

Kent Community Safety Partnership

Kent & Medway Reducing Offending Board (KMROB) Update

8th October 2019

1. Background

KMROB sits under the governance of Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB) and is a senior management group that is made up of key partners from criminal justice agencies, the OPCC and community safety partnerships in Kent and Medway.

Purpose:

- Development and ownership of Kent and Medway Reducing Offending priority objectives and key outputs
- Oversee reducing offending and re-offending across Kent and Medway, reduce repeat victims, protecting the public
- Provide a platform for sharing information on progress in relation to identified thematic topics and work-streams
- Promote joint working from all stakeholders to deliver actions to reduce offending
- Inform commissioning of offender needs and service gaps utilising agency data and research
- Provide a strategic level platform for local operational oversight groups to report into

Objectives:

- Identify and implement solutions to any barriers to achieving successful outcomes
 - Identify opportunities for joint uses of resources and income generation which include offender support service
 - Review the progress of individual projects in achieving the objectives of individual strands of thematic topics and work streams
 - Identify the financial cost of offending to services and the cost benefit and value for money of implementing initiatives which reduce offending and re-offending
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2. Priority Objectives and Key Outputs for 2019/20

- *Accommodation*
 - Support and promote an evidence based and joined up multi-agency approach to highlight (and address) accommodation issues for offenders

The Board continues to be aware through its agency representation of the ongoing challenge to house offenders with complex needs, including those leaving prison after serving lengthy sentences. The Board have now commissioned a report to understand the current picture in relation to current service users and their accommodation status to further assist in driving the agenda in Kent and Medway. Most recently KSS CRC has secured 10 bed spaces supported by 'Your Ambition' (a charitable arm of Seetec) in partnership with Maidstone Borough Council. These bed spaces will be available for current service users and the service will be run by Pathways to Independence, who have a long history of working with offenders assisting them to resettle in the community.

- *Women*
 - Establish Kent & Medway Women's Forum
 - Support the development of whole systems approach to working with women across Kent and Medway, including the implementation of co-located women only environments

Positive steps have been made in relation to women in Kent and Medway. The first Kent and Medway Women's Forum took place on 1st May which saw a wide range of specialist agencies as well as universal services in attendance. There was enthusiasm and commitment from partners to work in collaborative way to develop a clear pathway for women pre-charge and further on in the Criminal Justice System. This included the appetite for co-location for women specific services as is established practice in Surrey and Sussex. Since the initial meeting a Terms of Reference has been agreed and a further two meetings have taken place. The focus will be keeping things simple and setting achievable actions which agencies can commit to. The Forum has been led by KSS CRC, National Probation Service, Kent Police and Criminal Justice Liaison and Diversion Service.

A barrier that has been identified in relation to women in the criminal justice system in Kent and Medway relates to the Courts and Sentencers. Despite the launch of the Ministry of Justice 'Female Offender Strategy' in June 2018, sentencers are reluctant to lose their judicial independence and feel a change of law is required to enable them to sentence women differently to men. It has been identified through the Forum and sentencer liaison meetings that there is disconnect between the Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty's Court's and Tribunals Service in terms of the implementation of key policies.

- *Integrated Offender Management (IOM)*
 - Embed revised Operational Guidance to ensure consistency in selection to priority groups of domestic abuse, vulnerable to gang involvement, serious acquisitive crime and other complex cases requiring a multi-agency approach
 - Continue to utilise data to evidence progress and impact of IOM

IOM aims to create a coherent framework for partners to manage adult offenders and young people who are committing the most crimes and causing harm to their local communities. Key statistics that KCSP may be interested regarding the IOM cohort in Kent and Medway are:

- On the 26th July 2019 the IOM cohort was at 245
- 2 of the cohort are female
- 14 (5.7%) are managed by youth teams
- Serious acquisitive crime is the priority group with the largest cohort (93, 38.0%)
- 111 individuals (45.3%) are in custody
- 126 adults and 8 youths are currently living in the community
- The adult cohort has collectively reduced their offending by 40.0%
- The youth cohort has measured a 63.0% reduction in offending
- In the last 3 months, 69 offences have been committed by 23 adults and 4 youths
- 19 members of the cohort have committed 25 knife offences over the past 3 years

Updated Operational Guide was issued in April as a result of a workshop to review the current arrangements and simplify the priority groups to prevent duplication and confusion. A multi-agency audit to assess the extent to which the new guidance has been embedded will take place in the New Year.

3. Recommendations

KCSP is asked to note the progress and actions undertaken by KMROB.

Claire Jones, Assistant Chief Probation Officer (KSS CRC)
Chair of KMROB
