



CYPSP Children, Young People and Offending Sub-Group
Minutes of meeting held on 29th November 2017
YJA Waring Street, Belfast

Present:

Declan McGeown	YJA (Chair)
Michael Heaney	YJA
Paula Rodgers	Include Youth
Graeme McArthur	PSNI
Liz Arthur	PBNI
Anne Marie McClure	Start 360
Rachel Long	NIACRO
Annie Clarke	HSCNI
Maurice Leeson	HSCNI
Jim Wharton	YJA (minutes)

Apologies:

Michelle Janes	Barnardos
Mirjam Bader	Mindwise

Welcome

Declan welcomed those present to the meeting and a round of introductions followed.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Agreed

Matters Arising

Anne Marie stated that she felt it was necessary to review the Terms of Reference of the CYPO Sub-Group and queried the future direction of work done previously by the group. She also raised the question of what her role as vice chair of the group was.

Maurice stated that he had general Terms of Reference pertaining to all sub-groups which he would circulate after today's meeting. It was agreed that Maurice would provide Jim with the Terms of Reference which Jim would circulate to members.

Declan spoke about the effectiveness of the CYPO sub-group and expressed his desire to see the sub-group continue whilst questioning the direction which should be taken going forward. Declan also suggested that it might be useful to invite members of other groups with a shared interest to attend future meetings to present on work they are carrying out.

Paula stated that she was against any suggestion to discontinue the sub-group.

Maurice circulated copies of Young Persons journey through the justice system and suggested that it might be time to review and update this.

There was discussion around the loss of impetus due to the present political situation. Anne Marie stated that there was work which could be done in spite of this.

The following was **agreed**:

CYPO sub-group should continue and the Terms of Reference revisited accordingly.

Members of other groups should be invited to future meetings

We should look at and agree what area we should focus on

Action Point: - Maurice to supply Jim with a copy of YP journey through the justice system which Jim will circulate to the sub-group members along with the current Terms of Reference.

Scoping Study

Declan updated the group re the Scoping Study but stressed again that the ability to move forward was limited due to the present political impasse – prior to this Declan had spoken with the then Minister Claire Sugden who was enthusiastic about future plans including the envisioned repurposing of Woodlands. It is felt that Woodlands, alongside its custodial role, could become a place of care and attention for young people and a place of safety for those under paramilitary threat. Woodlands along with Lakewood could be known as a Care and Justice campus where young people with a range of issues could be referred and receive interventions designed to help them from becoming involved in the justice system.

A draft of the Review of Secure Care report has been produced but as yet there is no indication of when it will be available for scrutiny.

Paula stated that she felt there was a need to engage with young people in order to understand their views in terms of what Woodlands should look like in the future.

Declan spoke about the necessity of changes to current legislation which would be needed in light of future plans, and estimated that the process could take up to 5 years, mostly due to making the legislative changes.

EITP – Community Diversion Pilot

Michael updated the meeting.

Funding of 150K per year for 3 years out of the EITP budget has enabled a number of diversionary initiatives to be undertaken. We are now in the last 6 months of funding.

In the first half of 2016/17, out of a target of 100 YJA has had 52 Earlier Stage intervention referrals. Additional EITP funding has been used to buy additional services for some of these cases e.g. training courses to help young people into employment. Last year YJA funded 23 group initiatives delivered primarily by the voluntary and community sectors. So far this year we have funded 17 such initiatives from a target of 20.

Michael spoke about what we have learned in terms of the level of complexity around the issues affecting young people and suggested the need for retraining for this different way of working with this type of early engagement.

Declan mentioned that statistics show a reduction in the numbers of young people being referred to the YJA and also a 20% reduction in re-offending rates for those leaving Woodlands and stated his desire to see this momentum continue.

Declan stated that he hoped that next year's budget would include funding to allow this work to continue.

Michael spoke about the aspiration to see the criminal justice system focused on early diversion and how 'criminal' behaviour might sometimes be regarded as 'problematic behaviour' and dealt with at an early stage by delivering the same services but in a different context.

There was discussion around the approach to early intervention in Wales and Anne Marie stated her desire to see the age of responsibility increased.

Declan suggested that a small group should be set up to look at how organisations might work together to develop ESI. Michael agreed to coordinate a first meeting.

CYPSP

Maurice gave a brief update.

LAC strategy is written and must go to consultation – unsure if Permanent Secretary can sign off on this or if it requires a minister.

Family support strategy (Families Matter) – work ongoing.

There was discussion around Support Hubs and the growing amount of other initiatives which perhaps may cause some amount of confusion and the need for rationalisation of same and it was felt that some reference should be available to the public to signpost which services are available.

AOB - none