

PROPOSALS FOR THE LONG TERM FUNDING OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN YOUTH OFFENDER INSTITUTIONS

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This strategy paper has been prepared by the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), at the request of officials at the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), who had invited ADCS to work with them and the Youth Justice Board (YJB) in bringing forward proposals to secure the long term sustainability of social work posts in Youth Offender Institutions (YOIs) following the successful conclusion of the pilot project.
- 1.2 The proposals in this paper have been developed by the ADCS Families, Communities and Young People (FCYP) Policy Committee, working with practitioners from a number of the host local authorities in which the participating YOIs are located. We have also drawn on the findings and recommendations from the National Children's Bureau report, '*An Evaluation of Social Work Posts in Youth Offender Institutions*' (the NCB Evaluation) which is due to be published at the end of July 2008. Our proposals also take into account the DCSF Children's Plan '*Building Brighter Futures*' and the Youth Crime Action Plan published in July 2008.
- 1.3 The ADCS proposals are set out in the Executive Summary below. This is followed by our analysis of five key issues, which underpins our overall approach. We have drawn on examples and case study material from YOIs to support the case we present.

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 The ADCS believes that social work posts in YOIs already make an invaluable contribution to the safeguarding, wider welfare and outcomes of young people in custody. These roles will be pivotal in delivering the improvements to the outcomes for young people in custody outlined in the Youth Crime Action Plan, and in enabling local authorities to fulfil their responsibilities in overseeing resettlement provision. There is thus a need to establish the roles on a sustainable basis. The Youth Crime Action Plan provides an opportunity to securing a long-term funding base, but it also provides a context for wider consideration of the role performed by these posts, the number and distribution of the posts across YOIs, and the wider leadership of their work. There is a need for urgency in coming to a conclusion about the future of these roles as the current uncertainty is making it difficult to retain and recruit staff. Delay beyond November 1st will leave local authorities with significant difficulties in meeting their employer responsibilities, should the decision be to cease to continue with the social work posts.
- 2.2 To take forward the proposals in this paper, it is suggested that ADCS and officials from DCSF and YJB work together) to bring forward proposals to be submitted to Ministers in the early Autumn. These proposals should be linked to the wider implementation of the Youth Crime Action Plan.

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SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL WORK POSTS IN YOUTH OFFENDER INSTITUTIONS: PROPOSALS BY ADCS

- ADCS accepts that local authorities have a general duty under the Children Act 1989 to meet the needs of young people in YOIs. Social workers based in YOIs enable local authorities to fulfil that statutory responsibility, and it is our view, in line with the NCB Evaluation, that these posts should continue. These posts make a major contribution to the safeguarding of young people in YOIs, as part of a 'through care' function within the criminal justice system, in which social workers offer young people access to a range and level of support services similar to those in the community and with appropriate professional support and assistance to help young people resettle and reintegrate into society following release. The posts are pivotal to the effective delivery of the Youth Crime Action Plan in improving the outcomes for young people in custody and enabling local authorities to meet their responsibilities in overseeing resettlement provision.
- There is an urgent need to secure the long-term funding for these posts. ADCS has assessed various ways to do so and has concluded that the most efficient means would be for the DCSF to 'top slice' a specific grant to be distributed to each YOI in accordance with a revised quantum and funding formula (see below).
- In the light of the NCB evaluation and the evidence from practitioners who have contributed to this paper, it is clear that the social work provision in YOIs needs to be re-designed so that there is more scope to work in teams, with greater consistency and impact. This requires a higher level of funding overall. Illustrative options prepared by YJB are included at Appendix 2
- There should be contextually appropriate staffing levels in each YOI, based on a formula that reflects the differences between establishments in size and client group.
- There is a need to provide clear leadership for the scheme across the YOIs, to promote quality and consistency, as well as relating the work to national priorities and outcomes (e.g. the Youth Crime Action Plan).
- A decision by DCSF about future arrangements is required urgently so that the YOIs and host local authorities can plan ahead. The current lack of certainty is leading to low morale and loss of experienced staff. The latest date for a decision would be November 1st 2008.

