

Substance Misuse by Children and Young People



Services for Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

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1. Introduction by the Chair

I am pleased to present this report which follows the review carried out by the Services for Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel into problematic substance misuse.

The Panel is aware that substance misuse is a very complex issue which is not easy to address. Tameside, in line with the North West, has particular challenges regarding reducing alcohol consumption and drug use.

It is clearly important that partners work collaboratively to address these issues. The Scrutiny Panel welcomes the contribution that schools, police, youth services and sports services make towards providing diversionary activities for young people to reduce drug and alcohol misuse.



The Panel was particularly impressed with the targeted support delivered by the Branching Out substance misuse service and the Youth Offending Team. Members were pleased to hear, during consultation sessions with young people, how they had made such a positive difference to the lives of service users. Staff in both these services took time to engage with young people to find the most effective ways to help them.

The Panel learned that Branching Out were commissioned to provide support services for young people up to 19 years old and that the transition from young peoples' to adults' substance misuse services could be difficult, due to the different types of support offered and the thresholds for accessing services. The Panel heard about other services in Greater Manchester that are designed in different ways to offer wider provision and, in line with this, Members would like consideration to be given to revising the age limit for accessing Branching Out. However, the Panel also acknowledge the expected budget constraints, the challenges regarding maintaining existing services, and the need to work in different and innovate ways to continue to support young people.

This report makes a number of recommendations which, if implemented, the Panel hopes will add value to existing service provision.

On behalf of the Panel I would like to thank all the organisations and individuals that have provided information to Members during the course of this review.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruth Welsh', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Ruth Welsh
Chair, Services for Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

2. Summary

Drug and alcohol misuse can have a long term impact on young people's education, health, and life chances. Substance misuse also has a negative effect on the economy. The National Drugs Strategy 2010 estimates the cost of alcohol misuse alone at £18-25 billion a year to the British economy.

The Scrutiny Panel understands that alcohol consumption is part of British culture. However, the impact of alcohol related harm is increasing nationally, and particularly in the North West and Greater Manchester. In addition, research shows that, nationally, a quarter of young people under 15 have used drugs.

During the review the Panel considered the approach taken to address problematic substance misuse amongst young people in Tameside and the progress that has been made to prevent it. The Panel learned that a multi-agency Young People's Substance Misuse Reference Group had been established to coordinate the work of the council and partner agencies to prevent smoking, alcohol and drug use. It was reported that although services have been established to address substance misuse, it remains challenging to address because these behaviours are embedded in many communities and some of the services and activities that have been established to prevent substance misuse will take a long time to impact on these behaviours.

Members were impressed with the range and quality of diversionary activities offered to young people by the Youth Service and the Sports Development Services to prevent them from engaging in drug and alcohol misuse. The Panel believes that these opportunities should be further promoted and Members welcome the plans to target sport and leisure services through forums such as District Assemblies.

During the course of the review, Panel Members carried out consultations with young people that had used Branching Out (the substance misuse service) and Youth Offending Team in Tameside. They found that the age at which young people start to misuse drugs and alcohol appears to be getting earlier. They also found that the young people were very positive about both services and particularly praised their engaging approach and the one-to-one support sessions, which were individually tailored to meet their needs. They also learned about the importance of using peer education to prevent substance misuse and believe that this approach should be further developed to tackle the views and culture of drug and alcohol misuse amongst young people.

The Panel found that individuals could experience difficulties moving from young peoples' to adults' substance misuse services due to the different types of support offered and the thresholds for accessing services. As a result the Panel would like to see the age limit for accessing Branching Out reviewed, in line with other successful initiatives across Greater Manchester. However, the Panel are also aware of the expected budget constraints and realise that it may be difficult for existing services to operate as they do currently.

The report makes a number of recommendations which the Panel feels would help to improve substance misuse services.

3. Membership of the Scrutiny Panel

Councillor R Welsh (Chair), Councillor Francis (Deputy Chair).

Councillors Brelsford, P Fitzpatrick, P Harrison, Patrick, S Quinn, Sullivan, Ward and Wild.

Mrs S Marsh (Church of England)

Rev Father J Clarke (Roman Catholic Church)

Mr N Ahmed (Muslim Faith)

Mrs T Sharma (Hindu Faith)

Mrs A Gregory (Parent Governor)

Mr M Osmond (Parent Governor)

4. Terms of Reference

Aim of the Review:

To assess actions taken and progress made to address problematic substance misuse (including alcohol) by children and young people in Tameside.

Objectives:

- A. To examine evidence relating to the extent of problems caused by substance misuse (including alcohol) for children and young people within Tameside.
- B. To gather evidence regarding current strategies and activities carried out to address substance misuse for children and young people in Tameside.
- C. To determine the key agencies involved in addressing substance misuse for children and young people in Tameside.
- D. To determine how different agencies involved in addressing substance misuse for children and young people in Tameside interact.
- E. To determine best or successful practices relating to the reduction of problematic substance misuse.
- F. To assess whether activity to address substance misuse, by children and young people in Tameside, is adequately addressing issues identified.

Value for Money/Use of Resources:

Substance misuse can impact significantly on both the educational attainment and overall life chances of children and young people in Tameside. In addition the review will consider the effectiveness of services provided and the value for money offered.

Equalities Issues:

Throughout the course of the review the Scrutiny Panel will take into account any significant differences which may exist between different groups within the community relating to substance misuse.

