

Stockton on Tees Youth Offending Service



Youth Justice Board
Bwrdd Cyfiawnder Ieuencid

Tackling Offending through Confidence, Challenge and Change

YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2009/10

Endorsed by YOS Management Board on 14 July 2009

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Glossary

APACS	Assessment of Policing & Community Safety	LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
APIS	Assessment, Planning, Intervention & Supervision	LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
ASSET	Assessment Tool	MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
BME	Black & Minority Ethnic	NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
Careworks	Electronic Case Management System provider	NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
CAF	Common Assessment Framework	OB TJ	Offences Brought To Justice
CAMHS	Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service	ONSET	Assessment tool
CESC	Children, Education and Social Care	OU	The Open University
CJSSS	Criminal Justice Simple Speedy Summary	PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
CPN	Community Psychiatric Nurse	P&D	Prevent & Deter
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service	PAYP	Positive Activities for Young People
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau	PCEP	Professional Certificate of Effective Practice
CYP	Children and Young People	PCT	Primary Care Trust
CYPSP	Children and Young People Strategic Partnership	PDP	Personal Development Plan
CWDC	Children's Workforce Development Council	PENY	Police Electronic Notification to YOTs
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Team	PNC	Police National Computer
DTO	Detention and Training Order	PYO	Persistent Young Offender
DYO	Deter Young Offender	PSR	Pre-Sentence Report
ECM	Every Child Matters	RAP	Resettlement Aftercare Provision
EI	Early Interventions	RJ	Restorative Justice
EPQA	Effective Practice Quality Assurance	ROSH	Risk of Serious Harm
ESF	European Social Funding	SIWIS	Stockton Integrated Working & Information Sharing
ETE	Education, Training and Employment	SRE	Sexual & Relationship Education
EYE	Electronic Yellow Envelope	STASH	Stockton Together Against Substance Harm
FTE	First Time Entrant	TYS	Targeted Youth Support
G4S	Secure escort contractor	VCS	Voluntary & Community Sector
ICT	Information Computer Technology	YCAP	Youth Crime Action Plan
ISA	Integrated Service Area	YJB	Youth Justice Board
ISSP	Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Project	YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
IYSS	Integrated Youth Support Service	YOS/YOT	Youth Offending Service / Team
LAA	Local Area Agreement	YRO	Youth Rehabilitation Order
LAC	Looked After Child / Children		

Aims of the Youth Justice System for 2009/10:

- Prevent offending
- Reduce Re-Offending
- Ensure the safe and effective use of custody
- Increase victim and public confidence

National Performance Measures:

Six youth justice indicators are part of the National Indicator set for Local Authorities and provide Stockton on Tees Borough Council with the means to measure issues relating to children and young people who offend.

- **NI 19 Recidivism:** the rate of proven re-offending by young offenders
- **NI 43 Use of Custody:** young people within the youth justice system receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody
- **NI 44 Diversity:** the ethnic composition of offenders on youth justice system disposals
- **NI 45 Education, Training and Employment:** young offenders engagement in suitable education, employment or training
- **NI 46 Accommodation:** young offenders access to suitable accommodation
- **NI 111 First Time Entrants:** the numbers of first time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17

Aims and priorities of the local YOS partnership

Stockton on Tees is a relatively safe place to live where levels of crime and anti-social behaviour are below the England and Wales average. Nevertheless crime, and the fear of crime, is a feature of Stockton on Tees, as it is elsewhere. To that end, we deliver a range of services to divert children and young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour:

- **Prevention** – to identify and work with children and young people at risk of offending and/or anti-social behaviour
- **Early intervention** – providing short term interventions to those at the early stages of offending and at risk of committing more crimes
- **Community sentences** – supervision of children and young people subject to community based court orders
- **Custodial supervision** – supervision of children and young people subject to custodial sentences
- **Support**, advice and guidance to parents / carers
- **Restorative support** to victims
- **Community engagement** – to reassure local communities and increase public confidence in the youth justice system

2007-2009 have been exciting and challenging years for Stockton on Tees YOS. We underwent a Joint Inspection led by HMI Probation and have developed new arrangements for service delivery within integrated support services for children and young people. We have taken learning from both the experience and outcome of the inspection process, implemented an Improvement Action Plan, developed new initiatives and consolidated our areas of strength. A Core Case inspection of the YOS is planned for October 2009.

The prevention of crime is high on Stockton on Tees corporate agenda and diverting children and young people from offending is a key priority for the Safer Stockton Partnership, identified by local residents. The YOS is located within the Children, Education and Social Care (CESC) group within the Local Authority and has formed strong links within the criminal justice, community safety and children and young people's services in order to achieve its principal aim of preventing youth crime.

The YOS engages with a complex web of targets and priorities and strives to achieve a balance between a number, and sometimes conflicting, national agendas: meeting the needs of the community and meeting the needs of individual children and young people; managing the risks of further offending; and safeguarding children and young people, and meeting a diverse range of needs and ensuring proportionality in how children and young people experience the youth justice system.

The YOS responds pro-actively to national change agendas including the introduction of CJSSS in courts, Wiring Up Youth Justice, YCAP, TYS and the new DYO strategy. The service is currently making preparations to respond to new legislation and guidance which will introduce the Scaled Approach and Youth Rehabilitation Order from late Autumn 2009.

