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To: Customer and Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

Date: 15th September 2011

Subject: Kent YOS Annual Operating Plan – 2011/12

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This paper seeks approval for the Kent YOS Annual Operating Plan to be submitted to the National Youth Justice Board as its Youth Justice Plan for 2011/12.

For comment prior to submission for County Council approval.

Introduction

1. The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 established multi-agency Youth Offending Teams nationally and Section 40 of the Act sets out responsibilities in relation to the production each year of a Youth Justice Plan which following consultation with partner agencies sets out:
 - a) how youth justice services in their areas are to be provided and funded;
and
 - b) how the Youth Offending Team is composed, how it will operate and what functions it will carry out.

Structure of the Plan

2. The structure for the Youth Justice Plan was prescribed by the National Youth Justice Board (YJB) using a template which they supplied. At the beginning of 2010, the Youth Justice Board informed all Youth Offending Teams, in response to the central government initiative to reduce the burden on local services, that while they still needed to forward Annual Plans to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) they no longer needed to follow the previously prescriptive format and that Youth Offending Services in future could submit plans which were prepared for local purposes, provided they covered the information previously required.
3. The three key elements of the YJB template included a self assessment, the plan in response to the findings of the self assessment and the resources that were being made available to the Youth Offending Service by its five statutory partners, Health, Education, Children's Social Care, Probation and Police:

4. The self assessment and the objectives in the Youth Justice Plan related to the following service areas and responsibilities:
 - Reducing first time entrants into the youth justice system and reducing any disproportionality with reference to issues of diversity;
 - Reducing proven re-offending by children and young people and reducing any disproportionality with reference to issues of diversity;
 - Reducing the use of youth custodial remands and sentences and reducing any disproportionality with reference to issues of diversity;
 - Addressing the risk of serious harm to the public through local application of YJB risk of serious harm procedures;
 - Keeping children and young people safe from harm;
 - Improving public confidence in the fairness and effectiveness of dealing with youth crime in the Criminal Justice System; and
 - Improving satisfaction in the Criminal Justice System for those who have been victims of youth crime.
5. The areas of attention with respect to the use of resources and achieving value for money were:
 - the youth justice services to be delivered
 - any identifiable risk to the delivery in the future of these services
 - how the above risks would be addressed by the Youth Offending Service and its partners
 - the budget for the Service with the contributions from each of the partners clarified
 - the staffing of the Service

The Kent Response

6. Kent Youth Offending Service through the County Youth Justice Board and with advice from Legal and Democratic Services took the decision to submit the Annual Operating Plan as its Youth Justice Plan to the YJB, which is produced for KCC monitoring and scrutiny purposes.
7. The key difference between the requirements of the two planning processes is that the YJB template expected commentary on the contribution of all partners within the Youth Offending Service whereas the Annual Operating Plan focuses primarily on how the Local Authority is meeting its responsibilities with respect to the principal aim for the youth justice system, “the prevention of offending by children and young people”.
8. With the exception of this difference, the information requirements of the two templates are similar with the focus in the KCC template for the Annual Operating Plan being:
 - a risk analysis for the business
 - a performance review against national and local performance indicators
 - planned activities and new service developments

- the budget for the coming financial year and the KCC contribution to the staffing of the Service
9. This template has been accepted by the YJB as fulfilling its' requirements and it forms the basis of the work from the Kent YOS in 2011/12. The Operating Plan is submitted to the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the Annual Youth Justice Plan for Kent for comment prior to submission to the County Council for approval.

Recommendations

10. Members are asked to comment on the sufficiency of the YOS Annual Operating Plan for 2011/12 and to note that it will be submitted to County Council for approval in October

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