Local Area Agreement Targets:

NI 39 - Alcohol-harm related hospital admissions (rate per 100,000 population)

NI 112 - Under 18 conception rate

5. Methodology

During the course of this review Members met Claire Bibby, Assistant Executive Director, Area Support and Youth Services; Jane Forrest, Head of Commissioning and Resources; and Tom Coffey, Head of Service, Youth Support; to learn about Tameside Council's strategic approach to addressing drug and alcohol misuse for children and young people.

Members also met with:

- Chief Inspector Lindsey Atherton to learn about the role and work of Greater Manchester Police.
- Shelagh Walton, Drugs Advisory Teacher, Healthy Schools Team, to find out about drug and alcohol education in schools.
- Lisa Noble, Service Manager, and Rachel Connor, Team Leader, to learn about the Branching Out substance misuse service.
- Pat Jennings, Head of the Youth Offending Team.
- Diane King and Pam Chadwick, Area Youth Managers, Youth Service; Mark Tweedie, Head of Sport and Physical Activity; and Steve Hampson, Community Sports Development Manager; to learn about the diversionary activities provided for young people.
- Alison Leigh, Drug Action Team Strategic Manager, and Heidi Shaw, Mosaic Service Manager to find out about substance misuse services in Stockport Council.
- Alan Higgins, Greater Manchester Lead Director for Public Health for Alcohol and Director of Public Health NHS Oldham, to find out about work taking place across the sub region to address drug and alcohol misuse.

In addition, representatives of the Scrutiny Panel consulted with young people that had used Branching Out and the Youth Offending Team.

The content of this report has been checked for factual accuracy by Claire Bibby, Assistant Executive Director, Area Support and Youth Services; and Rachel Connor, Team Leader, Branching Out substance misuse service.

6. Background to the Review

6.1 Setting the Scene – Alcohol Misuse

- 6.1.1 Drug and alcohol misuse can have a major impact on young peoples' education, health, families and long-term chances in life.
- 6.1.2 The National Drugs Strategy 2010 estimates the cost of alcohol misuse at £18-25 billion a year due to crime, loss of productivity in the workplace and health and social problems. For the NHS alone, the estimated financial burden of the harmful use of alcohol is around £2.7 billion.
- 6.1.3 Alcohol consumption is part of British culture. Excessive drinking is characteristic of young adults drinking in friendship groups and is encouraged in youth-orientated bars and clubs. Recent research suggests that marketing and advertising increase the likelihood that young people will take up drinking and drink more frequently. However, further work is needed to examine the impact of social media.
- 6.1.4 In 2006 the National Centre for Social Research and the National Foundation for Educational Research conducted a national survey of 11-15 year olds for the Health and Social Care Information Centre. Young people self-reported their smoking, alcohol and drug use. Analysis of the results demonstrates that:
- There has been a steady increase in drinking since 1990;
 - Boys drink more alcohol than girls; and
 - That where young people are consuming alcohol they are drinking more heavily.
- 6.1.5 Similarly, under 18 hospital related alcohol admissions have generally increased. Those young people given alcohol by their parents, and those involved in sports or hobbies, are 1.6 times less likely to binge drink.

6.2 Setting the Scene – Drugs Misuse

- 6.2.1 According to the latest British Crime Survey, 8.6% of adults in 2009/10 had used an illicit drug in the last year. This equates to almost three million people.
- 6.2.2 National analysis of 11-15 year old drug use¹ shows that:
- 25% of young people have used drugs at least once. This has declined since 2001 when the figure was 29%;

¹ Drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England in 2007, NHS Information Centre

- 17% of young people said they had taken drugs in the last year, and 10% in the last month;
- Young people are most likely to use cannabis than other drugs (9% reported taking cannabis).

6.2.3 Each year around 24,000 young people access specialist support for substance misuse, 90% because of cannabis or alcohol².

6.3 Rationale for this Review

Alcohol Misuse

6.3.1 The impact of alcohol related harm in all English local authorities is measured every year. 5 out of 10 of the worst affected areas are in Greater Manchester. Recent data suggests that Tameside is the fifth worst affected area nationally.

6.3.2 25% of young people in the North West take part in regular (at least weekly) binge drinking. It is estimated that in Tameside 29% of young people are regular binge drinkers.

6.3.3 Regional data from the Centre for Public Health³ showed that in 2007, the percentage of 14 to 17 year olds claiming to drink five drinks or more at least once a week across Greater Manchester was greatest in Tameside (21%), and lowest in Stockport (17%).

6.3.4 Between 2005-2006 and 2008-2009, Tameside experienced the greatest rate of alcohol-specific hospital admissions in under 18s (123 per 100,000) across Greater Manchester, while Trafford had the lowest rate (70 per 100,000).

6.3.5 In a consultation with young people, Panel Members were informed that it was easy for under 18s to buy alcohol from small shops, but more difficult to purchase it from supermarkets because they require proof of age.

Drug Misuse

6.3.6 Drug misuse amongst different age groups is monitored with a range of surveys. The 'Tell Us' Survey 2008 indicates that 11% of Year 8 and Year 10 pupils in Tameside say that they had taken an illicit drug.

6.3.7 In 2008-2009 the Youth Online Survey (of Year 10 pupils) showed:

- 23% of pupils claimed to have used an illicit drug (640 young people). The most common drug used was cannabis (19%), followed by poppers (9%), and cocaine (4%);
- 66% of young people that said they took drugs also reported drinking alcohol at the same time;

² Drug Strategy 2010; Reducing Demand, Restricting Supply, Building Recovery

³ The impact of alcohol in Greater Manchester, Centre for Public Health, September 2010, p. 27

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- 10% of pupils claimed to have been involved with drugs at school (either giving away, using, carried or bought/sold).

