

Minutes of CYPSP Children, Young People and Offending (CYPO)
Sub-group meeting
Thursday 2nd August 2012 at 10.30 am – 3rd floor, Waring Street

Present:

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| Michael Heaney | YJA (Chair) |
| Yvonne Cooke | PSNI |
| Andrew Hawthorne | HSCB |
| Franziska Hewitt | YJA |
| Stephen Lilley | PSNI |
| Una Magee | Barnardos |
| Claire Gallogly | NICTS (for Mark Radcliffe who stepped down) |
| Anne-Marie McClure | Opportunity Youth |
| Elaine McConnell | CSU |
| Dave Weir | NIACRO |
| Angela Devlin | Extern |
| Helen Dunn | Action for Children |
| Jane McKenna | PBNI |
| Philomena McDermott | SELB/WELB (video link) |
| Edel Quinn | Include Youth |
| Paula Rogers | Include Youth (will be attending for Edel Quinn from next meeting on) |
| Jim Wharton | (in attendance) |

Apologies:

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Tom Cassidy | WHST |
| John Duffy | HSCB |
| Ann Godfrey | HSCB |
| Paula Jack | YJA |

Michael welcomed the group to the meeting and informed members that he was chairing the meeting in Paula's absence who due to unforeseen circumstances was unable to attend.

Michael reported that due to Ann Godfrey's forthcoming retirement, the next meeting of the sub-group would be her last.

Michael outlined the agenda for today's meeting.

Minutes of last meeting:

Ann-Marie commented that her apologies had not been recorded in the minutes. Subject to this one change the minutes were agreed as drafted.

Matters Arising:

Appointment of Vice-Chairperson

Michael was pleased to report that a number of members of the group had expressed an interest in this position. However, it was decided to defer discussion on this matter until Paula was present.

Action Plan:

Michael acknowledged the work of Andrew and Franziska in relation to the Action Plan and asked Andrew for an update on progress.

Andrew reported that the Action Plan was now out for consultation. The closing date for responses is 10th October 2012. Andrew will collate the responses received and circulate them to group members for consideration in advance of the meeting scheduled for 24th October at which, any changes to the Action Plan as a result of responses received would be discussed. Once agreed, the final plan will be submitted to the CYPSP for its approval and implementation.

A discussion followed on the participation of children and young people in the work of the group and while it was acknowledged that while there is the need to look at a more comprehensive approach to this, in the meantime the focus will be specifically on the production and distribution of a child-friendly action plan. Sub-group members agreed to nominate people in their own organisations to work with Andrew on this and will email the contact details of their nominees to Andrew. The group agreed to aim to have the children and young people's version of the action plan produced in the next couple of weeks. The sub-group looking into this will also identify young people to be involved in the consultation, namely the ones defined in our draft action plan:

'The group of young people that concerns this group is:

- Children and young people at risk of offending,
- Children and young people in the justice system and
- Children and young people for whom offending and its consequences present a significant risk'

Andrew offered to attend the consultation events if required.

Review of Process of the Children and Young People and Offending Sub-group:

Michael asked the group to briefly outline their thoughts and experiences of the work of the group so far and any recommendations they had for the future work of the sub-group. The plan is to review the processes of the group in more detail in the future.

It was stated from various members that the work of the group was pivotal and valued.

A recurring theme which emerged was the perceived need for sub-groups within the Children and Young People and Offending sub-group which would focus on specific topics.

It was also stated that unavoidable changes in membership of group members were challenging and that deputising was at odds with the guidance from the CYPSP to avoid this. A result of deputising was that new attendees sometimes asked for clarification on points that had already been discussed and agreed and were no longer open for discussion.

Some members felt that there was a need for representation from the community and the private sector but this had to be balanced with avoiding membership of the group becoming too large.

A question was asked concerning the Youth Justice sub-group as to whether it was now redundant.

Members agreed that the sub-group had been well chaired and was businesslike.

Whilst it was agreed that good outcomes have been achieved by the sub-group it was noted that, particularly at the beginning of the process, vast amounts of documentation were emailed to sub-group members in preparation of meetings.

Reducing Offending Framework Document / CYPSP CYPO Action Plan:

Michael briefly highlighted the main points of the document and advised that it was a framework rather than a strategy, with the overall aim of reducing offending in Northern Ireland. Michael highlighted that many of the themes within the framework were linked to many of those in our own action plan.

