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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Citizenship and Inclusion Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 22 June 2011

**Subject:** Education, Training and Employment (ETE) and Support for young offenders leaving custody

**Report of:** Mike Livingstone  
Director of Children's Services

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**Summary**

To advise committee of how young offenders leaving custody are supported into ETE placements, covering:

- ETE provision in HMYOI Hindley
- Support available within YOS
- Partnership working on ETE

**Recommendations**

Members note the content of the report

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**Wards Affected:**

All

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

Reports to the Citizenship and Inclusion Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- November 2010 "Youth Crime"
- May 2011 "Housing Opportunities and Support for young offenders leaving custody"
- May 2011 "Key points from the Education Bill and the Green Paper –Support and Aspiration: A new approach to SEN and disability"

## **1.0 Introduction/Background**

1.1 Research clearly points to the importance of ETE in the lives of young people generally. The Audit Commission report from July 2010 entitled “‘Against the Odds’: Re-engaging young people in education, employment and training”, identified that:-

- Young men who were NEET (not in education, employment or training) are three times more likely to suffer from depression and five times more likely to have a criminal record than their peers.
- Young men not in education, employment or training at 16-18 have poorer life chances than their peers and are more likely to be a long term cost to the public purse.

1.2 It is widely recognised that ETE is one of the most important protective factors for young people at risk of offending or re-offending. In Manchester, within the Youth Offending Service (YOS), there has been a considerable effort with key partners to improve the delivery of and access to ETE options for young people who are known to YOS.

1.3 The most challenging aspect of this work is ensuring those young people who receive custodial sentences have continuing and consistent access to appropriate ETE provision during the period of imprisonment and afterwards, upon release. This is set against a context of major upheaval, often traumatic, for the young person as a sentence of imprisonment disrupts any stability, family life, other positive relationships and occasionally, accommodation provision. Release from custody can similarly be a frightening and unsettling experience when priorities of finding accommodation and restoring relationships can take precedence over ETE.

## **2.0 ETE provision and support in custody**

2.1 The majority (approx 70%) of young people from Manchester who receive custodial sentences are sent to HMYOI Hindley. Within Hindley, the Offender Learning and Skills Service is delivered by Manchester College who provide a good range of accredited programmes including:

- Functional Skills of Numeracy, Literacy and ICT
- Vocational training skills
- Employability
- Personal and Social Development

2.2 It is compulsory for all the young people detained at HMYOI Hindley to participate in education/training, this is provided by The Manchester College and the Prison. The young people attend education/training for 3 hours in the morning and then again for 3 hours in the afternoon. A summary of the work that takes place within Hindley is outlined in a report by Louise Higginbotham, from The Manchester College – see Appendix 1

### **3.0 ASCL Act**

3.1 New legislation, the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, has recently come into force bringing all young people in custody under education legislation for the first time. They now have the same entitlement to education as young people in the mainstream. The legislation places responsibilities upon 'home' local authorities, 'host' local authorities, YOS and schools to share information at the appropriate times i.e. as a young person arrives in custody and when they are released into the community. Host local authorities are responsible for the education and training young people receive in custody taking into account age, aptitudes and abilities, Special Educational Needs, continuation of any courses started, the national curriculum and that education should be comparable with that in the community. Home local authorities must, where appropriate, make arrangements for the provision of education and training of the young person when they are released. The new ASCL Act came into force in September 2010 and Manchester and Wigan local authorities are working together on developing improved systems to share information and ensure that appropriate provision is in place for young men going into Hindley.

### **4.0 Resettlement Consortium**

4.1 Manchester YOS is part of the Resettlement Consortium, a national pilot with the Youth Justice Board. Manchester YOS is working with a range of partners and HMYOI Hindley to provide an improved resettlement experience to all young men who have been sentenced to a Detention and Training Order (DTO) and sent to Hindley. The aim of the project is to stop the cycle of reconviction and imprisonment by ensuring that appropriate support is available at an early stage so that there is a real opportunity for the young person to be successfully rehabilitated. Each one receives an *Enhanced Offer* which is designed to meet their individual needs, ensures a consistent and accountable level of service and which can eventually be mainstreamed.

The enhanced offer in Manchester provides support for the young person at an early stage in their sentence, to plan with other agencies for their release. The needs of all Manchester young men leaving Hindley are currently considered by our multi agency Family Resource Panel. This includes planning accommodation provision, family support, ETE placement, drug and alcohol treatment (if appropriate) and addressing offending behaviour. An evaluation of the project is being commissioned to capture the improved resettlement outcomes and subsequent reduction in reoffending and allied cost benefits.

### **5.0 Connexions**

5.1 Connexions is a key partner in the Manchester Resettlement Consortium and is responsible for attending initial DTO meetings and subsequent reviews. Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs) have the responsibility of ensuring that each young person receives appropriate Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), including careers guidance and ongoing support to enable them to make informed choices and assist with the transition from custody into education, training or employment. Post release and during the licence period Connexions will continue to support the work of YOS in the community with a focus on engaging and sustaining the client in ETE. A key part

of this work will be co-ordination through the Case Planning Forums (CPFs) that will ensure that services to the client are appropriate, timely and effective. The CPF should also act as a monitoring body to ensure that actions are carried out and individual agencies and staff are held to account.

5.2 Manchester YOS fund a specific PA post to focus on the young people in Hindley and this compliments the service Connexions provide in each of the three locality YOS teams, where a PA attends the office each week to meet with young people referred by YOS. There are also regular meetings between managers in YOS and Connexions to review the effectiveness of the ETE provision within YOS.