6.3.8 In a consultation with young people, Panel Members were informed that it was easy to buy drugs and that many young people used cannabis. There was a perception amongst the young people that drug and alcohol use was widespread, and therefore normal, so they just joined in with their friends.

Conclusions

1. Alcohol and drugs misuse are significant issues for Greater Manchester and Tameside. The Panel supports the work at the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) level to tackle the causes and effects of substance misuse.

Recommendations

1. That the partnership approach to tackling alcohol and drug misuse across Greater Manchester continues to be used to address substance misuse.

7. Review Findings

7.1 Strategic Approach to Tackling Substance Misuse

7.1.1 A multi-agency Young People's Substance Misuse Reference Group had been established to coordinate the work of the council and partner agencies to reduce smoking, alcohol and drug use. The Reference Group reports to the Tameside Children's Trust Board and the Executive and Joint Commissioning Group.

7.1.2 The following key needs assessments and action plans had been developed to prevent drug and alcohol misuse amongst young people in Tameside:

- Children and Young People Alcohol Action Plan
- Tameside Alcohol Needs Assessment
- Tameside Alcohol Strategy and Action Plan
- Children and Young People Substance Misuse Annual Needs Assessment
- Children and Young People Substance Misuse Annual Treatment Plan Assessment

7.1.3 The Children and Young People Service highlighted a range of actions being taken by the council to tackle drug and alcohol use:

- The Department of Health National Support Team visited Tameside to assess the activities carried out to prevent drug and alcohol misuse and to support the agencies undertaking this work to improve outcomes. The most recent visit, which occurred in summer 2010, focused on alcohol and smoking services. As

a result of the National Support Team recommendations, more targeted support has been provided which focuses on the needs of young people.

- The Services for Children and Young People Directorate is examining the current performance monitoring information to assess the extent of substance misuse and contribute to the appraisal of prevention activities.
- The Services for Children and Young People Directorate has commissioned qualitative research to better understand the factors driving alcohol misuse by young people in Tameside.

7.1.4 It was reported that substance misuse is a complex problem. Although services have been established to prevent drug and alcohol misuse amongst young people, it remains challenging to address because these behaviours are embedded in many communities and certain 'hotspots' in the borough. Some of the services and activities that have been established to prevent substance misuse will take a long time to impact on these behaviours.

7.1.5 The Scrutiny Panel learned that preventing substance misuse amongst children and young people is now a priority for NHS Tameside and Glossop (the Primary Care Trust) and that this has improved the effectiveness and coordination of the work to prevent alcohol and drug misuse.

Conclusions

2. The night time drinking culture and low aspirations are a major contributor to substance misuse in Tameside and surrounding boroughs. The Panel noted that raising aspirations and de-normalising substance misuse were vital to tackling the problem.

Recommendations

2. That, where possible, a co-ordinated plan to address substance misuse should be used to ensure those delivering the plans are clear on approach and expected outcomes.
3. That tackling alcohol misuse should remain a priority for the Tameside Strategic Partnership and specifically within the Children and Young People Plan.

7.2 Schools

7.2.1 The 1998 National Drugs Strategy highlighted the issue of drug use and drug use in schools. It advocated the need for a partnership approach to prevent the misuse of drugs. At an early stage, Tameside was identified as an area of good practice in relation to the provision of drugs education in schools.

7.2.2 The Healthy Schools Team coordinates the work that is carried out by schools to prevent substance misuse. All Tameside schools deliver drugs education as part

of Personal Social and Health Education curriculum (PSHE) lessons. They aim to prevent young people misusing substances. Peer education is used as part of this approach and has proved to be successful in preventing substance misuse.

- 7.2.3 The Panel heard that although a higher than average number of pupils reported using substances in school in 2003, this had declined significantly in more recent surveys.
- 7.2.4 However, there is not a standard model for delivering drugs education and, in practice, classes vary in each school. Although 60 teachers in Tameside have been trained to deliver the PSHE curriculum in relation to drugs misuse, the Panel heard that there is no longer specific funding for PSHE.
- 7.2.5 The Healthy Schools Team highlighted that they believed their areas of strength were:
- Supporting schools to develop evidence based, targeted substance misuse programmes;
 - Screening and assessment;
 - Increasing the awareness of treatment opportunities; and
 - Clear processes for accessing treatment.
- 7.2.6 Parents groups have been formed to address engagement networks to support the reduction of substance misuse. They have been involved in running sessions such as 'Drug Proof Your Kids'.
- 7.2.7 The Healthy Schools Team highlighted that the following were challenging issues:
- There are separate action plans for preventing alcohol, drugs and tobacco misuse in Tameside. Consequently, council service areas and partners must respond to three different strategies and associated action plans. The Panel heard that it would be helpful to have one overarching substance misuse strategy.
 - Some young people are at risk from substance misuse but do not meet the threshold for accessing targeted support.
 - All schools are smoke free but it is challenging for schools to police this, especially for those with large school grounds.

Conclusions

3. The Panel noted that peer education was a positive way for children and young people to understand the consequences of substance misuse.

Recommendations

4. That peer education be further developed and used to tackle the views and culture regarding substance misuse by children and young people from a young age.

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5. That early identification and support should be carried out within schools before children and young people hit the triggers for referral to the Branching Out service.

