



HM Prison &
Probation Service



Ministry
of Justice

Youth Offending Teams

By Email

18 August 2017

Dear Colleague,

Youth Justice Reform

We are writing to you today to update you on the progress of the youth justice reform.

Last year the government set out plans to reform the youth justice system in England and Wales with the aim of improving outcomes for young people in both custody and the community. The government's aim was to create stronger, clearer governance for the youth justice system. In April this year the Youth Custody Service (YCS) was created and has been operating in shadow form since then. From 1 September, changes in accountability for service provision come into full effect, and youth justice services will now be delivered as outlined below.

Youth Justice custodial provision will now be the responsibility of a new distinct arm of HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), called the Youth Custody Service. This has a dedicated director who from 1 September is directly accountable to HMPPS's chief executive, but will work closely with other youth justice services, including the Youth Justice Board. The YCS's responsibilities include the placement of young people into custody and the delivery of secure services, both directly and via contractors.

Responsibility and accountability for commissioning youth custody services will from 1 September transfer from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The MoJ will commission both directly provided and contracted youth justice secure services, setting the standards expected for these services and holding providers to account.

The Youth Justice Board will be responsible for oversight of the whole youth justice system and providing independent advice to ministers on its functioning. This power is enshrined in legislation. The YJB will identify where improvements are needed and support implementation across the system. It will continue to work closely with youth offending teams to, amongst other things, provide early intervention in the community and share best practice across the system. It will continue to manage grant payments for the provision of community youth justice services.

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While accountability for delivery of youth justice services will transfer on 1 September we will take the coming months to refine and embed our approach to delivery. We will keep you informed of how these changes are developing and what this will mean for how each of the new bodies will work with you in the future.

Those who work within the youth justice sector are no strangers to reform. We are therefore confident that you will continue to work with us all to ensure that the focus remains on delivering positive outcomes for children and young people who find themselves in the youth justice system.

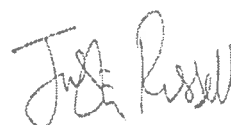
Yours Sincerely



Colin Allars
Chief Executive
Youth Justice Board



Michael Spurr
Chief Executive
Her Majesty's Prison and
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Justin Russell
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Date/Dyddiad 4th April, 2017

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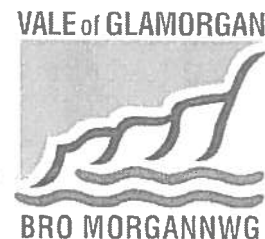
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Laura Beaumont & Abigail Plenty,
Deputy Director, Youth Justice (Policy) MoJ
Youth Justice
102 Petty France
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Dear Ms Beaumont and Ms Plenty

YOUTH JUSTICE REVIEW

On behalf of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee, I wish to express our concern regarding some of the proposals outlined within the Youth Justice Review and the UK Government Response published in December 2016.

Whilst the Committee welcomes the focus on children as children first and offenders second and the recognition of the complex needs of children within the Youth Justice System, we feel that there has been a distinct lack of focus on how youth justice services are delivered in Wales.

Both reports outline how the Ministry of Justice will work with Government Departments responsible for Health, Social Services, Housing and Education in England with only a brief reference to the need to also undertake consultation with Welsh Government.

Devolved policy, legislation, the financial climate and the geography of Wales all have a significant impact on how services are delivered. It is therefore imperative that the Ministry of Justice engages constructively with Wales to ensure that any redesign of services does not have unintended consequences which in turn could undermine the successes achieved.

The Youth Justice Review makes recommendations for local authorities to be given greater freedom to develop models of delivery in relation to youth justice services. These proposals include the devolution of the cost of custodial placements and the removal of the requirement to establish a Youth Offending Team.

We are pleased that the UK Government response does not endorse these proposals but instead seeks to review the governance of the Youth Justice System both for custody and the community.

We also note that there are proposals to pilot two secure schools in England. It is difficult to envisage how a similar scheme would operate in Wales based on the number of children held within the secure estate, the financial implications and the geography of Wales making resettlement of children away from their home areas extremely challenging. This may be an area where the opportunity should be taken to consult about how things could be delivered differently in Wales.

Both reports promote a commitment to continuation of funding for Youth Offending Teams. This Local Authority has committed to not reducing funding to the Youth Offending Team as we view the service as part of our prevention and early intervention services promoted by both the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

We welcome the UK Government's commitment to maintaining the Youth Offending Team model and to continue to provide a grant for delivery of youth justice services. What would be extremely helpful is to be notified of the level of grant prior to the start of each financial year and/or a commitment to longer term funding levels to facilitate the planning for delivery of service.

We look forward to engaging constructively in future consultations regarding proposed changes to the Youth Justice System and to hearing from you in relation to funding levels.

Yours sincerely

C.J. Williams
Chairman - Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection)

Signed on behalf of the Chairman

Copied to:-

- Clare Toogood, Deputy Director, Youth justice (Implementation) MoJ
- Louise Falshaw – Director of Partnerships and Performance, Youth Justice Board
- Colin Allars, Chief Executive of Youth Justice Board
- Dusty Kennedy – Director of YJB Cymru