

Agenda Item

**Report to CYP Select Committee
16th October 2013**

**Report of Corporate Director,
CESC**

Youth Offending Service (YOS) Annual Performance Report 2012~13

Introduction:

1. This report is prepared to provide information on the service's annual performance for 2012/13 and update on a number of national developments in youth justice.

Information:

Youth Crime 2012/13

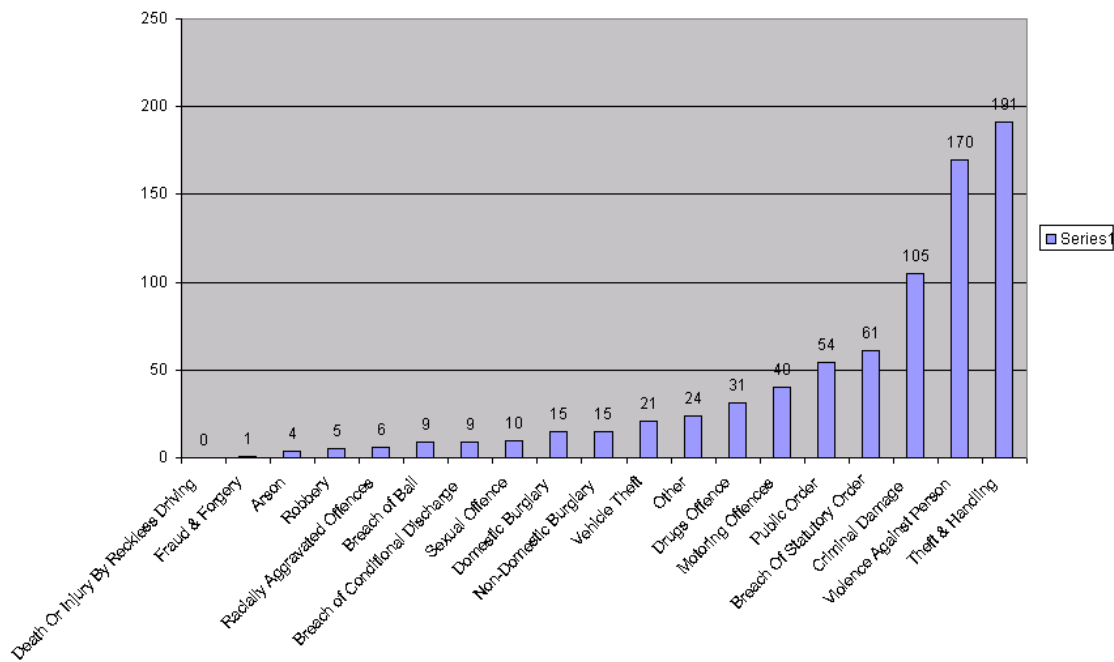
2. In 2012/13, 392 young people came into contact with the youth justice system in Stockton on Tees, committing 771 offences.

It is significant to note that crime and youth crime in Stockton has decreased, as it has nationally. Crimes resulting in a substantive police / court outcome:

- In 2007/08, there were 1463 offences committed by 10-17 year olds in Stockton.
- In 2009/10, this had decreased to 1084; and in 2011/12, decreased further to 870.

Thus youth crime, resulting in a substantive outcome, has almost halved in 5 years (a reduction of 47%). However, there is evidence from Cleveland Police that they are seeing crime levels plateau which could be indicative of a rise to come.

The table below provides an overview of the nature of proven offences in 2012/13.



3. As can be seen, the majority of offences were Theft & Handling (25%), Violence (22%), Criminal Damage (14%). Breach of statutory court orders accounted for 8% of proven offences in Stockton on Tees.