3 Background

- 3.1 The background to the establishment of social work posts in YOIs is set out in the NCB Evaluation (see Appendix 1 below). In 2002 Mr Justice Munby confirmed in his judgement following an application by the Howard League for Penal Reform that children in YOIs are entitled to services under the Children Act 1989. In order to support local authorities in the development of this work it was

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decided that social work posts should be established in YOIs specifically to undertake tasks relating to the duties under the Children Act. The YJB funded a pilot programme for an initial two –year period from March 2005, the intention being to establish the impact of the social worker roles and to secure a long-term funding base from DfES sources by March 2007. The long-term funding base has not been established. Interim funding was secured for 2007/08, whilst further consideration was given to the future of the scheme.

- 3.2 To enable YJB and DCSF to assess the value and impact of the social worker posts, YJB commissioned an evaluation from NCB in April 2006. The report is due to be published at the end of July 2008. It made a number of key recommendations about the future development of the scheme, and YJB prepared funding options to reflect the recommendations. The recommendations from the NCB Evaluation are set out in Appendix 2. They have informed the proposals put forward in this paper by ADCS, as has the work from YJB on funding models (see section 4.2 and Appendix 3 below).
- 3.3 Having considered all the issues, Ministers indicated that they would wish to see the social work posts in YOIs continue, but concluded that this should not be through a central funding mechanism. Whilst a further interim budget was secured for 2008/09, officials from DCSF and YJB sought discussion with ADCS about the best way to take the scheme forward.
- 3.4 The publication of the DCSF Children’s Plan *‘Building Brighter Futures’*, as well as highlighting the need for preventative work with young people at risk of offending, has also noted the need to improve targeted support for young people in custody (including effective educational provision) and to pave the way for their effective resettlement. (See paragraphs 6.5, 6.15 and 6.58.) Social work posts in YOIs have a key role to play in these improvements.
- 3.5 The Youth Crime Action Plan sets out key principles for the use of custody for young people, and highlights the need to improve custody so that it is as effective as it can be in reducing re-offending and addressing underlying problems. Social workers in YOIs will have a key role to play in supporting these improvements, and in enabling local authorities in meeting their responsibilities in overseeing resettlement provision.

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4 Key Issues

4.1 The Importance of the Social Worker Role in YOIs

4.1.1 **ADCS proposes that the social worker posts in YOIs should continue, with the social workers employed, as now, by the host local authority in the area where the YOI is located.** The NCB Evaluation made clear that the social worker role in YOIs needed to continue: *‘the model for local authority management but geographical location within YOIs should be maintained’*. The report provided substantial evidence of the impact of the role, shown particularly in the reflective case studies as well as the extensive quantitative and qualitative analysis in the report. The social worker roles have an important contribution to the following key objectives, which have heightened importance in the light of *Care Matters, Building Brighter Futures* and the Youth Crime Action Plan:

- Local authorities accept, understand, and meet their obligations to children in custody;
- YOIs become a more child-centred environment;
- Joint working between YOI and local authority with young people in custody improves;
- Young people in custody have improved experiences and outcomes in custody and on release.

4.1.2 Case study material from practitioners illustrates the impact of the role.

SH – Male, Aged 17, Custody from 22.03.08 for drug-related burglary

SH was a young person looked after and subject to a full Care Order from his LA and now subject to Pathway planning / reviews. He was taken into care at the age of 8 as a result of severe neglect from his parents and emotional abuse. This resulted in SH developing a severe attachment disorder, mental health problems and substance misuse issues. Prior to custody, SH had been placed by his LA in transitory bed & breakfast accommodation which was also being used by adult residents, some of whom were drug dependant and offenders.

As a result of his severe emotional distress, SH was placed on the prison’s care in custody process for prisoners at risk of harm. A comprehensive care plan was negotiated and implemented with regularly weekly reviews. This coordinated intensive support enabled the young person to stop self harming, improved their social skills and brought more positive relationships with staff and other young people. SH’s self-confidence / self-esteem greatly improved.

The YOI social worker acted as a ‘lead professional’ with the young person and a range of statutory and private agencies to agree an integrated Pathway plan involving the LA, YOT, Health, Connexions and an accommodation provider with experience in implementing and monitoring plans. This resulted in:

- Supported accommodation with intensive 24 hr support within a residential environment monitored by CCTV.
- Therapeutic support with a Health Service Trauma Therapist.
- Referral to Adult Services for allocation of SW to ensure continuity of care as YP makes transition into adulthood
- Referral via Connexions to local college for vocational training.
- Key worker support via Pathway YP’s Support Worker.