7.3 Tameside Youth Service

- 7.3.1 The Youth Service provides universal activities and services that can be accessed by young people at weekends, during evenings and school holidays. In 2009-10, the Youth Service reached 7,000 young people in the borough. The Youth Service has 15 bases in the community which are situated in the most deprived wards.
- 7.3.2 There are also 4 Outreach Teams that provide services during evenings and weekends and work closely with other agencies, such as the Police. The service has established 9 specialist groups to work with young people to address certain issues, such as domestic violence. The Youth Service is often the first point of contact for young people, providing them with support at critical times. All Youth Workers are qualified and trained in a range of areas, such as drug and alcohol screening.
- 7.3.3 In 2008 the Government launched the Youth Crime Action Plan. This aimed to make communities safer by providing diversionary activities for young people, early intervention for those at risk of offending, and by using the youth justice system to deter young people from becoming involved in criminal activity. In response the Youth Service re-shaped their provision by:
- Engaging in more partnership working with PACTs and neighbourhood groups to provide local solutions to local problems. A range of diversionary activities, such as youth discos, are provided for young people where and when they are needed. Various agencies support these activities and the Police and Patrollers take these opportunities to build relationships with the young people that attend.
 - Bringing communities together by providing activities such as Fun Days, to build relationships amongst different groups.
 - Providing targeted support and referral for young people most at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour and substance misuse. Each young person is assigned a key worker who identifies their issues and develops an individual support package for them. This can involve the support of other agencies such as the Police and the council's Sports Development Service. This approach is designed to address young people's problems at an early stage, to prevent them from needing more intensive support in the future.
- 7.3.4 The service also works with groups of young people at critical times when they are likely to cause annoyance or misuse substances, to engage them positive activities such as rock climbing and canoeing. The Panel heard that providing these types of initiatives had contributed to a 49% reduction in anti-social behaviour in Tameside.

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- 7.3.5 The Youth Service highlighted that support from the Police had been essential in helping the Youth Service to tackle drug and alcohol misuse in the borough. However, the Panel were informed that the anticipated reductions in the Greater Manchester Police budget could mean that in the Youth Service would have to reconsider how they provided their services.

Conclusions

4. Partnership work between Greater Manchester Police and the Youth Service to provide activities for young people, such as youth discos, have been positively received by young people and communities.
5. The Panel noted that provision of activities which can help deter substance misuse are not always universal across the borough.

7.4 Tameside Sports Development Service

- 7.4.1 The Sports Development Service provides both universal sports and physical activity services for all young people and targeted activities to prevent anti-social behaviour and substance misuse.

Universal Sports Services

- 7.4.2 The service provides 'X Clubs'. These are community sports activities that all young people aged 11-16 years old can access. They are delivered at over 25 venues, at times when anti-social behaviour incidents are more likely to occur. There were approximately 23,500 attendances at X Clubs during 2009-10.
- 7.4.3 Over the past 16 months, the Sports Development Service has provided sports sessions on Friday and Saturday nights at 4 venues. They have attracted an average of 150 people each weekend.
- 7.4.4 Sports activities are also provided during school holidays at a cost to participants of between £0.50-£7.00 each day. An average of 470 young people attend these sessions each week.
- 7.4.5 The Panel heard that there are approximately 300 voluntary sector sports clubs in Tameside. These clubs offer the largest range of sports provision in the borough. However, the success of the voluntary sector clubs is due to the council's funding and support.
- 7.4.6 There is a high drop out rate from 16 years olds engaged in sports. The Panel heard that, to prevent this, it was important that good transitional arrangements exist for young people to become involved in adult sports clubs. The Sports Development Service is working to keep young people involved in sports activities.

Targeted Sports Services

- 7.4.7 The 'Sport Plus' and 'Positive Engagement Through Sport' programmes are targeted intervention schemes. They aim to support young people at risk of substance misuse and anti-social behaviour. Schools and other agencies refer young people to the Sports Development Service to access these schemes. There is a menu of activities that young people can take part in. On average 600 young people engage in these programmes each year.

Partnership work

- 7.4.8 The Sports Development Service works closely with partners, such as Tameside Sports Trust, the Police, New Charter, the Youth Offending Team and the Looked After Children's Service. This partnership approach has improved how sports provision is targeted, how the impact of sports services and interventions are measured, and has provided efficiencies for the partners involved.
- 7.4.9 The Scrutiny Panel was informed that sports provision is not consistent across the borough and the Sports Development Service wanted to intensify their provision by working with partners and other services, particularly District Assemblies, to divert more young people into positive sporting activities.
- 7.4.10 Members heard that 70% of funding for the Sports Development Service came from partner organisations commissioning their services. The service was expecting a budget shortfall of between £250,000-£400,000 in 2011-2012. This will be addressed, in part, by using more casual staff and volunteers to provide services.

Conclusions

6. The amount of children and young people accessing sport and leisure opportunities in Tameside is very encouraging and has had a positive effect on those accessing the services. These opportunities need to be further communicated and marketed.
7. The Panel noted evidence from the Sports Development Service that one to one engagement with young people around sport and leisure was an effective way of tackling substance misuse and associated issues in a young person's life.

Recommendations

6. That the opportunities for children and young people to access sport and leisure activities should be promoted wider. In particular, these opportunities should be promoted through District Assembly forums to ensure all Councillors are aware of the provision available.