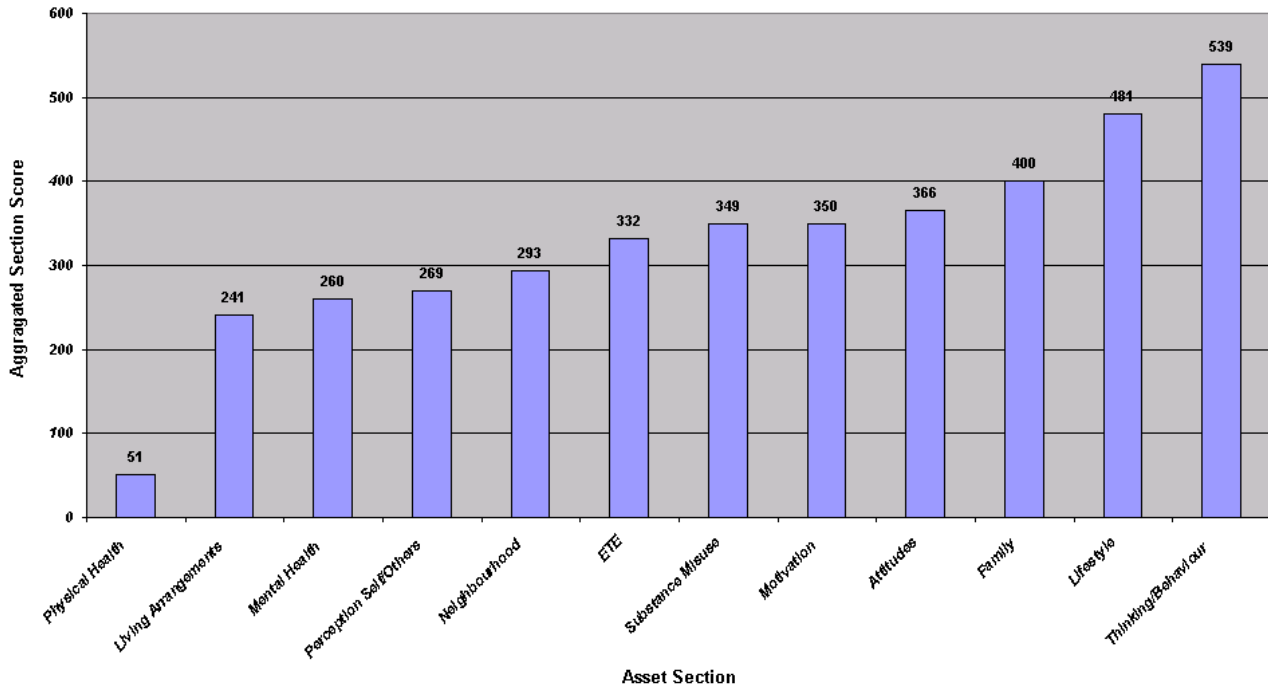
82% of youth crimes were committed by males; 18% by females. Slightly less than 1% were committed by young people from BME backgrounds.

The peak ages for offending was 14-17 years inclusive, for both genders, with over 82% of offences being committed by this age group. Just 8% of offences were committed by 10-12 year olds (actual number 65).

Young people supervised by the YOS

4. Of the 392 young people committing crimes in 2012/13, 46% (actual number 181) were of sufficient seriousness / persistence to require a court ordered programme of intervention from the YOS. Some young people received multiple outcomes during the period for repeated offending, resulting in 238 court ordered programmes in the period.

Of those supervised by the YOS, the below table highlights level of criminogenic needs assessed by the YOS.



