

**For General Release**

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>CABINET 20 October 2015</b>
<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<i>Youth Crime Prevention Plan</i>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<i>Jo Negrini, Executive Director of Place</i>
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	<i>Mark Watson, Cabinet Member for Safety and Justice</i>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:</b> This report highlights programmes of work to reduce youth crime and improve feelings of safety for people that live, work and visit Croydon. The report therefore shows how we are making Croydon a safer and more attractive place, improving people’s satisfaction with the Borough, which supports the Growth and Liveability priorities for the Council.	
<b>AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON &amp; WHY ARE WE DOING THIS:</b> This supports the ambitious for Croydon priorities to make Croydon a safer and more attractive place to live, work and visit.	
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT</b> There is no additional financial impact contained within this report. The delivery of the Youth Crime Prevention Plan will be picked up by the existing Youth Offending Service (YOS) and various other internal and external partners.	
<b>KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.:</b> 24/15/CAB	

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1.1 Agree the Youth Crime Prevention Plan
- 1.2 Agree that, for the reasons detailed in paragraph 3.8 of the report, the Executive Director of Place be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Safety and Justice to make any amendments to the Youth Crime Prevention Plan considered necessary after the decision has been made.  
Note that where any amendments are made under this delegation, the amended Youth Crime Prevention Plan will be published on the Council’s website within one month of the change taking place.

**2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Whilst the numbers of young people involved in crime are low and overall levels of youth crime are reducing it is important that we work in partnership to further reduce youth crime and protect young people. A Youth Crime Prevention Plan (the action Plan) has been developed in partnership with a number of internal and external teams that sets out how agencies should work in partnership to prevent young people from being victims or perpetrators of crime.
- 2.2 The action plan has four themes providing a framework for both the short and medium term and sets out some of the long term ambitions to reduce youth crime and improve outcomes for children and young people. The themes are:
- Prevention
  - Enforcement and Support
  - Protecting children and young people and supporting victims
  - Children and young people's participation

### **3. DETAIL**

- 3.1 Whilst overall levels of youth crime are reducing, improving the safety of children and young people has been identified as a key partnership priority in the Community Safety Strategy 2014-17. It is important to note that the numbers of youth crime victims is low when compared to the youth population. The number of youth victims for serious youth violence is 0.94% of the youth population, knife crime 1.2% and robbery 2.2%. The numbers of young offenders identified is even lower with less than 1% involved in each of the three youth crime types.
- 3.2 Despite the number of reports in relation to crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) falling, Croydon continues to experience negative perceptions in relation to crime and ASB. Increasing awareness of the role and work undertaken by partners in tackling crime and ASB is key to improving public confidence. It is therefore important that local communities are provided with information to improve their understanding of what is being done locally through the development of this plan to respond to their crime and ASB concerns.
- 3.3 The most common crimes young people in Croydon are involved in as both victims and offenders are:
- Serious Youth Violence
  - Knife Crime
  - Personal Robbery

Trends for these crime types including victims, offenders, locations and times are all identified in the action plan. The hotspots for common crime types listed above are identified within the plan but are consistently in the town centre and the north of the Borough. The latest crime figures for these crime types show that good progress is being made in reducing knife crime and robbery offences. Serious youth violence increased during 2014/15 but has been steadily reducing since April 2015.

- 3.4 The action plan highlights key links to other issues affecting young people's safety including the local gangs profile, the relationship with gang involvement and the risk of sexual and violent exploitation, domestic abuse and sexual violence, early help and family engagement, safeguarding and the fear of crime.
- 3.5 Through discussions with partners, a number of shared outcomes have been agreed. These have been grouped into four themes and specific actions have been set out in the action plan within each theme. A summary of the themes and outcomes are set out as follows:

#### PREVENTION

- Improved early identification and support of children and young people at risk of offending, anti-social behaviour and gangs
- Evidence of more work which takes a "think family" approach building on the strengths of families and reduces risk factors.

#### ENFORCEMENT AND INTERVENTION

- Improved life chances for those young people identified as at high risk of re-offending or committing anti-social behaviour
- Identify young people involved in gang activity/serious youth violence and they are provided opportunities and interventions to exit the lifestyle.

#### PROTECTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND SUPPORTING VICTIMS

- To reduce the number of victims of youth crime
- To ensure young people are safe as possible from violence, sexual exploitation, gangs, bullying and domestic abuse
- To raise the skills and knowledge in relation to young people that go missing and at risk of Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Abuse

#### PARTICIPATION

- To ensure children and young people are able to participate in decision making regarding crime issues of concern to them.

- 3.6 Partnership working to tackle youth crime is already well established. For example, a back to school safety operation was launched on 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2015 to coincide with the start of the new school year and focus on keeping young people and their possessions safe. The police, Croydon Council and voluntary sector engaged with school children and parents, advising them on how they can keep themselves and their possessions safe as well as distributing information on the new knife and offensive weapons law. In addition Crystal Palace FC Foundation has helped to promote these important messages to the hundreds of young people they engage with through their community based sporting programmes.