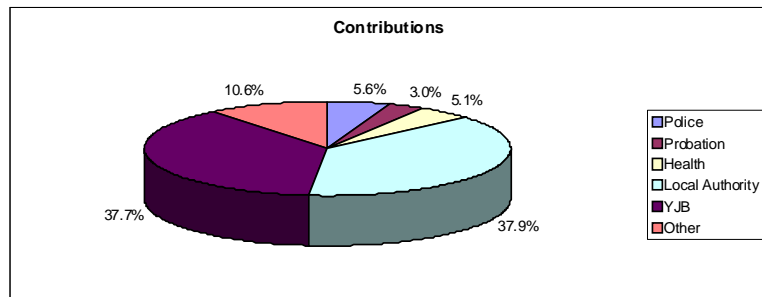
A Summary of Local Priorities for 2009/10:

- **Prevention of offending and re-offending** by children and young people
- **Assessment** as the foundation of effective service delivery
- **Risk Management** to manage risks of re-offending and harm to others
- **Safeguarding** children and young people
- **Diverse** needs are met and proportionality in children and young people's experience of the youth justice system
- **Engagement** of young people as the key to achieving behavioural change
- **Enforcement** for those who refuse to comply
- **Restorative** approaches within the service
- **Public confidence** with criminal justice system improved
- **High quality** training and development for staff
- **Continuous improvement** and focus upon quality assurance
- **Prevention** and early identification services embedded within Integrated Service Areas
- **YOS** embedded within the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS)
- **Youth Crime Action Plan** integrated into service development and delivery
- **Youth Justice: Scaled Approach** and Youth Rehabilitation Order delivery

Resources And Value For Money

Financial:

The YOS has an annual partnership budget of over £1.5 million. Stockton Borough Council has increased its contribution to the YOS in 09/10 to create additional practitioner posts; all other partners have maintained their financial contributions to the YOS this year, some with inflationary uplifts. The Council remains the major funding partner via Children, Education and Social Care.



Staff:

The YOS partnership directly employs 39 staff on a substantive basis. We have access to 37 community volunteers who support the Youth Offender Panels and 15 sessionals who support interventions during evenings and weekends. 3 members from Middlesbrough Borough Council are placed into the service as part of the ISSP consortium arrangements and parenting services, and 3 workers from partnership projects with local VCS projects. We commission a range of services to court, victims, and parents/carers.

Programmes:

Stockton on Tees YOS interventions are individually tailored to address identified needs and risk factors, whilst strengthening protective factors. A range of programmes are delivered directly by the YOS or through integrated working and external commissioning arrangements.

Prevention: Preventions funding from the YJB is pooled with Positive Activities funding to deliver a range of services to the most vulnerable and challenging children and young people identified as being at risk of offending, anti-social behaviour or truancy and exclusion. A case worker model has been developed to provide assessment using the Onset assessment tool and targeted

interventions to those identified through YISP; work is complemented by a range of targeted activity programmes delivered through Positive Activities and YCAP services and other early preventative work in local communities.

Final Warnings: All young people receiving a final warning from Police are assessed using the Asset assessment tool. Delivery of final warnings has been revised following recommendations from inspection to ensure that interventions are more proportionate and focused upon those young people assessed as being at risk of committing further offences.

Restorative Justice: Restorative approaches by the YOS have also been revised to ensure shared ownership by all within the service. To complement work by case managers, the following programmes are available:

- Reparative Activities – delivered in a range of ways and settings, direct to victims or indirectly in the form of activity which benefits the whole community. The latter is normally delivered on a one to one basis, supervised by sessional workers acting as mentors to support, supervise and reinforce the restorative nature of the activity. Activities can take place during the working week, on evenings and at weekends.
- Victim Support and Mediation – delivered by the YOS directly and through an external commissioning arrangement with the Children’s Society Youth Justice North East Project. Services include victim impact / awareness work, mediation, reparation, youth offender panels and feedback to victims.

Resettlement and Aftercare Provision (RAP): an initiative funded by the YJB to engage young people with substance misuse issues in custody and in the community and provide high levels of support, including evenings and weekends.

Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Project (ISSP): delivered through a consortium arrangement with other services in the Tees Valley. This programme is the most rigorous and robust non-custodial intervention available for the most persistent and serious offenders.

Parenting Programmes and Support: delivered to parents and carers of all young people with whom YOS services have contact. The majority of support is delivered on a voluntary basis; however, court ordered programmes are also delivered. The YOS externally commissions Barnardos and Middlesbrough Borough Council to deliver structured programmes. Other funding streams including the new Family Intervention Programme funded through YCAP and Targeted Parenting has expanded the capacity of the service to deliver support for parents / carers.

Youth Offender Panels: engaging local members of the community in shaping interventions for those young people subject to Referral Orders. This is an area of significant strength for the YOS, highlighted during inspection. Stockton on Tees has

developed a high calibre of panel volunteer, winning a Criminal Justice Award.

Additionally, there are a range of individually tailored packages of support and challenge delivered by case managers, specialist support workers employed by the service including ETE worker, CAMHS practitioner and substance misuse workers and by our partner agencies.