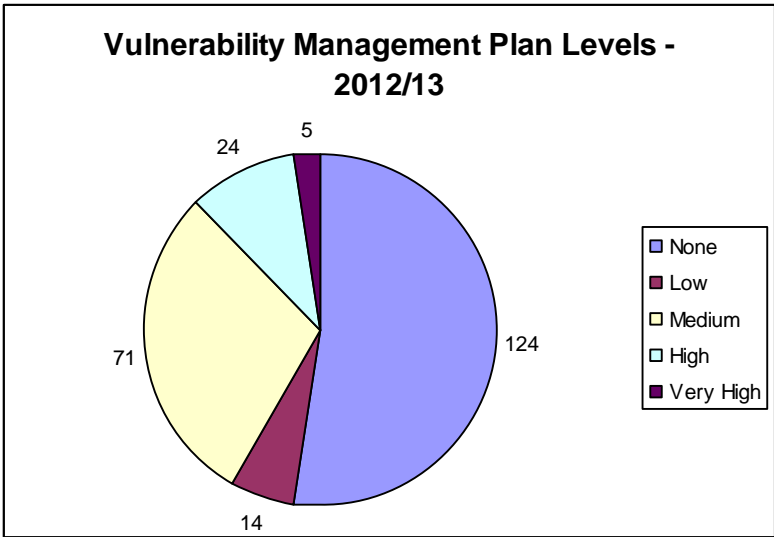
ETE: Education, Training, Employment

- The table highlights that Thinking / Behaviour, Lifestyle and Family are highly significant criminogenic factors amongst young people supervised by the YOS, with physical health having the least influence on likelihood of offending.

Assessed Needs:

- All assessments of young people supervised by the YOS cover 3 key areas:
 - Likelihood of further offending
 - Safeguarding
 - Risk of harm to the public.
- For those young people with assessed needs, Vulnerability Management Plans (VMPs) and Risk Management Plans (RMPs) are put into place and are actively monitored by managers; where necessary, in partnership with other agencies.

The following tables highlight the number of young people with such plans in 2012/13 and the assessed level of need / risk.



8. Of the 100 young people subject to Vulnerability Management Plans at a medium level and above, 72 were males and 28 female.



9. Of those young people subject to Risk Management Plans of a medium level and above, 58 were male and 2 were female.

10. As can be seen, the majority of young people were not assessed as being in need of specific vulnerability / risk management plans.

Those that were, received targeted services, often in partnership with other agencies, to meet safeguarding and vulnerability needs and manage risk of harm to others.

YOS performance 2012/13

11. The YOS has 3 key performance measurements:

- Reducing the numbers of first-time entrants
- Reducing reoffending

- Reducing the use of custody

Performance is routinely monitored by the YOS management board and shows some good results for 12/13.

Youth justice data is also monitored nationally by the Youth Justice Board and published on the Gov.Uk website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-justice-statistics--2> along with other criminal justice data sets.

First Time Entrants (FTEs):

12. From the peak year of 2007/8 when the number was 464, FTEs have been halved in 4 years but year on year, the rate in which FTEs has fallen has slowed and reached a plateau. In 2012/3, there were 233 FTEs in Stockton.

It has been notable, for some time, that FTEs for the Cleveland YOTs were significantly higher, and almost double in some cases, the regional, family and English averages, reflecting police approaches to youth crime. However, there has been a recent changes in approach with the introduction of early intervention programmes and restorative justice by Cleveland Police.

FTE figures for 13/14 are showing considerable decreases, which will have a positive impact on many young people who come to the attention of criminal justice agencies for the first time and are successfully diverted from the criminal justice system and without a criminal record.

Reducing Reoffending:

13. Reoffending rates for 12/13 are the lowest for many years. Less young people reoffended in 2012/13 and committed fewer reoffences. (39 from a 2012 cohort of 117 young people, committing 128 reoffences; compared to 53 from the 2011 cohort committing 163 reoffences).

More detailed interim analysis evidences that the decrease is partially due to the fact that there were no young people from custody in the 2012 cohort. National and local evidence shows that this group of young people are disproportionality likely to reoffend; therefore this has had a positive impact upon local statistics. However, even if this group had been represented in the cohort, using a 5 year average of reoffending rate for this group of 4.00, the current rate would still be lower than the same period last year.

This is very positive and it is hoped that good progress can be maintained.

Use of Custody:

14. 22 custodial sentences were imposed on young people in 12/13 (actual number 22, compared to 21 in the previous year).