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4.1.3 Practitioner evidence indicates there are a number of benefits from the social worker role in YOIs:

- **Addressing the safeguarding needs of young people in custody**
The high proportion of children in custody with complex safeguarding / developmental needs which are most effectively addressed by way of YOI Social Worker with responsibility for coordinating the provision of external services.
- **Reducing the risks for more vulnerable young people**
YP With additional needs (e.g. learning difficulties, physical disabilities, mental health problems) or increased vulnerability (e.g. suicide, self-harm, bullying) would be more vulnerable without access to social work support.
- **Advice and support to YOI staff**
Social Workers provide prison staff with advice and support in relation to a range of safeguarding issues and act as a link with outside agencies who may offer additional support.
- **Enabling LAs to fulfil statutory responsibilities** - . Social Workers in YOIs act as a 'Lead Professional' in ensuring plans agreed meet children's needs and result in positive outcomes. Care and pathway plans need to take account of changes which have resulted as a result of the young person being in custody .There is scope for this role to be enhanced, given the commitment in the Youth Crime Action Plan for local authorities to fund and commission education and training in juvenile custody.
- **A central reference point for LAs and Children's Trusts**
The YOI social worker is a central reference point with a registered children's Social Worker with knowledge, experience and expertise in child welfare and safeguarding issues and in coordinating services for young people.

4.1.4 Whilst recognising the impact and value of the social worker role in YOIs, the practitioner evidence concurs with the recommendation from the NCB Evaluation that the role of the YOI social worker should be reviewed to take account of the wider roles and responsibilities within the YOI. ADCS proposals are considered in section 4.5 below.

4.2 Securing Long Term Funding

ADCS has considered a number of options to secure long term funding, given the view of Ministers that central funding from DCSF should not continue. Our view is that as well as securing long – term funding, we should ensure that the scheme is resourced at the right level to make an impact. **ADCS recommends that the current funding at £800,000 is not enough to deliver the expectations of the project and that a more appropriate level of funding is suggested in the illustrative funding options provided by YJB at Appendix B.** We have looked at two alternative models to secure long –term funding::

- direct funding by the host local authority for each YOI;
- collective funding by all local authorities, contributing to a fund administered by a lead LA that allocates funds to YOIs in accordance with the agreed funding

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formula. Our view is that neither of these approaches to long term funding is feasible, for the reasons outlined below.

4.2.1 Direct Funding

Evidence from practitioners shows that the services provided by social workers in YOIs relate to statutory duties for a significant number of local authorities and thus the costs of funding the posts should not be attributed to the host local authority alone.:

Practitioner Evidence Northumberland

Castington YOI can accommodate up to 168 young people (Juveniles) at any one time and generally operates to full capacity. Whilst guidance suggests that young people should be placed in a YOI within a 50 mile radiance of their home authority, Castington routinely has young people from up to 40 different authorities across the country. Between April 2006 and May 2007, 579 young people entered Castington YOI. Of these, only 21 (3.6%) originated from Northumberland and whilst there is a general safeguarding responsibility on the authority under s47 of the Children Act (1989) it would not represent value for money to provide the service in this manner as a single authority.

Practitioner Evidence Suffolk

Of 222 young people in custody in Warren Hill currently, 23 are from Suffolk, with the remainder drawn from 36 other LAs from as far apart as Powys, Isle of Wight and Greater Manchester. Corporate parenting responsibilities remain with the young persons home authorities and it is appropriate for these authorities to meet their statutory duties to them. Whilst they are in custody it is difficult for this to happen given the distance from the home authority.

Suffolk has a duty to safeguard children whilst they are in the county but cannot pick up on the statutory duties of the home authority. Our role is to identify and assess social care needs and facilitate contact within the home authority. We will also deal with immediate safeguarding issues. If we had additional resources we would be in a position to do more.

Given that so few young people in custody at Warren Hill come from Suffolk we could not justify funding the social work post given that most of the young people who need the service come from other authorities.

4.2.2 Collective Funding by all Local Authorities

ADCS considered carefully the merits of a scheme by which a funding contribution from each LA would be raised in accordance with an agreed formula. The fund could be managed by a lead LA and allocated to each YOI in line with the institutional funding formula agreed. There are some key benefits to this approach:

- a service with a funding base from LA contributions would be likely to be more responsive – and more accountable, with incentives to achieve increasing value for money;
- LAs would be more likely to focus on see the impact of the YOI social workers with their young people and be more aware of their responsibilities with young people In custody

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- A collective scheme would have the scope to promote increased levels of investment in response to changing needs

There is also a significant drawback:

- This would require over- complex arrangements to devise a formula for contribution from each LA, as well as bureaucratic arrangements to collect relatively small amounts of money.