5.3 In a recent report, Jeff Mills, Connexions Partnership Manager, included the following information:

*In total the Connexions service has worked with 77 young people who are engaged in the Hindley pilot. **Of this number 56 have been released to date and on release 49 went into an ETE placement (85%).** 21 of the cohort are still in custody and 5 have been released but subsequently returned to custody for failing to comply with their licence conditions or for committing other offences.*

**Overall the numbers in ETE at the end of their licence was 67%.**

**36% of the cohort are either LDD or have a statement of special educational need.**

**The percentage of those who are defined as LAC and Care Leavers is 14%.**

**15 members of the cohort have had significant issues around housing on release.**

*Work has taken place around the development of a Work Pairing programme aimed at engaging young people from a variety of vulnerable groups in work placed training. The programme will see a number of large companies and their suppliers providing work experience for between 5 and 6 months alongside training and education providers delivering basic skills and other appropriate training to improve the employability of the cohort. The programme is being led on by members of the Local Authority 14 – 19 team, Laing O'Rourke construction, Skills Solutions and Careers Solutions (Connexions Manchester). It is anticipated that this programme will eventually provide at least 10 places for members of the Hindley resettlement programme cohort. We presently have 7 young offenders on the future jobs fund programme as well as those we have managed to engage in training this quarter with the Construction Youth trust and other employer led training programmes.*

## **6.0 Barriers to ETE**

6.1 There are a number of factors which influence the chances of a successful ETE placement for each young person:

- Unstable or unsuitable accommodation – if a young person does not have this, it will be difficult to focus on work or training.

- Short prison sentences mean that there is not enough time in custody to complete courses – the average length of stay is 72 days.
- Young person is not work ready – a number of young men have been put forward for work with the Construction Youth Trust or Silvertrack Training but have not progressed through the interview stage or have dropped out in the early days as they do not have the appropriate attitude or skills required.
- Poor literacy and numeracy skills.
- Learning difficulties. The issue of children and young people with a behavioural, social or emotional difficulty which results from an underlying learning difficulty or communication difficulty has been highlighted in the Green Paper called Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability, currently out for consultation. This paper wants to ensure that assessments of children and young people displaying challenging behaviour identify the root cause of the behaviour rather than focus on the symptoms.
- A Benefit System which provides financial cushion for those living independently.

## **7.0 What we are doing**

7.1 As well as the work on the Resettlement Consortium with Hindley, there is activity on a number of fronts to address and improve the ETE outcomes for all young people coming out of custody:

- In September 2010, an independent review of the work on ETE within YOS was commissioned. A former Ofsted inspector met with managers, partners, looked at performance data and reported to the YOS Management Board. His recommendations included strengthening the relationship between YOS and Education and inviting a senior education manager to attend future Board meetings to contribute to the discussions about how ETE outcomes could improve. This and other recommendations that were made were subsequently formed into an action plan that is now part-way through implementation.
- Education and YOS managers have developed a protocol, and visited schools throughout Manchester to agree on improved sharing of information and arrangements for young people of school age retaining their school place whilst in custody.
- Education funded Learning Mentors work within YOS to support young people in finding a place in a school and in maintaining regular attendance, which is often an issue.
- YOS Team Managers hold monthly ETE performance meetings to review all cases where a young person is not in a full-time ETE placement. These are attended by education and Connexions staff and action plans on each case are agreed and reviewed.
- The GIFT charity provides ETE mentors who can spend time supporting young people in looking for appropriate training or employment, to prepare CVs and develop interview skills. They will accompany a young person to interview and generally advise and guide them.

- Working with The Manchester College in the community to provide more opportunities and support for young men coming out of custody to continue their education and training courses started in prison.
- Connexions PAs hold surgeries within YOS offices and are available to talk to case-managers about referrals and the individual needs/risks of each young person.

## **8.0 Next Steps**

8.1 The recent decrease in staffing levels has impacted upon the progress of this work as Connexions, Education and YOS have all seen key personnel leave posts and new arrangements for covering tasks have not yet been embedded. It is hoped that this will be a short-term delay and that planned work can be taken forward soon.

8.2 The implementation of the ASCL Act strengthens the arrangements that YOS and partners were already putting into place. Effective communication between schools, education, Connexions, prisons and YOS will be a central part of improving the experience for those returning from custody to the community. Manchester YOS are currently waiting on Wigan Local Authority and Hindley to identify Specific Points of Contact and to ensure that there is a secure e-mail network on which information about each young person can be shared. This is imminent and a new template to gather information is ready to be shared. We will use this template with other prisons and secure establishments.

8.3 Whilst the initial results of the Resettlement Consortium Pilot look encouraging, it is too early to assess the outcomes of this approach. The pilot is being independently evaluated by Salford University to assess the outcomes, including the potential cost savings of providing an enhanced offer and the impact on re-offending. An initial evaluation report will be ready by September and the final report, in March 2010. The ETE outcomes will be a significant part of this evaluation as it such an important protective factor in reducing re-offending and helping young adults to lead a constructive life going forward.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

9.1 Considerable progress has been made in Manchester to improve the general transition from custody to community. The Resettlement Consortium Pilot has brought in partners to support and plan with young people at much earlier stages in their sentence than before. The curriculum at Hindley offers young men a wide range of opportunities including accredited educational and vocational courses. The Manchester College is the education provider in Hindley and is working with YOS to improve the support to those attending the college in the community after release. Connexions are working with Hindley and YOS staff to ensure there is appropriate provision of advice and guidance and have access to a range of employment and training opportunities on offer. Early results for the pilot indicate a much higher rate of success at placing young men into ETE placements is achieved through the enhanced offer, although there is still more work to be done particularly with those who have learning difficulties and poor literacy and numeracy skills.