In the last 6 months, a range of group based programmes have been developed with our partners, some of which have now commenced. These include: personal finance and welfare rights MOT / advice; knife crime; surviving domestic violence; car crime; art competition; slogan competition; and a substance misuse programme. We are also exploring anger management programmes with the third sector and how group based activity delivered to parents / carers and young people in parallel can be developed. In addition, young people are signposted to group based activities being delivered by other initiatives / partner agencies in accordance with identified needs / protective factors.

The YOS is exploring how some of the young people's participation and activity on programmes can be accredited by external awarding bodies.

ICT:

The YOS continues to be committed to the use of ICT as an enabler in the delivery of services. All staff have their own PCs with access to the electronic case management database and the internet. The YOS Police Officer has direct access to the Police National Computer via a terminal in the YOS building.

Feedback from practitioners has highlighted concerns over the amount of time they spend inputting into the case management database. We have been working towards rationalising this and increasing the amount of dedicated admin support to create more practitioner time for engagement with service users.

The YOS has gone live with the Connectivity element of the Wiring Up Youth Justice project enabling speedier electronic transfers of confidential data, including Police Electronic Notification to YOTS (PENY) data. We are currently awaiting access to the Court LIBRA system, anticipated to go live in October 09. The YOS is making preparations to upgrade to Version 5 of Careworks YOTWEB, which will enable connectivity with Contact Point and support the implementation of the new Scaled Approach and Youth Rehabilitation Order. We are also awaiting developments of the new nationally commissioned case management system.

First Time Entrants (FTE)

The prevention of crime and disorder by children and young people is high on the corporate agenda and is a key objective within the Children and Young People's Plan, the Community Safety Plan and the Council Plan. We have developed effective prevention work in the delivery of support and interventions to children and young people at risk of anti-social / criminal behaviour. This area of work received a 'Good' Grading from inspection in 2007.

Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that the rate of crime in Stockton on Tees has increased in recent years (indeed the opposite is the case; with a 30% reduction in recorded crime in the last 5 years¹), the numbers of FTEs saw some significant increases in 2006-2008, suggesting that the increases were due to the way that agencies were responding to youth crime. Analysis of data in YOS monthly performance clinics and with the YOS Management Board, the Children's Trust Board and the Safer Stockton Partnership, identified that the Offences Brought To Justice (OBTJ) initiative for the Police Force was having a significant impact in bringing more children and young people into the criminal justice system.

Following the introduction of the new Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) performance framework in April 2008, the numbers of children and young people entering the criminal justice system has decreased by almost a fifth in 2008/09: (actual reduction 19%) from 462 first time entrants in 07/08 to 372 in 08/09. This trend appears to be continuing into 09/10 and will be closely monitored. The way that FTE data is measured nationally has changed from YOS data indicating the actual numbers of young people, to use of PNC data to calculate the rate per 100,000 of the population. In 2008/09, the rate for Stockton on Tees was 1,829, the fourth lowest in the region.

As stated above, prevention work in Stockton-on-Tees is considered to be effective; the development of the YISP was identified by inspectors as a particular strength. A case work approach is adopted enabling individual packages of support to be delivered to targeted children and young people and improve quality standards. There is evidence of positive results for the Preventions Unit from activity in 08/09 – the unit received 136 referrals over the period with the team supporting 133 children and young people.

The 'triple track' approach to preventing and addressing youth crime and disorder outlined in the *Youth Crime Action Plan* (YCAP) has been incorporated into local planning, overseen by a multi-agency YCAP Steering Group and led by IYSS. YCAP set out the government's commitment to achieving a 20% reduction in FTE by 2020 and the YOS partnership in Stockton on Tees is now well placed to contribute to this. Strong links with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Police, especially neighbourhood policing teams have developed over time and the development of YCAP activities have been able to capitalise on this. The YCAP Pilot phase

¹ Safer Stockton Partnership, Levels of Recorded Crime, May 2009

from January-March 09 included 3 distinct Street based teams delivering services, one commissioned from Voluntary Community Sector. They were deployed 6 times per week on Friday and Saturday evenings delivering services to 11 Neighbourhoods, engaged 1,080 young people and referred 460 young people to Positive Activities. The Positive Activities on Friday and Saturday evenings strand delivered 101 activities engaging 2,040 in total.

Further development of early intervention and prevention is key to minimising the risks of children and young people entering the youth justice system. In Stockton on Tees, the planned roll-out of the YCAP funded *YOT in Police Custody Project* with a neighbouring YOS, and the further alignment of preventions work with targeted teams in locality based integrated teams will enable services to be more responsive at earlier stages. Support and monitoring of preventions work continues to be provided by the borough wide IYSS, including coordination and delivery of the YISP.

First Time Entrants: Objectives for 2009/10:

- Continue to embed prevention services within integrated service areas
- Continued delivery of the multi-agency YISP
- Delivery of Youth Crime Action Plan prevention and early identification activity aligned with positive activities

Re-Offending

Reducing offending is the primary objective for Stockton on Tees YOS. All our interventions are designed to prevent offending behaviour by children and young people. Analysis of our recidivism data indicates that re-offending rates have fluctuated over the years, largely caused by variations in the numbers of first time entrants, those placed on 'first tier' sentences at court and an increase in the numbers of young people subject to statutory interventions.