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7. That plans by Tameside Sports Development Services to target sport and leisure services through forums such as District Assemblies are welcomed and should be integrated into the neighbourhood working plans of other agencies to ensure a joined up approach and deliver resources where most needed.
 8. That reducing the drop out rate of young people from activities (such as sport) at 16 years old should continue to be addressed by partners.
 9. That volunteering opportunities should be developed to support the delivery of diversionary services that have a positive impact on substance misuse.

7.5 Greater Manchester Police

- 7.5.1 Greater Manchester Police works closely with many council services and partners in Tameside to tackle issues regarding alcohol and drugs. Work is taking place to develop a better understanding of the interaction between alcohol and other drugs such as cannabis, cocaine and ecstasy. Members also learned that issues relating to misuse of substances tend to peak on Friday and Saturday.
- 7.5.2 The Panel heard that it was difficult for Greater Manchester Police to quantify the number of under 18s misusing alcohol because they could not use “test on arrest” powers. However, they are aware that the number of young people found with alcohol is decreasing, though it is thought that it is due to young people keeping alcohol hidden. Some parents give their children alcohol. Police can issue Parenting Orders to prevent this in severe cases. However, this is an issue that all services dealing with substance misuse have a role in addressing. Alcohol misuse accounts for the largest proportion of issues for the Police and Members heard that Greater Manchester Police believed that there could be more work undertaken to prevent alcohol misuse.
- 7.5.3 Greater Manchester Police undertakes a range of work with partners in relation to drug and alcohol misuse, including:
 - Working with Trading Standards on enforcement activity to address underage and proxy sales of alcohol. However, work to prosecute traders is intensive and can be complex.
 - Referring young people to the Branching Out substance misuse treatment service when they have been involved in alcohol related anti-social behaviour.
 - Providing targeted police patrols in Tameside between 5.30pm and 11.30pm.
 - Working with Youth Services to provide diversionary activities for young people, such as youth discos. These initiatives have been successful in reducing problems caused by alcohol and substance misuse.
 - Working with the Services for Children and Young People Directorate on ‘Operation Stay Safe’. When a young person is found to have a significant risk of harm, a Youth Protection Order is issued and the young person is taken into Police protection at a place of safety, by the Out of Hours Team. Staff run checks and call the young person’s parents. This operation has been

successful in reducing issues related to alcohol and drug misuse and has encouraged parents to take responsibility for their children.

- Undertaking targeted operations to address substance misuse.

7.5.4 Greater Manchester Police highlighted to the Scrutiny Panel that the transition from youth to adult substance misuse treatment services is problematic. Adult treatment services are targeted at different levels of need. It is possible for young people to 'drop out' of treatment services when they reach 19 years old. It was also reported that whilst most parents are supportive of work to address substance misuse issues for young people, the most difficult cases are those where the parents are disengaged and may themselves have substance misuse issues.

7.5.5 The Panel also heard that restorative justice could be further used to improve outcomes for substance misuse related crime. Restorative justice usually involves the victim and offender meeting in a controlled environment. Both parties have the opportunity to explain the consequences of the offence upon themselves. Often the offender will apologise and may try and repair the harm caused.

Recommendations

10. That the Emergency Services always refer young people to appropriate support agencies if they are found to be using drugs or alcohol.

7.6 Youth Offending Team

7.6.1 The Crime and Disorder Reduction Act (1998) made it a legal requirement for each local authority to establish a Youth Offending Team (YOT). They were created to support children and young people to lead crime-free lives; provide victims with better support; give the public more confidence in the youth justice system; and ensure that more offenders were held to account for their actions, and stop offending.

7.6.2 In Tameside the role of the YOT involves:

- Preventing offending using various intervention packages for young people at risk, for example, for those involved in anti-social behaviour;
- First tier offending;
- Community Panels;
- Community sentences;
- Custodial sentences;
- Conducting assessments, using the ASSET assessment tool. This is used nationally by all Youth Offending Teams;
- Face to face work, at home or in the office;
- Writing reports, for example, for court;
- Presentation to courts;
- Visiting secure estates, for example, prisons for young offenders; and
- Conducting assessments of health; education, training and employment; and accommodation.

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- 7.6.3 The Tameside YOT is a multi-agency team with a range of professionals. They assess all the issues affecting young people between 10-18 years old and examine the opportunities available to support them to achieve their potential. The YOT works closely with Tameside Council Social Care Services, the Police, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Branching Out substance misuse service.
- 7.6.4 There are four tiers of drug treatment provision:
- Tier one: provides a general service, for example, disseminating leaflets.
 - Tier two: provides brief interventions.
 - Tier three: supports chronic drug users.
 - Tier four: provides a specialist residential service. (This is rarely used).
- 7.6.5 The YOT is involved mainly in tier two and three provision. However, young people cannot be legally required to attend substance misuse sessions. Consequently, the YOT builds relationships with young people, based on trust, to encourage them to engage with the substance misuse services they provide.
- 7.6.6 The YOT screens all young people involved with the service for substance misuse. Within the calendar year to date, the Panel learned that 55% of all young people screened had engaged in substance misuse.