Practitioner Evidence Suffolk

The numbers of YP entering and leaving custody (particularly those on remand) is in a constant state of flux. YPs sentences vary greatly from as little as two months in custody to life. This would make it very difficult to accurately identify the proportion of funding each LA should contribute although an average might be considered. Negotiating and collecting a contribution from every local authority where a young person comes from would be very difficult and place a major administrative burden on Suffolk to collect the money. Working out a funding formula for young people who may have a different status i.e. those in care and those who are not would present logistical problems.

4.2.3 DCSF Top Sliced Grant – Our Preferred Approach

The ADCS recommendation is that DCSF should establish a top slicing grant that would cover the full costs of the scheme. (as determined by whatever funding formula was agreed – see 4.3 below and Appendix 2). This would allow those local authorities with establishments in their area to develop a structured and sustainable service. This would also ensure that no one local authority was carrying the associated risks regarding staffing costs and would provide the workers with secured employment. In turn it would overcome the uncertainty that to date has led to high staff turnover and difficulties in recruitment..

4.3 The Funding Formula

It is clear from the NCB Evaluation that the funding formula adopted for the pilot project did not provide sufficient staffing resources overall to enable social workers to carry out the full elements of the role. In addition, some YOIs had a higher level of staffing than was required whilst others were significantly under resourced. The NCB Evaluation recommended that ‘the formula for deciding how many posts are needed within each YOI and their level of seniority needs to be reviewed, with consideration given to teams of social workers being based in the larger YOIs. A realistic allocation of funding for administrative support should be provided.’ Evidence that ADCS has taken from practitioners supports this view. The YJB developed two illustrative funding options that would give effect to this recommendation and ***ADCS proposes that DCSF should give consideration to them, working closely with the host local authorities. The illustrative funding options are set out at Appendix 2.***

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Practitioner Evidence: Northumberland

The original model was established to provide one social worker per 100 young people. This ratio appears to be appropriate based on a minimum number of two posts per unit. Within Castington it has not been possible to fund more than one post and this has significantly limited the role and caused a degree of isolation for the post holder. Although the professional isolation has been overcome by linking the post to a childcare social work team for supervision the establishment of one post significantly limits the ability of the post holder to undertake detailed work with a constantly changing population.

4.4 The Leadership Structure

The scheme to date has suffered from a lack of national identity and strategic leadership from within the DCSF or the YJB. The Youth Crime Action Plan and the DCSF Children's Plan provide a clear strategic context for leadership of the scheme going forward. ***ADCS recommends that a framework for national coordination is established, perhaps through a lead LA, with clear performance measures for the scheme.***

4.5 Developing and Changing the Social Worker Role

In line with the recommendations in the NCB Evaluation report, ADCS proposes that social workers should operate in teams in the larger YOIs. The NCB recommendation was made in September 2007. Since then the DCSF proposals for the development of the children's workforce (April 2008) reinforce the importance of the 'lead professional' function within multi-agency teams. The social worker role in YOIs has the potential to operate in this way in the specialist context of young people in custody, and we consider that this role will be pivotal in assisting local authorities to meet their responsibilities for resettlement provision and ensuring that a comprehensive package of support is in place for young people leaving custody.. The ADCS proposals are based on this premise. This is a more expensive staffing model than operates currently, as the YJB illustrative funding models at Appendix 2 indicate.

4.6 Urgency of National Decision Timetable

A decision by DCSF about future funding arrangements is required urgently so that the YOIs and host local authorities can plan ahead. The current lack of certainty is leading to low morale and loss of experienced staff. ADCS has consulted the host local authorities and it is clear that, if a solution to long-term funding is not found, the social worker posts will be made redundant as the individual local authorities are unlikely to carry the current costs. Given that there is a 90 day consultation period of consultation before redundancies are implemented, ADCS recommends that the local authorities need a decision on future funding by no later than November 1st 2008.