- 3.7 Delivery of the action plan will be monitored by the Safer Croydon Partnership with detailed discussions and review of performance taking place at the Youth Crime Board sub-group. The Youth Crime Board is jointly chaired by the Council's Director of Safety and Director of Children, Family Intervention and Social Care. It is attended by teams across the Council, Police, Health and the voluntary and community sector.
- 3.8 It is possible that revisions to the Youth Crime Prevention Plan will be necessary following the Cabinet decision being made. This may be as a result of shifts in partnership priorities arising from legislative updates, good or poor progress against delivery of the plan or other changes in national, regional or local focus. To enable further revisions to be made expediently it is necessary to have a delegated authority to make amendments without the need to go back to Cabinet. It is therefore recommended that authority be given to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Safety and Justice, to agree these amendments. Please note that where any amendments are made under this delegation, the amended Youth Crime Prevention Plan will be published on the Council's website within one month of the change taking place.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The plan has been developed in partnership with a number of internal and external teams who have contributed to the content and signed up to the delivery plan. Partners include Children's and Safety teams in the Council, Police, Probation, Health and voluntary sector providers. In addition the Safer Croydon Partnership has considered the plan and has signed it off subject to Cabinet approval.
- 4.2 The Safer Croydon Partnership consults with the community on an annual basis to assess feelings of safety and to canvass views on what they think the partnership priorities should be. Youth crime, robbery, gangs and knife regularly feature as some of our resident's top concerns, which demonstrates the importance of this plan.

#### **5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

##### **1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations**

There are no revenue or capital consequences of this report. The plans that are set out have been developed and agreed by a range of partners and resources have already been identified to ensure that they are deliverable.

##### **2 The effect of the decision**

The effect of the decision is for Cabinet to be aware of the partnership plans to reduce youth crime and to endorse the approach to reduce victimisation and target offenders. It will have no additional financial impact as the activity will be delivered by re-directing existing resources.

##### **3 Risks**

The only potential risk identified is that budget pressures may put some of the activity at risk in future years. This will be mitigated by effective performance monitoring of the interventions so that we are clear about what works and can prioritise delivery in the future

#### **4 Options**

The options are to 1) agree the plan 2) agree the plan but seek amendments and 3) decide not to have a partnership plan and continue with various work streams that are not effectively pulled together.

#### **5 Future savings/efficiencies**

None identified at the moment but it is possible that the activity detailed in the plan will lead to reductions in activity elsewhere in the system e.g. diverting young people away from criminal activities and thus easing pressure in the criminal justice system. This will be difficult to quantify however.

6 (Approved by: Dianne Ellender Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer)

### **6. COMMENTS OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER**

6.1 The Council Solicitor comments that there are no legal issues arising from this report.

(Approved by: Gabriel MacGregor Head of Corporate Law on behalf of the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer)

### **7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

7.1 There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report. However, consideration should be given to providing apprenticeships opportunities where possible to those involved in gang related activity as part of the Youth Crime Prevention plan.

7.2. Approved by Adrian Prescod, HR Business Partner, for and on behalf of Director of HR, Resources department.

### **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.1 An initial Equality Analysis has been completed to assess the impact that the Youth Crime Prevention Action Plan is likely to have specific groups that share a "protected characteristic". The analysis identified that young black men as a group are over-represented as offenders of youth crime. The monitoring information for youth offending indicates that young black men are over-represented in the following areas of youth crime:

- Serious Youth Crime – 58.5% black males
- Knife Crime – 47.3% black males
- Robbery – 54.7% black males

- 8.2 There is a likelihood that the targeted interventions in the Youth Crime Prevention Action Plan will have a greater impact on young black men (who are over-represented in youth crime) and could be perceived as negative. However, the outcomes that will be delivered through the action plan are likely to be positive for both individual's from the specific equality group and the wider community.
- 8.3 The key outcomes that the Youth Crime Prevention Action Plan is likely to deliver will enable the Council and its partners to advance equality of opportunity and promote good relation between groups that share a "protected characteristic" and those that do not. The likely outcomes that will be delivered through the plan are set out in 3.5.
- 8.4 The delivery of the Youth Crime Prevention Plan will enable the Council to ensure that it delivers the following objectives that are set out in the Council's Equality and Inclusion Policy:
- Foster good community relations and cohesion by getting to know our diverse communities and understand their needs
  - Improve empowerment and participation by strengthening partnership work with community, faith and voluntary sectors.
- 8.5 A full Equality Analysis of the Youth Crime Prevention Action Plan will be completed to mitigate any potential disadvantage /risk that it could have on equality groups that it is targeted at such as young people and a high proportion of young black males who are identified as offenders. The full equality analysis will be completed and will be published on the Council's website

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 9.1 There is limited impact on the environment as a result of this report. The plan is principally about improving safety and behaviour rather than the environment.

## **10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

- 10.1 The agreement of the Youth Crime Prevention Plan will have a significant crime and disorder impact and is the principle driver behind the report and papers. The impact is made clear throughout the report.

## **11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION**

- 11.1 It is important for the Council and its partners to set out its approach on how it will tackle youth crime. Although certain crime types associated with young people are reducing we need to continue working together to increase protection for young people from being victims and perpetrators of crime.

## **12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 12.1 To not have an agreed plan, which means there would be no agreed partnership framework that demonstrates shared outcomes and actions to improve young people's safety.

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**CONTACT OFFICER:** [Andy Opie, Director of Safety x65686]

Appendices:  
Youth Crime Action Plan

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The initial Equality Analysis.

The full Equality Analysis will be published on the Council's website when completed, before the Cabinet meeting takes place