Last year, the Youth Justice Board changed the way it measures performance. Using those young people receiving a youth justice outcome from January to March 2008, the cohort is monitored for any re-offending episodes in subsequent months, and for 08/09 is compared with performance in 2005. In 2005, the re-offending rate for Stockton on Tees was 0.83, the lowest since the inception of the YOS and uncharacteristic of normal levels of performance. The frequency rates for first 9 months of 2008/09 currently stands at 0.88, representing a 33.1% increase in the same period in 2005. Having an uncharacteristically low baseline for this performance measure presents a particular challenge to the YOS partnership as whilst performance could be improving, targets based on such a low baseline year are unlikely to be achieved. Concerns have been shared with the Youth Justice Board and we will continue to highlight this in performance feedback.

The picture is complicated further by the way in which this particular measurement is counted – the number of re-offences divided by the number in the January-March cohort. The reduction in the numbers of first time entrants in 08/09, detailed in the previous section, will reduce for 2009/10 the total numbers of children and young people in the cohort, whilst increasing the numbers of young people who are likely to have already re-offended on at least one previous occasion. Therefore, it is anticipated that the reduction in first time entrants in 08/09 will have a detrimental impact upon the recidivism performance measurement in 09/10. Notwithstanding this, the crime rate for Stockton on Tees remains the lowest of the five unitary authorities in the Tees Valley².

Late 2006, the North East regional YJB team published "Out of Crime"³; this research highlighting 6 factors associated with re-offending: accommodation; education, training and employment; substance misuse; health; families and finance and debt. The research also highlighted the critical contribution of effective case management functions. The regional YJB team are looking to replicate research carried out in the South West of England which suggests a causal link between levels of deprivation and offending and highlighted the significance of the quality of relationships between the young person and their worker. The YOS has taken learning from these and other research.

² Community Safety Plan 2008-2011, Stockton on Tees

³ 'Out of Crime: reducing Re-Offending Among Young People in the North East' YJB, November 2006

A YOS recidivism action plan for 09/10 has been developed encompassing: strategic planning; quality assessments; targeting those with medium to high risk of re-offending; imaginative interventions; and exit strategies. We have been able to build upon existing improvement activity and initiate further developments.

Activities to support the recidivism action plan / continuous improvement agenda:

- Analysis of the nature and pattern of recidivism in the area and regular tracking and analysis of reoffending cohort
- Analysis of those young people who remained crime free for the duration of their statutory order
- Review of exit strategies for those children and young people still 'at risk' who are coming to the end of their statutory involvement
- The new DYO strategy and premium service targeting those at highest risk of re-offending
- Imaginative interventions programmes delivered by practitioners and partner agencies, including the rollout of group base delivery programmes in 2009
- Improved user engagement, which seeks to secure feedback on 'what works' to help shape service delivery
- Robust quality assurance processes to support performance management
- Increasing the amount of time for practitioners to spend delivering services by reducing the amount of time spent inputting data onto the case management database

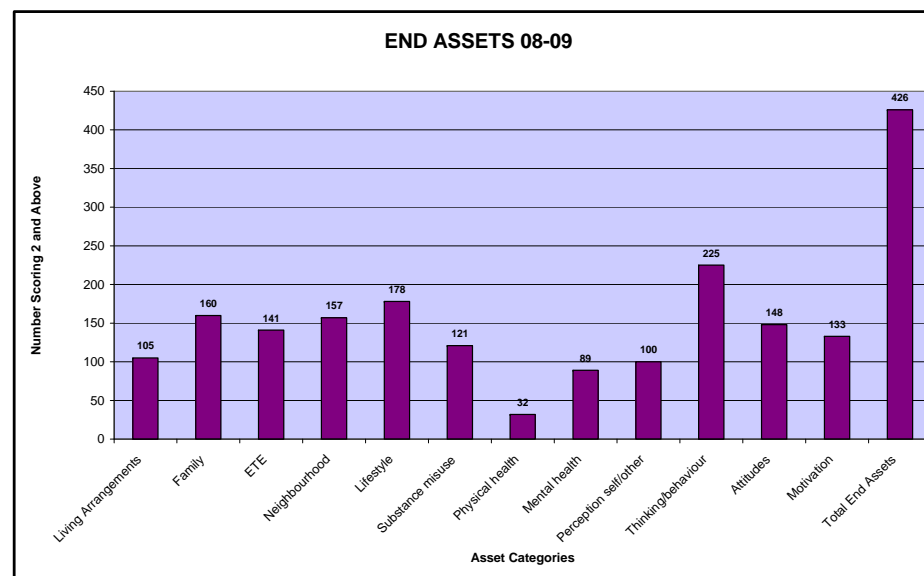
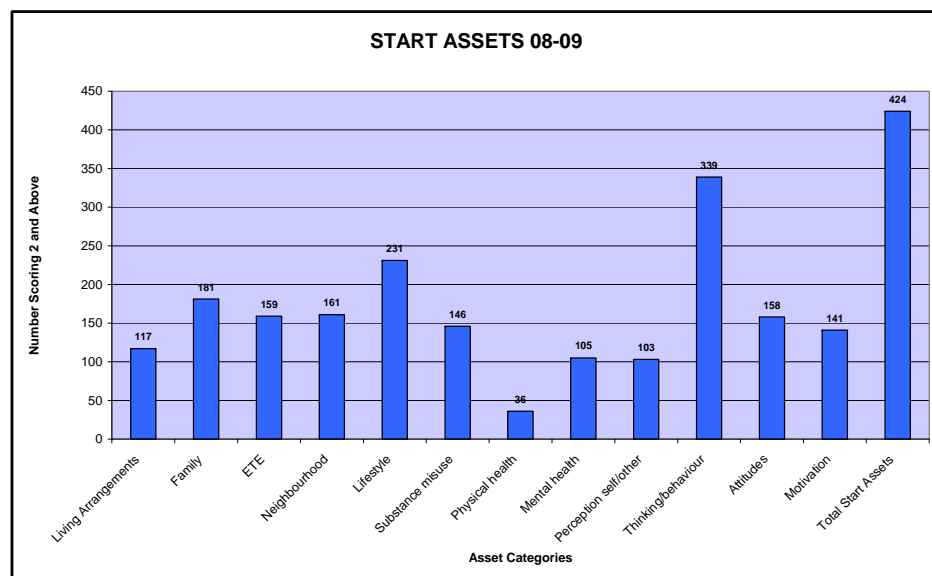
The inspection in 2007 provided key points of learning for the service and we acknowledged that in line with its findings, inconsistencies in case management and performance management presented some risks to future improvements. As a result, there has been much activity to reconfigure case management resources and improve the way the YOS assesses and delivers interventions to children and young people and evaluates outcomes.