Views of Service Users

- 7.6.7 Representatives of the Scrutiny Panel undertook a consultation exercise with five young people who had accessed substance misuse services to find out about their experiences of using the YOT.
- 7.6.8 The young people were initially reluctant to engage with services they had been referred to, including the YOT, because they did not agree that they had problems. They often needed a few support sessions to recognise they had issues. (The YOT workers highlighted that they carried out 'pre-work' to engage young people, identify their problems, and help them to see they had issues).
- 7.6.9 The young people felt that the diversionary activities provided by the YOT are good, especially sports sessions (boxing, gym sessions).
- 7.6.10 All of the young people praised the help provided by the YOT and particularly the persistence and approach of the YOT workers. They felt that they engaged them in an effective way that schools and other services had not.
- 7.6.11 One of the young people taking part in the consultation said that one-to-one support sessions were the most effective way of helping young people with substance misuse issues as they could be more open in this environment.

7.7 Substance Misuse Service in Tameside

- 7.7.1 Tameside Council commissions 'Branching Out' to provide a substance misuse treatment and mentoring service for children and young people under 19 years old. The Branching Out service is part of the national 'Lifeline' umbrella organisation.
- 7.7.2 Branching Out provides services to parents and carers concerned about a young person's substance use, as well as support to young people. They accept referrals from young people, relatives, carers, friends or professionals. Wherever possible, they attempt to engage parents in the support programmes.
- 7.7.3 Branching Out provides specialist support in the following areas:
- One-to-one work.
 - Family work. This may involve one-to-one support or structured family sessions.
 - Targeted group work for vulnerable young people who require targeted drug and alcohol education. This support can be requested by schools, youth workers or other professionals working with young people.
 - Area working.
 - Training for professionals. Branching Out run a free, one day training course which covers basic drug and alcohol information, looks at how to complete their screening and assessment tool and provides educational resources that can be used with young people. 418 professionals in Tameside have been trained in the use of this tool.
 - Events, stalls and information sessions, such as the First Stop Project. They use young people who volunteer to deliver mentoring support and guidance to peers.
- 7.7.4 The average age of service users is just over 15 years old. There are approximately 3 to 4 cases per year with young service users. The age of the youngest service ever user was 9 years old.
- 7.7.5 The Panel heard that 50% of service users are referred from the Youth Offending Team and partner agencies. In 85% of cases, Branching Out works with partner agencies to provide treatment and support services.
- 7.7.6 In 2009-2010 70% of Branching Out service users were discharged with positive outcomes. This has increased to 94% in the year to date. However, due to the nature of the service and the way performance is monitored, it is not possible to achieve positive discharges in all cases. The Panel heard that follow-up work is not carried out after young people leave the service. Therefore Branching Out cannot monitor the progress of former service users.
- 7.7.7 It was highlighted that problematic cannabis use is a significant issue for the borough and that whilst information is not available to the service regarding the parental history of substance misuse, it is possible that in many cases the parents of service users also have a history of substance misuse.

7.7.8 The following challenges were highlighted:

- There is no funding nationally for detoxification and rehabilitation services for under 18 year olds. In Tameside, children and young people that need these services are referred to adult services.
- National grants have previously been used to support the service. However, it is not clear if this funding will continue in the current economic climate.
- Drug and alcohol treatment services for adults and young people are based on different models. There is limited support available for individuals making the transition between these services. As a result, when people reach the age of 19 they may not receive the support they need.
- There is no in-patient provision for young people's substance misuse treatment. In order to access support, Branching Out must request an in-patient bed from the Adult Community Care Panel who will decide if a young person meets the threshold to receive support. In practice, accessing this support for young people is very challenging.

Views of Service Users

- 7.7.9 Representatives of the Scrutiny Panel undertook a consultation exercise with four young people and one parent that had accessed Branching Out to find out about their experiences of using substance misuse services.
- 7.7.10 There was general agreement that young people misuse drugs and alcohol because they are bored and depressed, and due to peer pressure. They commented that drugs and alcohol are so widely used it is considered normal.
- 7.7.11 The young people all stated that it is very easy to buy drugs and alcohol. They tended to get them from friends or a drug dealer, often using money that their parents had given them. Some young people contribute to a fund to accumulate enough money to buy drugs and then share them out amongst their friends.
- 7.7.12 The parent that took part in the consultation session highlighted that some people give their children money, despite knowing that they will spend it on drugs and alcohol, in order to prevent them stealing to fund their habits.
- 7.7.13 The young people all commented that there is a limited amount of drug and alcohol education in school. They thought there needed to be more education and that it should begin at an earlier age, ideally in Year 6, because most young people first become exposed to drug and alcohol misuse at secondary school. Branching Out staff highlighted that the age people first start to use drugs appears to be becoming younger. Three 11 year olds are currently attending Branching Out.
- 7.7.14 It was agreed that peer education would be an effective way of teaching young people about drug and alcohol misuse, so they could learn from positive role models.
- 7.7.15 The parent that took part in the consultation session said that many people did not know about the signs of drug use in young people. They could be educated to help them identify the signs at an earlier stage. Branching Out staff pointed out

that they have undertaken awareness raising work in a local primary school in the past. Although all parents were invited to attend a lesson on drugs and alcohol, only two attended.

- 7.7.16 Two of the participants had been referred to Branching Out by their GP, one was referred by a PSHE teacher, and another had self-referred into the service. Branching Out does not currently receive referrals from young people that present at Accident and Emergency due to drug or alcohol misuse.
- 7.7.17 All the participants praised the Branching Out service very highly, particularly the one-to-one support sessions. The young people felt that the staff offered them targeted help which met their needs. Most of the participants said that this support had turned their lives around. As a result, one person now volunteers as a peer mentor for the service, promoting safe sex and drug awareness in schools, colleges and on the streets. Another young person volunteers at a local youth club to mentor younger children.
- 7.7.18 Branching Out supports young people up to the age of 19 years and the service works with young people that transfer to adult support services. However, the threshold to access the adult service is high and support is only provided for alcohol and heroin addicts. The adult service offered a very different type of support than Branching Out. It focused on prescribing rather than providing emotional support. As a result, the transition to adult services could be very difficult.