Members divided into three groups to discuss the strategy and give their initial responses to the following questions:

- What should and should not be in the Reducing Offending Strategy from a CYPSP CYPO sub-group point of view?
- Which points in the Reducing Offending Strategy fit with the CYPO action plan?

The responses will be collated and emailed* to sub-group members. The responses will aid members on the completion of the Reducing Offending Strategy questionnaire, from a sub-group perspective. Completed questionnaires should be returned to Jim Wharton for collation by the 31st August 2012. At the next meeting an overall response from the sub-group will be agreed.

* **see Annex A**

AOB:

Dave asked for clarification on the sub-group's role in responding to various government consultations, including the Reducing Offending Strategy and the Community Safety Strategy. Dave suggested that shaping the direction of other strategies is another way the group can contribute to the reduction of offending.

Edel informed the group that she leaving Include Youth to take up a new job and will therefore no longer attend the sub-group. Paula Roger will take up Edel's place in future meetings. The group thanked Edel for her valued contribution to the work of the sub-group and wished her well for the future.

Date of next meeting:

13th September 2012 at 10.30am, in Waring Street.

Feedback from the three groups at CYPSP Children and Young People and Offending Sub-group meeting - 2nd August 2012 in relation to the Reducing Offending Strategy

Group 1

- Framework Core Principles- Should include Participation, Family Support/Empowerment and Custody as a Last Resort.
- Transition- Should say something about how transition from children's to adult services should be managed.
- NEET Strategy- Needs more explicit links within Framework.
- Early Intervention- Consistent theme in Framework and our Action Plan.
- Victims- Greater emphasis in Framework than Action Plan.

General- Group felt that it was good that these two documents were out at the same time. General feeling was the framework was useful (connects other strategies well) but quite light on how anything will be achieved. Also felt that our Action Plan sits well with the general tone and content of the framework.

Group 2

- Broadly the group welcomed the document but was aware that it was an overview rather than a strategy in itself. There seems to be some value in capturing how a range of strategies from a range of Government Departments can contribute to the particular agenda of the Department of Justice.
- We noted that some strategies were not referenced - 10 year children's strategy/ Every School a Good School -for example.
- We noted that there was minimal reference to victims and, though Restorative Justice is referenced, we would have preferred to see a reference to restorative practices and their application in a range of settings.
- We regarded the references to early intervention/prevention and diversion as having relevance to the work of the sub-group, but we thought that disproportionate emphasis was placed on early years intervention (i.e. Family Nurse Partnerships) at the expense of early stage intervention – and noted too that greater attention could have been given to addressing 'anti-social behaviour'.
- Noted too that there was no reference to welfare reform and the impact this may have on disadvantaged groups – and thus increase risk of offending.

Group 3

Comments to Reducing Offending Strategy:

- Liked David Ford introduction
- Purpose of rest of the document not as clear
- Is intention of the framework to provide governance?
- Will it measure /show progress eg in an annual report?
- How do we link strategic/operational side?
- Need to develop action points, outputs / outcomes

- Useful to see different strategies in one framework
- Evidence base in separate paper available
- Case studies re: how reducing offending works might be useful
- Does not seem written for people not involved in Criminal Justice world

- Focus on highlighting financial benefits and social benefits. Not going to see financial return around early years strategy until longer term
- Need to manage expectations of quick outcomes of strategy (ie with politicians)

- Core Principles: Rights not mentioned

- 'Getting communities to take responsibility for reducing offending' – what does that look like?
- Streamlining finance application procedures for community group?

- Role of private sector

- Importance of speedier justice in reducing offending
- Speedier access to all services eg benefits, housing, advocacy – on release from custody
- More evidence about rehabilitation – strengthen this issue

Connections Reducing Offending Strategy CYPO Action Plan:

- Partnership work
- Early Intervention / reducing offending need to go hand in hand
- More input needed in reducing Offending Strategy about positive perception of young people
- Incorporate 6 High Level Headings (from OFMDFM) into Reducing Offending Strategy
- Identify what CYPO sub-group does not yet have in draft action plan which is in Reducing Offending Strategy and consider additional inputs