Improvement activity is already beginning to have a positive impact and has been validated externally. A regional YJB initiative to increase standards in the quality of assessments has evidenced some marked improvements in Stockton on Tees. Through peer auditing QA processes, the quality of Assets is on the increase: in May 07, 30% of assets were deemed unacceptable; in March 08 and May 09 consecutively, no assessments were deemed unacceptable. In May 07, none of the assets audited were considered to be Good or Excellent; in March 08, this had increased to over 16% and in May 09, increased further to 25%. Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement and the YOS is striving to secure improvements in all assessments undertaken, underpinned by robust internal QA and auditing processes and reconfiguration of case management resources.

Feedback from young people we engaged via questionnaires in 2008 and 2009, highlight the following themes they reported would encourage them away from crime and anti-social behaviour: positive accessible activities in and around their local community;

employment opportunities; use of mentors and support with alcohol use. A further consultation exercise mid- 2009 was carried out with the most prolific young offenders in the borough to seek feedback on current service delivery, which identified key points of learning for the service and shape developments. We are currently consulting with those young people who remained crime free for the duration of statutory involvement.

Locating the YOS within IYSS has assisted in improving joint work to address those factors known to be linked with offending behaviour. The tables below summarise the risk factors associated with likelihood of re-offending for all children and young people at the beginning and end of their involvement in 2008/09. Whilst it demonstrates a positive impact upon risk factors from YOS interventions, this can be developed further



The development of Integrated Service Areas will also support improvement by supporting exit strategies for those children and young people at the end of their statutory involvement who require ongoing support and delivery of the youth offer and integrated information, advice and guidance.

We are now planning for the introduction of the new national arrangements for *Youth Justice: the Scaled Approach* and the Youth Rehabilitation Order which should significantly support our efforts to improve outcomes in re-offending rates through:

- The development of a tiered approach to interventions based on risk (primarily of re-offending).
- Reconfiguring resources so that the intensity of interventions is matched to the assessment of the likelihood of re-offending behaviour, not the nature of the court order (as is the case currently)
- Ensuring a coherent relationship between National Standards, Key Elements of Effective Practice and the new case management guidance
- Improvements to case management as an end to end process, including practice in assessments, writing Pre-Sentence Reports for courts, intervention planning and ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Locally, this new initiative presents a positive opportunity to consolidate recent improvements and further develop services to young people who offend. A local implementation group attended by key stakeholders, and chaired by the YOS Manager, has been established to oversee preparations.

Reducing offending and re-offending by looked after children is a corporate priority. Performance clinics are attended by senior managers from CESC, the YOS and IYSS. Restorative justice approaches have been embedded within local children's homes and a local protocol between the Police and Social Care has been revised by the LAC Service Manager, YOS Manager and the Police Neighbourhood Inspector.

Re-Offending: Objectives for 2009/10:

- Implementation of the local Recidivism Action Plan
- User engagement to help shape service delivery
- Restorative approaches embedded within the service
- Continuous improvements in assessment, planning and evaluation of outcomes
- Continuous improvements in the range of interventions programmes delivered
- Prompt enforcement in the event of non-compliance
- Reducing offending by looked after children a corporate priority
- Delivery of the new Scaled Approach and Youth Rehabilitation Order

Use of Custody

Stockton-on-Tees has relatively low numbers of young people remanded and sentenced to custody: 4.1% and 3.9% respectively in 08/09, of all young people appearing in court. When custody is used, it generally reflects the seriousness of the allegation / offence committed.