Conclusions

8. The Panel noted that on reaching the age limit for accessing Branching Out services many young people struggled to make the successful transition to adult treatment services, which had a negative impact on them.

Recommendations

11. That following support for substance misuse by Branching Out, young people should receive a follow up after six months to understand how the person has progressed.
12. That the age limit for accessing Branching Out services should be increased from 19 in line with other successful services from across Greater Manchester.

7.8 Substance Misuse Services in Stockport

- 7.8.1 Substance misuse services in Stockport are recognised nationally as an example of best practice. Stockport Council has a joint commissioning structure for young peoples' and adults' services.
- 7.8.2 The funding for young peoples' substance misuse services comes from a large range of agencies, including:

- Pooled Treatment Budget;
- Drug Interventions Programme;
- Children and Young People base budget;
- PCT base budget; and
- Other grants and funding streams for specific programmes.

7.8.3 It is not clear if there will be any changes to the substance misuse service budget in Stockport in the future. However, alcohol misuse has been identified as a priority for the borough because over the last 5-10 years there have been continual increases in alcohol related hospital admissions.

7.8.4 Stockport Council commissions Mosaic to provide a holistic substance misuse service for young people aged 5-25 years old. This includes prevention, treatment, detoxification and specialist services. Services are offered to individuals up to the age of 25 to better support young adults' needs regarding education, housing and employment.

7.8.5 The Mosaic service employs 30 staff including a GP, nurses, 5 social workers and youth workers. They offer a range of free and confidential services to young people, their families and friends, who are worried about drug or alcohol use. This includes:

- Treatment and Criminal Justice Service. Problematic substance misusers are offered a package of support, including detoxification, aftercare and a range of 'wrap around' services such as housing support.
- School Based Service. One worker is placed in each of the borough's secondary schools, special schools and Pupil Referral Units; for one day a week, providing one-to-one support.
- Family Service. Face-to-face and telephone advice is available to parents and carers concerned about young people. The service supports children affected by parental substance misuse by providing one-to-one sessions and group therapy work. The 10 week "Think Family" programme offers support to the whole family. The course has been very successful in preventing generational substance misuse.

7.8.6 Mosaic trains professionals that work with young people to identify individuals that may be misusing substances and signpost them to support services.

7.8.7 In 2008-2009 Mosaic delivered 560 school based programmes and received 650 referrals. The peak age range for individuals using the service is 18-23 years. The most common reasons for referrals are as follows:

- Cannabis (35%)
- Alcohol (29%)
- Cocaine (25%)

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- 7.8.8 However, overall alcohol misuse is a bigger issue for Stockport than drugs. Of the 111 active cases Mosaic worked with in 2009-2010, 50% featured alcohol misuse and 30% featured alcohol and drug misuse.
- 7.8.9 Partnership working has been essential in making the substance misuse service a success. Joint working arrangements have been agreed with the Youth Offending Team, Probation, the Local Safeguarding Children Unit, Social Care, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team, schools, Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, and the Young Carers Service. Mosaic has recently agreed a pathway with Stockport NHS Foundation Trust whereby young people that present at Accident and Emergency due to alcohol are referred to Mosaic. The service has also developed a good relationship with Adult Treatment Services.

7.9 Interventions

- 7.9.1 Possible interventions for preventing substance misuse by young people, suggested to the Scrutiny Panel are included below.

Marketing and Advertising

- 7.9.2 The Scrutiny Panel heard that alcohol consumption is part of British culture. Excessive drinking is characteristic of young adults drinking in friendship groups and is encouraged in youth-orientated bars and clubs.
- 7.9.3 Recent research⁴ suggests that marketing and advertising increase the likelihood that young people will take up drinking and drink more frequently. The Panel was informed that further work needs to be undertaken to examine the impact of social media on alcohol consumption by young people and the level of exposure to marketing; and that consideration could be given to reviewing the national regulatory system to address this.
- 7.9.4 It was suggested to the Scrutiny Panel that partners could work together to produce clear educational campaigns to raise awareness and understanding of alcohol harm in order to influence British culture.

Increasing the Price of Alcohol

- 7.9.5 Members were informed that, in February 2010, the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) Executive agreed to advocate nationally and locally for a minimum unit price for alcohol of 50p. AGMA is considering the possibility of introducing a bye law to establish this, which would mean:
- A 750ml bottle of wine (12% alcohol) could not be sold for less than £4.50;
 - Six 500ml cans of lager (4% alcohol) could not be sold for less than £6;
 - A 2 litre bottle of cider (5.5% alcohol) could not be sold for less than £5.50; and
 - A 700ml bottle of whisky (40% alcohol) could not be sold for less than £14.

