Changing Lives, Improving Outcomes: Youth Policy, Practice and Partnership in North East Lincolnshire. Executive Summary

Gutherson Research Ltd April 2012

“I would love to get into youth work, to put a favour back in and help the young kids that need help just like I needed it... I mean it... I’m being serious... I know what it is like for them kids that are in the same situation as me.” (Young person)

This executive summary presents highlights of a research project that examined evidence of the effect multi agency partnership working has on services relating to young people within, or on the edges of, the Youth Justice System in North East Lincolnshire. The study was driven by recognition of the pressures on public spending and the consequent need to eliminate waste and invest in services that deliver value for money and therefore the project also sought to develop a model for estimating future cost savings to the public purse that may be gained by the multiagency partnership approach.

In drawing together the evidence and analysing it using a theoretical framework based on the concept of wicked issues it is clear that the partnership approach to youth crime prevention in North East Lincolnshire is having a significant impact on policy, practice and outcomes for young people. It is difficult to say what would be happening now if the partnership approach had not developed in 2007 and grown over subsequent years but if things had carried on as they were the situation for services and young people would be in dire straits. The full report tells the story of the partnership, from inception through to the present and is available upon request.

Key impact data

- Overall reduction in recorded youth crime of 44%.
- Overall reduction in youth related offending (detected crime equivalent) of 61%.
- 33% reduction of young people as victims of crime.
- Youth related theft has decreased 46%.
- A steady but continual reduction in Youth Crime as a percentage of overall recorded crime throughout the lifetime of the partnership.
- Significant levels of participation and engagement in NE Lincolnshire (80%) – reducing the scarring effects of long-term youth disengagement.
- Triage with a 96% success rate – reducing the criminalisation of young people.
- Reduction in youth related ASB of 60%.
- Violence against the person has reduced by 34%.
- Year on year reductions in NEETS to 6.5% in October in 2011
- Young people who are NEET whose destination is ‘Not Known’ 1.4%
- Saving to the public purse of up to £10.85m youth crime reduction and £18.3m in NEET reductions
PARTNERSHIP SUCCESSES

- A move from agency centric service design and delivery to a people centric approach
- A partnership based on youth work principles and practice that recognises children and young people are still developing, make mistakes and need support – leading to a single message “We are there to listen and support”
- A move towards integration to deliver preventative proactive social support’ services in a holistic manner not simply reactive youth justice services
- Use of evidence, data and intelligence to design and target services and projects
- A move towards outcomes based accountability and a broad understanding of relevant outcomes
- Increased engagement and participation of young people— thereby increasing chances of young people getting support they need and also reduction in numbers involved in risky behaviours.
- Introduction of specific practices – restorative justice team, Triage, sports and arts participation,
- Less criminalisation of young people
- Significant reduction in some categories of youth crime and antisocial behaviour
- Willingness to try new approaches…and be honest about how well they work
- Reduction in duplication and improved coordination of activities
- Committed, passionate and coherent leadership
- Committed and passionate workforce that believes in the approach
- A shared belief, across leadership and delivery staff, in doing the right thing and subsuming personal or service objectives for “the good of the Borough”

PARTNERSHIP ISSUES

- Lengthy process to build trust, respect and understanding of the unique skills that each partner brings
- More work with to do with courts to educate and demonstrate how successful the approach can be
- Communication of projects, ideas, thinking and successes outside of the core partners
- Building on the personalities and serendipitous nature of the early days of the partnership requires continued effort to ensure the approach becomes ‘the way we do things in North East Lincolnshire’.
- Partnership development must be continually developed and reframed, in order to have continued success

POLICY CONTEXT

Good fit with Time for a Fresh Start (2010). This report of the Independent Commission on Youth Crime and Antisocial Behaviour, which was established under New Labour in the autumn of 2008, sets out a “blueprint for an effective, just, humane and coherent response to children and young people’s antisocial and criminal behaviour in England and Wales”. This blueprint is based on three pillars; restoration, prevention and integration.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Good fit with **Breaking the Cycle** (2010), indeed North East Lincolnshire is already doing many of the things proposed, including increasing the use of Restorative approaches and seeking to reduce the criminalisation of young people for low level offences and the need for “a local, joined up approach to address the multiple disadvantages that many young offenders have and the chaotic lifestyles that many lead.”

Good fit with the coalition government’s emphasis on early intervention and behaviour change that runs through all relevant policy from **A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families’ Lives**, (April 2011) through to **Positive for Youth** (2011) and **Building Engagement, Building Futures** (2011)

**Potential cost savings**

- Previously the partnership has used Home Office figures to estimate the savings resulting from the approach. This basic model has been further developed during this research project to take into account other potential savings that better reflect the wider outcomes the partnership seeks to achieve.

- Based on estimates of delivery cost alone and the lower estimates of savings to the public purse in terms of reduced negative outcomes then for every £1 invested £3 may be saved. If the upper estimate of savings to the public purse is used then for every £1 invested £5 may be saved.

- When management costs are taken into account then for every £1 invested £1.3 may be saved (lower estimate of savings). If the upper estimate of savings is used in calculation then for every £1 invested £2.2 may be saved.

**Next steps**

- This is still the beginning...

- Widening and reframing the partnership in order to be continually effective against an ever changing landscape...continue developing innovations within areas including health, family intervention, schools, employment, greater VCS involvement, housing

- Work on continually improving public perception, as issues emerge and communities change

- Wicked issues are never solved...continual need to learn and adjust and continue to be forward focussed rather than reacting to the past

- Recognise and build upon existing partnership relationships and ensure that current and emerging partnerships are effective and secure

- Understanding the costs of delivery...and refining further the cost benefit analysis

- Consistency in evaluating impact and change...based on agreed intended outcomes

There are now various examples of practice which relate to this research, which has been categorised as promising, emerging and validated practice. After a rigorous quality assurance process, this practice has been accredited in North East Lincolnshire by the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO)

More information on this work is available on www.c4eo.org.uk