed the development of a new inspection framework which was implemented in July 2018. It was a Full Joint Inspection which brought together a team of 7 inspectors from OFSTED, CQC, HMIC and Learning and Skills, and took place over a two week period. Inspectors examined casework records on 71 young people and had the same number of interviews with case-managers. They met with the Youth Justice Management Board, had a presentation from the Director of Children's Services and also held individual interviews with senior managers from partners including GMP, Health, Education, and Social Work. Following the inspection, HMIP rated the Service as 'Requires Improvement'.

## 2.0 Progress on HMIP Action Plan

- 2.1 There were 5 key actions identified within the HMIP Inspection Report published in February 2019 which for ease of reference are considered in bold font at the start of each section. In addition Annex A has sets out the actions with an update on progress made to implement these.
- 2.2 **Ensure premises are safe and accessible for children and young people, as well as staff.** There was a significant incident outside one of the Youth Justice offices that occurred during the inspection. Following the incident, the corporate property team have worked with the service to identify alternative premises. As a short term measure the two teams located there moved out and are currently, temporarily, based in Universal Square. This provides office accommodation and the Youth Justice Officers undertake more visits to homes and using young person friendly settings such as libraries, youth clubs to complete their direct work with young people. Group work with those young people on Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) Orders has continued in the short term in premises provided from the National Probation Service. New office space for the ISS Team has now been identified, this requires some adaptations and refurbishment; which is underway. This is a good development and will enable the team to deliver a revised programme in a city centre location thus promoting the independence of the young people.
- 2.3. **Ensure that there are sufficient staff in post to deliver high-quality services to children and young people** - At the time of the inspection there were 7 vacancies all of which had been appointed to but post holders had not

started. Currently, the Service is waiting on the arrival of a recently appointed case manager and is in the process of recruiting to two other new vacancies. The impact of this improved speed of recruitment is that caseloads within the service have reduced to a more desirable level. We recognise that whilst turnover is low in the service we are now able to respond flexibly and quickly to fill vacancies. Our largest team, South YJ, are fully staffed and our average caseload for the service is lower than national averages and that at the time of the inspection; it is anticipated these will be c9 young people per worker.

- 2.4. **Ensure that children and young people receive effective support to improve their chances of success in education, training and employment, and increase the proportion who receive their full entitlement** - achieving good impact from this action has required a complete review of how the Service engages with education, schools, colleges and employers to improve outcomes for young people on the Youth Justice caseload. A more detailed action plan has been drawn up between the Service, Education and Work and Skills Managers to bring expertise into Youth Justice including learning from the Virtual School's Personal Education Planning (PEP) approach and establishing Career Connect worker, co-located within the service who is available to advise young people and link them with opportunities. Youth Justice workers are committed to working with schools and colleges to get better outcomes for young people and at a recent full staff event, came up with many ideas to take forward to achieve this and are keen to establish better links with schools to encourage and support teachers to keep children engaged in full-time education.
- 2.5 **Continue to develop out-of-court decision-making processes to make sure that effective joint decision-making is in place, and that children and young people and their parents/carers understand the implications of the disposal** - The triage model of working with GMP to assess those young people referred in by the police, and through the use of a multi-agency panel to make recommendations for a suitable disposal, was introduced in June 2018 and inspectors expressed confidence in the approach. The model has since been strengthened by the introduction of a shorter assessment tool (which has been developed with Manchester Metropolitan University - MMU) and has been rolled out across all Greater Manchester Services as agreed with GMP. A leaflet has been designed by young people to inform others (and their parents) what it means to get an Out of Court Disposal. Engagement levels of young people vary in Out of Court work as most outcomes rely upon a young person's voluntary agreement to an intervention. An analysis of the first 10 months of the new approach shows that levels of engagement have doubled in that period.

Disposal Type	Panel Administered Disposal			Pre-administered Disposal by GMP		
	Engaged	No engagement	Engagement %	Engaged	No engagement	Engagement %
Community Resolution	22	4	85%	5	12	29%
Restorative Justice	1	0	100%	1	0	100%
Youth Caution	4	5	44%	4	23	15%
Youth Conditional Caution	7	0	100%	1	0	100%
All disposals	34	9	79%	11	35	24%

## 2.6. Work with partner agencies to reduce the over-representation of black and minority ethnic children and young people in the custodial population -

The work on levels of disproportionality has continued to follow the national picture. This is an area the service keeps under review whilst implementing the recommendations in the David Lammy report which highlights the disproportionate levels of BAME children and adults in the criminal justice system. A key element of our plan is to raise the profile of BAME disproportionality identified within the Youth Justice Service locally and across Greater Manchester. Several staff members have undergone 'Unconscious Bias' training and this will now be offered to all case-managers. A Workshop has been held with partners including GMP, the courts and the Crown Prosecution Service at which the data was shared to raise awareness and develop a shared understanding of the issue. Manchester Metropolitan University is engaged in working with the Youth Justice Service to understand the problem better, a meeting has been set up with the GMP lead manager and training has been planned with the Magistrates Youth Bench later this year.

## 3.0 Update on Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) in Youth Justice

3.1 Professor Hannah Smithson at MMU published her report in 2016 on the high presence of children with SEND within the Youth Justice System nationally. In her research, she highlighted the large numbers of children with moderate and severe learning difficulties including Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia and Communication difficulties that are in the caseloads of Youth Justice Services. Many of these young people did not have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHP) so the learning difficulties had not been identified prior to entering the criminal justice system. Whilst this issue needs to be addressed and challenged on a national basis, one of the other solutions recommended by Prof Smithson, is the development of SEND specialists within each Youth Justice Service.