⁴ The Impact of Alcohol Marketing on Youth Drinking Behaviour: A Two-stage Cohort Study. Alcohol and Alcoholism Vol. 45, No. 5, Gordon et al. 2010, pp. 470–480

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- 7.9.6 Research carried out by Sheffield University in 2008 identified that 50p per unit of alcohol would target irresponsible drinking; impact on hazardous and harmful drinkers, while imposing a minimal financial effect on moderate drinkers and on-trade sales. However, Members of the Scrutiny Panel discussed the topic of alcohol pricing with young offenders during a consultation session in January 2011 and one young person said that raising the price of cider from about £2.25 to £5.50 (for a 2 litre bottle) would mean that some people, who regularly commit anti-social behaviour, could not afford it and would steal alcohol from small shops or commit burglary.
- 7.9.7 On 18 January 2011, the government announced plans to ban retailers selling alcohol below the rate of duty plus VAT. This would mean:
- A 750ml bottle of wine (12.5% alcohol) could not be sold for less than £2.03;
 - A can of 440ml lager (4.2% alcohol) could not be sold for less than £0.38;
 - A 1 litre bottle of cider (4.5% alcohol) could not be sold for less than £0.40; and
 - A 700ml bottle of whisky (40% alcohol) could not be sold for less than £8.00.

Other Interventions

- 7.9.8 The following possible additional interventions, to prevent alcohol misuse by children and young people, were suggested to the Scrutiny Panel:
- Providing health information to parents;
 - Preventing underage sales, including the provision of extra support to retailers;
 - Greater joined up working between emergency health staff and substance misuse services; and
 - The introduction of a pathway, by all relevant partner agencies, whereby all young people that have contact with emergency services due to alcohol could be offered targeted information, advice and support.

Recommendations

13. That the Scrutiny Panel supports the proposals for an appropriate minimum unit price for alcohol and believes that this will need to be implemented nationally in order to be effective.

8. Conclusions

1. Alcohol and drugs misuse are significant issues for Greater Manchester and Tameside. The Panel supports the work at the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) level to tackle the causes and effects of substance misuse.
2. The night time drinking culture and low aspirations are a major contributor to substance misuse in Tameside and surrounding boroughs. The Panel noted that raising aspirations and de-normalising substance misuse were vital to tackling the problem.

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3. The Panel noted that peer education was a positive way for children and young people to understand the consequences of substance misuse.
 4. Partnership work between Greater Manchester Police and the Youth Service to provide activities for young people, such as youth discos, have been positively received by young people and communities.
 5. The Panel noted that provision of activities which can help deter substance misuse are not always universal across the borough.
 6. The amount of children and young people accessing sport and leisure opportunities in Tameside is very encouraging and has had a positive effect on those accessing the services. These opportunities need to be further communicated and marketed.
 7. The Panel noted evidence from the Sports Development Service that one to one engagement with young people around sport and leisure was an effective way of tackling substance misuse and associated issues in a young person's life.
 8. The Panel noted that on reaching the age limit for accessing Branching Out services many young people struggled to make the successful transition to adult treatment services, which had a negative impact on them.

9. Recommendations

1. That the partnership approach to tackling alcohol and drug misuse across Greater Manchester continues to be used to address substance misuse.
2. That, where possible, a co-ordinated plan to address substance misuse should be used to ensure those delivering the plans are clear on approach and expected outcomes.
3. That tackling alcohol misuse should remain a priority for the Tameside Strategic Partnership and specifically within the Children and Young People Plan.
4. That peer education be further developed and used to tackle the views and culture regarding substance misuse by children and young people from a young age.
5. That early identification and support should be carried out within schools before children and young people hit the triggers for referral to the Branching Out service.
6. That the opportunities for children and young people to access sport and leisure activities should be promoted wider. In particular, these opportunities should be promoted through District Assembly forums to ensure all Councillors are aware of the provision available.

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7. That plans by Tameside Sports Development Services to target sport and leisure services through forums such as District Assemblies are welcomed and should be integrated into the neighbourhood working plans of other agencies to ensure a joined up approach and deliver resources where most needed.
 8. That reducing the drop out rate of young people from activities (such as sport) at 16 years old should continue to be addressed by partners.
 9. That volunteering opportunities should be developed to support the delivery of diversionary services that have a positive impact on substance misuse.
 10. That the Emergency Services always refer young people to appropriate support agencies if they are found to be using drugs or alcohol.
 11. That following support for substance misuse by Branching Out, young people should receive a follow up after six months to understand how the person has progressed.
 12. That the age limit for accessing Branching Out services should be increased from 19 in line with other successful services from across Greater Manchester.
 13. That the Scrutiny Panel supports the proposals for an appropriate minimum unit price for alcohol and believes that this will need to be implemented nationally in order to be effective.

10. Borough Treasurer's Comments

Services for Children and Young People currently commission the branching out substance misuse contract. The contract value is £210,000 per annum. The Directorate has an option to extend the contract for a further year commencing 1 April 2011. If the contract is extended for a further year it will be funded via the following resources; £112,000 via the Primary Care Trust, £50,000 via the Early Intervention Grant and £48,000 via the Youth Offending Team revenue budget within Services for Children and Young People.

It will be essential that further resource opportunities are explored to support a substance misuse service beyond 2011/2012 as existing funding sources may not be available in future years due to the significant levels of efficiency savings to be addressed by the Council and its partners.

11. Borough Solicitor's Comments

This report looks at ways to address some of the causes and effects of substance misuse by children and young people in Tameside and reviews the effectiveness of current substance misuse strategies and actions plans. This review assists the Council in ensuring it is meeting its statutory duties both under the Children Act 1989 and under

section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act. This imposes a duty on councils to do all they reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder locally and improve people's quality of life as a result. Substance misuse falls within that duty. The next stage in the governance process is for this report to be received by the relevant Executive Member(s) and for a response to be made to the recommendations. It is intended that the response will be considered at the June Cabinet meeting.