Analysis evidences that there was a number of young people who received more than one short custodial sentence on separate occasions, during 12/13. They are a small, but difficult to engage group of young people, who are disproportionately responsible for a large number of offences. The service is working in partnership with a range of support and enforcement agencies to try to manage this group of young people. The service has been reviewing the way in which it delivers a range of services to young people with the express aim of improving engagement and compliance and it is hoped that this may have an impact upon the custodial rate.

Early indications from the latest data available highlights that custody rates are much lower in 13/14, with 4 custodial sentences having been imposed, to date, on young people in Stockton.

National Developments in Youth Justice:

15. National developments can be summarised as follows:

16. Government changes in national approaches to criminal / youth justice, outlined in The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO).

- The creation of a single remand order which includes 17 year olds from December 2012.
- All remanded young people to become 'Looked After Children' from December 2012.
- Devolution of the costs of secure / custodial remands to local authorities from April 2013
- The introduction of new 'out of court' disposals for young people from April 2013

The implications of these changes are explained in the following sections 17 and 18.

17. The local authority has prepared for the impact of this legislation, especially in assigning 'Looked After' status to a new cohort of young people in custody and assuming new financial responsibilities for the costs of custody and transporting to/from custody.

There is an inbuilt incentive for local authorities to be proactive in reducing the numbers and lengths of remands into youth detention. When numbers are high, there will be significant new costs to the local authority and increased demands upon social work provision; where numbers are low, there is the potential for less cost and even some savings to be made.

In 12/13, there were 17 remands episodes. If the council had been responsible for paying for the costs of remands in 12/13, this would have amounted to £243,701. These costs include 2 young people from abroad charged with serious drugs offences, who later were discovered to be adults.

Stockton Borough Council is now responsible for paying the cost of custodial remands, since April 2013, and has been allocated £49,383 for 13/14 for this purpose. At the time of writing this report, remand costs so far have amounted to approximately £57,780.

It is important to note that remands are often unpredictable; especially in cases of young people being charged with serious and often 'one-off' offences. This has been the experience this year, with at least 2 young people charged with very serious matters and consequently remanded.

YOS and social care are developing a 'Reducing Looked After Children & Remand Strategy' with 2 main strands: preventing young people being remanded into youth detention accommodation; and reducing the length of time that young people are so remanded.

At a national level, the devolution of remand costs was seen as the first step in a phased approach for central government to transfer ALL the costs of custody to local authorities; the government have now shelved plans to devolve the costs of custodial sentences.

18. In respect of the introduction of the new 'out of court disposal' framework, the YOS has jointly developed local approaches with neighbouring YOTs and Cleveland Police, including the

introduction of a triage approach to early assessment and intervention with those young people coming to the attention of the police.

National Standards

19. In the spirit of increasing 'professional freedom and flexibilities' and localism, from April 2013, new *National Standards for Youth Justice* have been introduced. In the run up to this, the YJB launched a national pilot from April 12, to allow local partnerships to review and adapt their approach in preparation for the new Standards. The YOS piloted the new National Standards, with oversight from the YOS Management Board and there was no discernible decrease in overall standards within the service, with effective decision making by practitioners in evidence.

HMI Probation inspection framework:

20. HMIP continues to inspect YOTs and safeguarding and public protection are high on the inspection agenda. HMIP look at safeguarding both in terms of child protection and in its broadest sense, ensuring that all vulnerabilities are identified and managed by the YOS, often in partnership with other agencies. How the service assesses and responds to *Risk of Serious Harm* to the public is also closely scrutinised.

There are several inspection frameworks: Short Quality Inspections; Full Joint Inspection involving other inspectorates; and Thematic Inspections involving other inspectorates. More information on inspection is available on the following link:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation/inspection-programmes-youth>

21. Stockton on Tees YOS is yet to be inspected under the new framework. All the other YOTs in the Tees Valley have been inspected and learning has been taken from their experiences. The YOS Management Board has approved a pre-inspection plan and continues to receive reports on progress.

Miriam Sigsworth, YOS Manager
3 October 2013