



Report to:	JOINT MEETING OF OVERVIEW/EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	9 February 2022
Executive Member:	Councillor Bill Fairfoull – Deputy Executive Leader
Reporting Officer:	Tony Decrop, Interim Assistant Director, Children’s Services
Subject:	YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE HMIP INSPECTION RESPONSE
Report Summary:	<p>The report provides a summary of the recent HMIP inspection of the Youth Justice Service, including the response of the service and next steps.</p> <p>The full HMIP report can be accessed using the following link An inspection of youth offending services in Tameside (justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)</p>
Recommendations:	That the report be noted.
Corporate Plan:	This supports the Corporate Plan across a number of strands, Resilient Families and Support Networks and specifically Nurturing Our Communities.
Policy Implications:	There are no policy implications relating to this report.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	There are no financial implications relating to this report. The content has been noted.
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	<p>It is important that any inspection reports are considered and an improvement action plan produced expediently where required putting in place clear timescales and accountability for delivery.</p> <p>Given that the report sets out the areas for improvement together with the response and next steps Members may wish to consider requesting an update report in due course in order to map the progress being made.</p>
Risk Management:	There are no risk implications arising from this report.
Background Information:	<p>The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Sally Dickin</p> <p> Telephone: 0161 342 5680</p> <p> e-mail: sally.dickin@tameside.gov.uk</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tameside Youth Justice Service (YJS) was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in September 2021 and the final report was published in December 2021. The inspection rated the service across three areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. The service received an overall rating of 'Good', with Out of Court Disposal work achieving a rating of 'Outstanding' in two areas.

2. SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS

- 2.1 Strengths were identified in the implementation, delivery and reviewing of court disposal casework, and in the assessment, planning and delivery of casework across out-of-court disposals. The service was noted to have a strong understanding of desistance, and work to promote this was evident to HMIP.
- 2.2 Arrangements for staffing and partnerships and services were found to be good. Staff were described as being motivated, experienced, child-centred, and in receipt of regular supervision, with access to good training and development. The YJS partnership was found to have access to a good volume, range and quality of services, including specialist and mainstream interventions. In particular, the report highlighted that the partnership is to be commended on adapting to the difficult local challenges that have arisen during the Covid-19 pandemic and continuing to deliver quality services.
- 2.3 HMIP noted that many of the children supervised by the YJS had complex lives, and their circumstances could change rapidly. Reviewing of cases was found to be strengths-based, informed by other agencies and child-focused, with the YJS described as achieving an appropriate balance between supporting desistance, safeguarding children and protecting the public. They found a consistently good level of involvement of children and their parents or carers across all elements of casework.

3. SUMMARY OF AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 3.1 Whilst the Chair of the YJS Management Board and Head of Service were consistent and experienced, HMIP noted that a recent turnover in partner membership of the Board had impacted upon continuity and cohesiveness and noted some disconnect between board and frontline practitioners. The Board's vision for the service was considered to be insufficiently clear and some key issues that had been identified such as disproportionality, children's participation in shaping the service and the re-establishment of strategic board sub groups, needed to be addressed.
- 3.2 Whilst reviewing and interventions in respect of court orders was a strength, HMIP did not always agree with the assessed levels in respect of risk of harm and highlighted the need to ensure that work to promote the safety and well-being of victims was always considered as part of assessment and planning.
- 3.3 The report noted some inconsistencies in decision making around out of court disposals and recommended that Greater Manchester Police work with the YJS to review and develop the out-of-court disposal policy and provision, to ensure effective joint decision-making in all cases.

4. RESPONSE AND NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The YJS Management Board had a development session on 12.11.22, delivered in partnership with a representative from the Youth Justice Board (YJB). The session confirmed expectations of Board members, started to look at the development of a clear vision and agreed to re-establish the strategic sub-groups. The Board is next due to meet at the beginning of February 2022 when the out of court policy will be agreed and the partnership are set to develop a strategic action plan in relation disproportionality, something that is a concern nationally. This Board will also sign off the operational action plan that relates to the findings of HMIP.
- 4.2 Work is underway in service to ensure that audit processes are fully embedded and to ensure that the views of children and their parents / carers are routinely obtained and used to influence service development going forward.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The YJS Management Board will drive forward the recommendations of HMIP and will review the action plan and progress against the plan in its quarterly meetings. The service will continue to ensure that children and young people who come to their attention receive a high quality service that is proportionate and addresses any unmet need.
- 5.2 The Board will continue to promote across the partnership the importance of children who are open to the YJS being viewed as children first and foremost, in line with the 'Child First, Offender Second' approach.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 As set out at the front of the report.