We have externally commissioned with a neighbouring YOS for a combined Court team based at Teesside Magistrates Court. For those young people at risk of being remanded into the secure estate, the Court team are able to assess suitability for bail support packages or arrange for ISSP Bail to be considered. ISSP in Stockton-on-Tees is delivered to a high standard at both the remand and sentencing stages and although breach is strictly applied, there is a commitment to keep working with the young person for as long as it's appropriate. ISSP has achieved much credibility with the court.

When custodial remands and sentences are made, these are explored at a Joint Custody Panel, attended by YOS managers and practitioners. Each case is explored and any learning fed back to staff. As above, the general picture shows that the use of custody is as a result of offence seriousness, persistence or refusal by the young person to engage in a community option. This ensures that the case management decisions are sound and that the reasons for the custodial episode are understood.

The previous inspections of both YOTs identified a need to improve the quality of some Pre-Sentence reports. Subsequently, joint improvement activity including court skills training has taken place, supported by the introduction of more robust quality assurance processes. We continue to obtain and monitor feedback from Sentencers regarding the quality and content of reports and there is much evidence from internal and external quality assurance processes, that the standard is improved and improving.

The YOS is a regular contributor to the Youth Court User group meeting quarterly and attended by a YOS Operational Manager, the Court Team and ISSP Coordinator, as well as CPS, Clerks, District Judge, defence solicitors, magistrates, G4S and Police. We also participate in a newly created Youth Court Liaison Group, between the Bench and the YOS. These both provide conduits for any issues to be discussed with other court users and for improvements in practice to be promoted.

Use of Custody: Objectives for 2009/10:

- Sustain improvements in the quality of Pre-Sentence Reports
- Work with local Courts to sustain high levels of confidence in YOS provision
- Continued monitoring of all young people in the secure estate

Risk of serious harm

The majority of young people the YOS engages do not present significant risk to the public, to YOS and other staff, or to themselves. Nonetheless, the management of risk of serious harm, as defined by the Youth Justice Board, is a high priority in Stockton-on-Tees and we are revising our procedures in light of the new MAPPA guidance to ensure that we can respond appropriately to those few young people who do.

The service has worked hard to create a culture of consistent risk management practice amongst staff. All assessment documents, including Risk of Serious Harm (ROSH) and Risk Management documents are quality assured by managers with Pre-Sentence Reports and Initial Panel Reports. Previous quality assurance processes identified the need to further improve the quality of some of ROSH assessments and this has been the subject of much activity.

We have also implemented a system for the maintenance of a Risk Register within the service. Where any young person poses a risk of serious harm, this is clearly flagged on the Careworks database and details of the risk clearly recorded. We will also highlight risk of serious harm, where appropriate, on the Council's Employee Protection Register.

There are a small number of young people on the YOS risk register (3 at the time of writing), who are discussed at weekly team meetings and a monthly multi-agency Risk & Resettlement meeting. These forums allow for meaningful discussion regarding risk and how risk can best be managed in order to protect the public. Timescales are built in for review, as part of the risk management procedures and regular reassessments of risk are monitored, through the use of an admin flagging system as well as via individual staff supervision sessions, providing individual support and guidance by operational managers.

Where the risk is assessed as being so high that a multi-agency approach is required, then there are clear pathways to the MAPPA processes. Practitioners and operations managers have attended MAPPA level 1 and arrangements are in place for practitioners to spend time in the MAPPA Unit for their learning and development. We have a partnership agreement with the local Probation service which clearly details processes to assist with the protection of victims should risk be assessed from high risk offenders.

All Pre-Sentence Reports on Stockton on Tees children and young people are quality assured by this service along with the Asset assessment prior to presentation at court, with considerable focus on assessment of risk to the community and proposing court disposals which will be effective in protecting the public in the short and longer term. Whilst we do strive to propose community sentences for most young people, we recognise that there are times when custody is inevitable for the protection of the public.

In Stockton-on-Tees, cases are allocated according to the experience of the worker, with the high risk cases being reserved for the most experienced staff. Prompt enforcement action is taken in all cases where there is non-compliance from high risk

offenders.

We recognise that risk management is an ongoing process. Throughout our interventions, we aim to ensure a process of continuous assessment of the risks presented by and to the young person is carried out, using available information from a range of relevant sources. YOS workers are aware that they need to remain alert to any new evidence that indicates the need to amend a young person's risk status due to reduced protective factors or increased risk factor. On occasion, this has necessitated reallocating the case to the most experienced workers.

Risk of Serious Harm: Objectives for 2009/10:

- Sustain improvements in the quality of ROSH assessments and risk management plans
- Robust quality assurance processes to ensure that service policy is adhered to
- Incorporate new MAPPA guidance into service policies and procedures
- Ensure regular learning and development for staff
- Risk management's inclusion in the induction of all new starters

Safeguarding

Stockton-on-Tees YOS has a significant role in safeguarding children and young people from harm and promoting wellbeing. Risk of harm can be as a result of behaviour from other people, or resulting from their own behaviour. Revised safeguarding procedures were introduced in the service late 2007, which link with Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) processes. All staff are subject to an enhanced CRB check, which is renewed every 3 years. All staff within the service are trained in corporate safeguarding and child protection procedures. Multi-agency planning meetings are commonplace; YOS staff support planning processes in respect of Looked After Children and young people.