3.2 Across the Manchester Youth Justice caseload we supervise and support 73 children with some form of special educational need, for a range of issues including Autism, speech, language and communication needs, learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. 61 children known to Youth Justice have an Education and Health and Social Care Plan (EHCP). In total this is 33% of the Youth Justice caseload; again following the national picture.

- 3.3 Manchester Youth Justice proudly provides a range of support and multi-disciplinary interventions for our children and young people with special additional needs and disabilities (SEND). The service has a speech and language therapist who undertakes speech and language screening and interventions, access to a dedicated Educational Psychologist 8 days per term, and SENDIAS support. We have also introduced the 'Do It Profiler' which is a screening tool for neuro-disabilities and also 'That Reading Thing' which is a programme to support young people who might be many years behind in reading, Dyslexic or just need a boost to access the language they need to thrive in school. For school leavers we have careers advice and guidance from a full time seconded Connect worker.
- 3.4 In Manchester, together with a leading education charity 'Achievement for All', the Youth Justice Service has trained and developed case-managers and other specialist workers to strengthen knowledge and skills about SEND as well as improve access for young people to Speech and Language Therapy, Education Psychology and Drama Therapists. In order to ensure a good standard in this work, the Service applied for a SEND Quality Standard in 2018 and was awarded the higher level Quality Leadership Award. The Youth Justice Team Manager who led this work, Vanessa O'Dare, was recently presented with a prestigious Butler Trust award at Buckingham Palace by Princess Anne.

#### **4.0 Review of the Youth Justice Service**

- 4.1 In 2016 Charlie Taylor undertook a review of Youth Justice on behalf of the Ministry of Justice, as reflected in that report the operating environment within which the Youth Justice Service delivers has changed in recent years; particularly the nature and volume of violent offences and child criminal exploitation locally. Subsequently whilst we have seen a reduction in first time entrants, the use of remand and custodial sentences continue to be a challenge where they are 'too high' in Manchester.. As a result, the service is currently reviewing delivery and design to strengthen current delivery in order to work with the courts to reduce the use of remands and custodial sentences; whilst strengthening the resettlement offer for young people leaving custody. The review has been carried out in close consultation with partners and all those who work in the Service and incorporates the views of the young people who receive services and interventions. It is not about resources or restructure but instead, the review is about how we engage, work with and respond to the needs of young people in the criminal justice system as well as themes and trends. The benefits we hope to achieve include helping young people to build their resilience through education, training and raising their ambitions, as well as having more appropriate opportunities in local communities for them to be active and involved in constructive projects and employment.
- 4.2 A recent full service event was used to share reflections on the review that have been gathered from the teams during consultation events and highlight the agreed principles and priorities that drive the work of all of those in the Youth Justice system. A key principle is building trusted relationships with young people as we know from a previous 'Realist Evaluation' study by Dr Mansoor Kazi, that when a young person is engaged and successfully completes an

order from the court, they are 7 times less likely than those who don't, to re-offend. The Service's Re-offending rate has reduced to its lowest ever rate at 31.6% (and out-performs all comparison areas) so our focus is on building on our assets, strengthening engagement to address needs and risks. The recent Service Day was used to translate the ambitions of the service into practical actions that will now be planned and implemented. These include ensuring that all offices have a child-friendly reception area so that young people and their parents will feel welcome on arrival and will be able to access information, a drink and snack. Much of this work will be influenced by the views of young people that are currently engaged with the service.

- 4.3 A key focus for the review is the ISS programme which is used by the Courts as an alternative to giving a custodial sentence or remanding a young person. The new location and premises in Castlefield Wharf provides an opportunity to work differently in a more child-friendly environment and engage partners in providing services and additional support to motivate and encourage young people to develop positive plans and aspirations that will help desistance from criminal activities. We are currently in discussion with the Prince's Trust to consider how their new Centre in the Beehive Mill in Ancoats will provide services for and inspire young people to engage in the variety of services that are on offer. Together we will look at designing bespoke taster sessions aimed at our hardest to reach children offering opportunities to realise their ambitions by building resilience and breaking down barriers for accessing courses at the centre.

## **5.0 Quality of Practice**

- 5.1 Regular audit work of Youth Justice casework is completed and there is a particular focus on management oversight of casework following feedback and comments from inspectors. The service continues to provide regular staff supervision and a recent audit of management oversight demonstrates a significant improvement in the quality of management supervision and oversight. 75% of cases received good supervision and oversight which is positive performance and this serves to drive up quality of practice. In addition, the Directorate Quality Assurance Framework is currently being reviewed.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

- 6.1 The activities and actions implemented following the Inspection have created stability and increasing confidence across the Youth Justice Service, and caseloads have reduced to manageable levels. Staff retention is high in the service and we are now able to respond flexibly and quickly to fill the new vacancies and this gives us the opportunity to acquire and develop new skills.
- 6.2 The improvement work will inform the annual Youth Justice Business Plan. The plan will be presented to the Management Board in August and then forwarded to the Youth Justice Board for approval. The Youth Justice Management Board will continue to oversee the implementation of the Action Plans and the Business Plan as well as driving the Service to deliver a high quality service to

our children and young people. To maintain and monitor progress and continually improve quality of practice the following is taking place:

- Corporate Estates colleagues are preparing new premises for ISS and North teams;
- The 3 vacant case manager posts are being recruited to;
- The Quality Assurance Framework is being reviewed, for completion September 2019;
- A formal audit of the Youth Justice Board new National Standards will be completed between September 2019 - March 2020;
- A Youth Justice Peer Review is planned to take place in early 2020.