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5 Conclusion, Summary of Proposals, and Next Steps

5.1 The ADCS believes that social work posts in YOIs make an invaluable contribution to the safeguarding, wider welfare and outcomes of young people in custody. There is a need to establish the roles on a sustainable basis. This includes securing a long-term funding base, but also requires wider consideration of the role performed by these posts, the number and distribution of the posts across YOIs, and the wider leadership of their work. There is also a need for urgency in coming to a conclusion about the future of these roles as the current uncertainty is making it difficult to retain and recruit staff. Delay beyond November 1st will leave local authorities with significant difficulties in meeting their employer responsibilities, should the decision be to cease to continue with the social work posts.

5.2 The following is a summary of the ADCS proposals:

- ***ADCS proposes that the social worker posts in YOIs should continue, with the social workers employed, as now, by the host local authority in the area where the YOI is located.***
- ***ADCS recommends that the current funding at £800,000 is not enough to deliver the expectations of the project and to enable local authorities to meet their responsibilities to young people in custody fully.***
- ***ADCS proposes that consideration should be given by DCSF to the illustrative funding options developed by the YJB, working closely with the host local authorities.***
- ***It is recommended that DCSF should establish a top slicing grant that would cover the full costs of the scheme.***
- ***ADCS recommends that a framework for national coordination is established, perhaps through a lead LA, with clear performance measures for the scheme.***
- ***In line with the recommendations in the NCB Evaluation report, ADCS proposes that social workers should operate in teams in the larger YOIs.***
- ***DCSF needs to establish a national decision timetable for future funding, with a decision no later than November 1st 2008.***

5.3 To take forward the proposals in this paper, it is suggested that officials from DCSF and YJB work with a sub-group of the ADCS Families, Communities, and Young People Policy Committee (to include practitioners from the host local authorities and others with wider expertise in youth justice) to work up a set of proposals to be submitted to Ministers in the early Autumn. These proposals should be linked to the wider implementation of the Youth Crime Action Plan.

John Harris

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July 16th 2008

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Background Papers

'An Evaluation of Social Work Posts in Youth Offender Institutions' Final Report
September 2007 – National Children's Bureau
[YJB funding paper – internal paper – date?]

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Extract from NCB Evaluation September 2007

Context: social workers in YOIs –

Background

The YJB is responsible for placing young people under 18 years of age in secure accommodation. There are three types of provision: Secure Training Centres (STCs), Secure Children's Homes (SCHs) and Young Offender Institutions (YOIs). YOIs are facilities run by the Prison Service accommodating 15 to 21-year-olds although under-18s are held in discrete establishments or young people's wings. YOIs have lower ratios of staff to young people than STCs and SCHs and generally accommodate larger numbers of young people.

In 2002 Mr Justice Munby confirmed in his judgement following an application by the Howard League for Penal Reform that children in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) are entitled to services under the Children Act 1989. Subsequently, the Joint Child Protection and Children's Safeguards Review by the YJB and the Prison Service, the Caerphilly Judgement and the Joint Chief Inspectors' Report on Arrangements to Safeguard Children all highlighted the particular needs of children in custody. The specific responsibilities that Local Authorities have towards such children have been set out in a Department of Education and Skills (DfES) circular. These are:

- Services in relation to children in need
- Action where there are concerns that a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm
- Action when a child dies in a juvenile secure establishment
- Services in relation to looked after children.

In order to support the development of this work it was decided that social work posts should be established in YOIs specifically to undertake tasks relating to the above duties. It was felt that, in addition to fulfilling the specific requirements of the DfES circular, such posts would make progress towards addressing some of the broader underlying issues, identified by a range of national stakeholders:

1. A recognition that many young people in custody have a high level of need, and that a significant number of young people in custody are looked after children (LAC).
2. A concern that previously young people in custody had been 'neglected', 'forgotten' or 'sidelined' by local authorities, even when statutory obligations existed. This meant that young people's needs were being met neither in custody nor on release.
3. Stakeholders felt that prisons were not sufficiently child-centred. For example, prison staff were thought to be unlikely to understand issues relating to looked after children, or to be equipped with the skills or time to deal with welfare issues.