A significant element of safeguarding is identifying and managing young people's vulnerability, in partnership with other agencies. The service has worked hard to create a culture of consistent safeguarding practice amongst all staff. The previous YOS Inspection noted that there was a continuous focus on safeguarding and risk of harm in the service's work with young people who offend and this focus has been maintained. This has been extended to preventions work; the multi-agency element of the YISP process has also facilitated this process.

Safeguarding and vulnerability considerations are an inherent feature of the service's assessment processes. Where assessment indicates vulnerability, then this is discussed with a line manager. Where the vulnerability assessment is medium or above, a Vulnerability Management Plan must be completed and endorsed by an operational manager. Where safeguarding issues are identified, the case manager considers whether YOS resources are sufficient to meet need or whether a multi-agency approach is required. It is expected that the case manager implements intervention plans with a view to safeguarding and promoting wellbeing, and maintains an effective record of actions taken to address risk and protective factors. Ongoing training in developing staff in risk and vulnerability management is planned to ensure consistencies in the quality of assessments and interventions.

The YOS Manager is represented on the LSCB by the Assistant Director / Head of Service, Children and Young People's Operations and members of the YOS are part of regular working groups. The YOS Manager has presented information on young people in custody to the LSCB, and more recently on the YJB review into Safeguarding in the Secure Estate; the Board also receives updates on young people in custody. A number of senior managers from across social care, safeguarding, the YOS and Community Safety in the Council attended the *Safe 'n Secure* Conference late 2008 organised by the regional YJB team, given the importance the Council places on safeguarding in the secure estate.

Vulnerability is considered through assessment for all young people remanded or sentenced to custody and highlighted to the secure estate provider, to support their safeguarding processes. The YOS actively supports the secure estate to safeguard and

promote the welfare of children and young people.

For young people who are Looked After, restorative justice approaches have been embedded within residential homes by residential managers and staff. Where it is of benefit, more specialised mediation can be accessed via the YOS commissioning arrangement with the Children's Society. The LAC Service Manager represents the borough on a national working group looking at restraint of children and young people.

Case managers are trained to deliver up to a Tier 2 substance misuse service and specialist substance misuse workers are able to deliver up to Tier 3 services. We have links with local substance misuse services for young people, STASH (Stockton Together Against Substance Harm) which can deliver Tier 3 and access Tier 4 provision.

We provide a complementary therapy service which enhances the substance misuse and health interventions delivered to young people and their parents / carers. The health worker in Stockton-on-Tees is employed and deployed by the local CAMHS team, which ensures prompt assessment and access to CAMHS provision. With another member of the CAMHS team, the YOS CAMHS practitioner plans to start delivering quarterly training sessions in mental health issues for practitioners. The worker also has close links with other local health departments to ensure that physical health needs can also be addressed. We have a designated health room where young people can feel comfortable and at ease. We link closely with the Teenage Pregnancy Unit and all staff are trained to enable them to respond appropriately to sexual health needs.

Safeguarding: Objectives for 09/10:

- Sustain improvements in the quality of vulnerability assessments and management plans
- Robust quality assurance processes to ensure that service policy is adhered to
- Ensure regular learning and development for staff
- Introduction to safeguarding in the induction of all new starters
- All children and young people in the secure estate assessed for vulnerability

Public Confidence

Increasing community confidence in the criminal justice system is a key theme for the YOS and key partners in the criminal justice system. It is a stated and measured objective of the Cleveland Criminal Justice Board, of which the YOS is a partner. Public confidence is measured annually via the British Crime Survey and highlights increasing levels of public confidence in recent years; 37% of respondents in Cleveland expressed confidence in bringing offenders to justice in 04/05 rising to 43% in 2007.

The YOS contributes to the increasing public confidence agenda by delivering:

- Well developed Youth Inclusion Support Panel involving a range of statutory and third sector organisations
- Robust intervention programmes to young people who offend, and their parents / carers
- Prompt enforcement in the event of non-compliance
- Engaging members of the community as volunteers to support the delivery of Youth Offender Panels
- Restorative approaches embedded within the service
- Engaging members of the community / community groups to help shape delivery of restorative activity
- Delivery of restorative activity with visible outcomes

The YOS partnership secures consistently positive feedback from victims; in 08/09, 100% of victims expressed satisfaction with services they had received (actual number 153). We have also secured consistently strong performance against National Standards for Youth Justice and the majority of the National Indicators.

Improving the way that the YOS promotes the full range of services, particularly to the wider community, was highlighted at a YOS stakeholder planning event. In response to this, a YOS Communications / Marketing Action Plan has been drawn up to ensure that we are more proactive in promoting positive messages and engaging with local media. This will also support other council activities to promote activities delivered by the YOS partnership and targeted youth support services, including recent publicity as part of the YCAP initiative.

Public Confidence: Objectives for 09/10:

- Work with key partners to improve communications to inform and influence community perceptions
- Enforcement of court orders in the event of non-compliance
- Engagement with local communities to promote activities and shape restorative activity

Improving Victim Satisfaction

Stockton-on-Tees YOS is committed to the delivery of strong and effective support to victims, which meets the *Code of Practice for Victims* and *National Standards for Youth Justice* and embedding restorative approaches in all aspects of its work. As well as delivery from YOS staff, victim work is also delivered by The Children’s Society Youth Justice North East project, an externally commissioned service.

The Youth Justice Board’s approach to restorative justice, outlined in the Key Elements of Effective practice, focuses on:

- Victim satisfaction – reducing the fear of the victim and ensuring they feel ‘paid back’ for the harm that has been done to them;
- Engagement with the young person to ensure that they are aware of the consequences of their actions so that they show remorse, make reparation and sign up to a plan for their restoration in the community

YOS interventions may therefore include one or more of these methods:

Direct Mediation or Reparation	Indirect Mediation or Reparation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face meeting between victim and young person • Restorative conference • Payback, to repair harm / damage or otherwise compensate the victim • An explanation or letter of apology/explanation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shuttle mediation, where a mediator liaises between victim and young person • Information giving, supplying information to the victim about the young person, putting the victim’s perspective to the young person and challenges behaviour • Community payback

Youth Offender Panels are provided with victim statements and these are considered by Panel members with the young person. Victims are offered the opportunity to attend Panels, but rarely do so. Increasing victim engagement with the Panel is a key area for development and is being explored in partnership with The Children’s Society.

In 08/09, 41% of victims were engaged and a 100% satisfaction rate was achieved, reflecting the positive work delivered by staff from the YOS and The Children’s Society. Nonetheless, improving the focus and coordination of work in relation to victims and restorative justice is a key area under development, including the ways in which we facilitate and evidence victim participation

and considerations of victim safety.

Where reparation is delivered indirectly to benefit the wider community, the YOS has developed a range of reparation projects and engages with a number of local community organisations, and the use of 2 garden allotments. Wherever possible, reparation is delivered on a one to one basis, supported and supervised by YOS sessional workers acting in a mentoring capacity.

Refresher training on restorative justice has been delivered to all sessional staff to ensure that all young people undertaking the activity understand its restorative nature. The response and attitude of the young person is recorded and is available to be fed back to the victim if this is what the victim has requested. The YOS supervising officer is able to use this information to support ongoing victim awareness work with the young person.

A triple track approach to preventing youth crime is outlined in the recently published Youth Crime Action Plan, which included a reinforcement of national commitment to support victims and plans for national targets to reduce young victims of crime by 2020, in recognition that young people are more likely to be victims of crime.

Improving Victim Satisfaction: Objectives for 2009/10:

- Restorative approached embedded within the Service
- Increase the proportion of direct restorative justice activity
- Victim engagement at panel
- Evidence victim engagement in the work of the YOS

Business Change & Innovation

CJSSS

During 08/09, the YOS participated in multi-agency planning for the introduction of Criminal Justice: Simple, Speedy, Summary (CJSSS) in the Youth Court from 09/10. CJSSS is based upon 3 principles:

- Better proportionate preparation for first hearing in court
- Ensuring that pleas are heard at first hearing and guilty pleas dealt with in the day
- Contested trials should proceed straight to trial within a reasonable timeframe

The Scaled Approach and Youth Rehabilitation Order

The Scaled Approach is designed to assist youth justice services to direct time and resources to young people appropriately, in accordance with their risk assessment. It is due to be introduced at end November 2009, alongside the introduction of the new Youth Rehabilitation Order and other youth justice provision.

An operational manager has been nominated to lead on service preparations, supported by a local Implementation Group chaired by the YOS Manager. An Implementation Action Plan has been developed, encompassing a broad range of activity at a strategic and operational level to prepare the YOS service and YOS partnership for delivery of the new arrangements.

Key to the success of the Scaled Approach is assessment and engagement and Stockton on Tees YOS is in a good position to respond to the new arrangements. Much of our existing service development activity will support the introduction.

Workforce Development

Having a skilled and competent workforce is crucial to the delivery of effective services. We are committed to a culture of learning and we will continue to identify learning and development needs for individuals and the service via supervision, annual appraisal, influenced by national and local policy agendas and developments. Corporately the YOS has been prioritised for the CWDC fund.

Case manager competencies have been developed matching corporate and National Occupational Standards, in consultation with Human Resources and will be rolled out over 09/10 with a new competency framework. Attempts to identify a provider of NVQ Level 4 in Youth Justice have been difficult and we are currently liaising with the council's Adult Education Services.

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Stockton on Tees Youth Offending Service

Delivering a range of services to divert children and young people away from crime and disorder

- *Prevention* – to identify and work with children and young people at risk of offending and/or anti-social behaviour
- *Early intervention* – providing short term interventions to those at the early stages of offending and at risk of committing more crimes
- *Community sentences* – supervision of children and young people subject to community based court orders
- *Custodial supervision* – supervision of children and young people subject to custodial sentences
- *Support, advice and guidance* to parents / carers
- *Restorative support* to victims
- *Community engagement* – to reassure local communities and increase public confidence in the youth justice system

For more information on this Plan, please contact Stockton on Tees Youth Offending Service. Tel: 01642 527597