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Funding the posts

The YJB consider childcare social work to be the ultimate responsibility of the DfES, but it was decided that they would provide initial funding for a two-year period from March 2005 to allow time for a longer-term solution to be found. A budget allocation was provided to each YOI based on the number of young people within each establishment and the local authority in which the YOI was situated was invited to access the funds specifically for the purpose of employing social workers to be based within the YOI. The expectation was that the local authorities would directly employ and manage a total of 25 social workers. This was so that the social workers would be independent of the YOIs and supported in fulfilling local authority responsibilities. The YJB anticipated that once the social worker project concluded in March 2007, long-term funding would have been secured with the help of DfES. This turned out not to be the case and in late 2006, following a period of negotiation between the YJB, Home Office, Prison Service and DfES, it was agreed that a further year's funding would be provided jointly by the YJB and DfES, during which time the YJB would continue to provide central co-ordination. The future of the funding for the posts beyond March 2008 is uncertain at the time of writing.

Recommendations for future development of the posts

If the posts are to develop, arrangements for long-term funding needs to be agreed as a matter of urgency in order to ensure retention (or replacement) of existing social workers.

Government departments should agree an approach towards the posts, supported by publicity and guidance about the purpose of their role. This should include clear responsibility for how the posts will be co-ordinated and monitored nationally. It is important that local authorities that do not contain a YOI are also engaged in this process.

The formula for deciding how many posts are needed within each YOI and their level of seniority needs to be reviewed, with consideration given to teams of social workers being based in the larger YOIs. A realistic allocation of funding for administrative support should be provided.

The model for local authority management but geographical location within YOIs should be maintained, although consideration needs to be given to a more flexible approach within the girl's estate.

Social workers in YOIs would benefit from coherent support at national level, including regular joint meetings and targeted development or training opportunities; ideally they should be linked into local team structures that can offer local support.

The job description needs to be reviewed to reflect resource levels. It should be considered whether other relevant groups such as care leavers aged 18 or over, young parents with children in the community, babies within mother and baby units, asylum seekers and foreign nationals and public protection issues should come within the social workers' remit. Expectations regarding children in need should also be clarified.

It had originally been the intention that the social workers would become involved in serious case reviews. There were no incidents that warranted such a

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review during the study but this responsibility is clearly one that rests with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Prisons and Probation Ombudsman. Although the social worker could be called upon to assist any review, as could any other professional, it would not be appropriate for them to take a lead role. It is therefore recommended that this be removed from their job description.

There is an urgent need to consider respective roles and responsibilities in child protection work, including a clearer definition of the distinction between assessment and investigation. The role of the social workers in wider safeguarding concerns, e.g. bullying and self-harm, also needs to be clarified.

Consideration needs to be given to the processes that social workers should use to link LA and YOI processes e.g. databases and referral systems, in order to avoid duplication, support accountability and allow meaningful monitoring.

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Youth Justice Board: Illustrative Funding Options

Option 1 - Revert to original funding formula when the posts were initially launched in 2005.

Funding was based on 1 social worker per 100 young people with a minimum funding allocation of £20,000. The original budget estimate of £1m per year did not include on-costs, admin support or consider costs for annual up-lift. Job descriptions would need to be redesigned to reflect findings from the evaluation (see NCB Evaluation report and Appendix 1).

Benefits –

- Social work provision would remain with the opportunity for Local Authorities to either freshly recruit or back fill vacancies.
- It would provide establishments who have been working with limited service the opportunity to increase social work provision to young people.

Disbenefits –

- Without appropriate admin or line management support social workers will remain unable to direct their time effectively.
- With the impact of a remand population, average length of stay and Local Authority catchment area, many establishments will still remain under resourced to provide an effective service.

Option 2 – Taking into consideration recommendations outlined by the NCB Evaluation report, launch revise the funding formula and redesign service provision using a team model approach.

A funding formula would be designed to take into consideration findings from the NCB Evaluation. Using a points system, establishments would receive one point for each threshold met:

- One social worker per 100 young people (half person to round up figures)
- Establishments is split site or has a mother and baby unit
- Establishment has a remand population

The NCB Evaluation recommended that there must be a minimum of two staff per site as this would reduce isolation and promote a more effective division of workloads between the 'casework' (i.e. bridging communication between the young person and the home local authority) and the strategic elements of the work.. Additional variables that could also be taken into consideration, could include Local Authority catchment areas and average length of stay.

Local Authorities would have the autonomy to decide the final team structure. However, dependent upon the numbers of posts generated by the formula, potential options could include:

- Team manager, senior social worker and basic grade social workers
- Team manager and basic grade social workers
- Two senior social workers and basic grade social workers
- One senior social worker and basic grade social workers

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