

Communities and Culture Committee

CC(3)-10-09 - Paper 1 - 25 June 2009

Committee Inquiry into Youth Justice in Wales – evidence gathering – Association of Chief Policy Officers in Wales (ACPO Cymru)

Call for Evidence

Communities and Culture Committee Inquiry into Youth Justice in Wales Welsh children in the secure estate

The Communities and Culture Committee of the National Assembly for Wales is undertaking an inquiry into the experience of Welsh children in the secure estate.

Terms of Reference

The Communities and Culture Committee Inquiry into Youth Justice will focus on the experience of Welsh children in the secure estate and will:

- scrutinise the delivery of the Welsh Assembly Government's policies in relation to children and young people in the secure estate;

identify areas where there are particular problems in implementation and the delivery of positive outcomes for children and young people in the secure estate, including specific groups of children and young people;
- examine the extent to which the Welsh Assembly Government's "rights based agenda", in its support to children and young people, is delivered to children and young people in the secure estate;
- review use of custody and alternative measures to detention for children in conflict with the law;
- identify issues relevant to the debate on the devolution of the youth justice system to Wales as set out in the One Wales agreement;
- make evidence-based recommendations to the Welsh Assembly Government and others as necessary.

To assist with its inquiry, the Committee wishes to receive written evidence in relation to the experience of Welsh children in the secure estate, in particular on the following issues:



ACPO CYMRU

15th June 2009

Janice Gregory AM
Chair Communities and Culture Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Communities and Culture Committee Inquiry into Youth Justice in Wales

On behalf of ACPO Cymru, we are pleased to respond to the request to provide evidence to the Committee from a policing perspective.

We fully support the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy and its emphasis on stopping young people from entering the criminal justice system. Indeed, we would argue that entry into the criminal justice system signals a failure to address early indicators of problem behaviour. In our view, multi agency action focused on preventing offending and rehabilitating those who have offended is the most effective way of reducing demand on the secure estate.

The ACPO Children and Young Persons Strategy which Deputy Chief Constable Carmel Napier, Gwent Police, is leading on puts the child first and in doing so encourages the police service and its partner agencies to consider carefully their response to precursor or early offending behaviour. It is being developed not only to maintain focus on those young people who persistently offend or who require our specialist support and protection, but also to deliver core preventative services in a holistic and collective way to promote safety, engagement and justice for all children

and young people as well as impacting on the long term reduction of crime, disorder and anti social behaviour. Prevention, focused on dealing with the root causes of youth offending and negative behaviour¹ through early intervention and diversion is at the heart of our strategy. We recognise that moving too hastily to enforcement-based interventions is often a short-term fix that creates longer term problems for local communities. Our key objectives are to ensure the police service plays a full part in the delivery of services to children and young people, to discharge our legal duties and to ensure every child achieves the Welsh Assembly's Seven Core Aims.

The structure of this paper now follows the questions set out in the terms of reference for this Inquiry:

1. What action should the Welsh Assembly Government take to improve the experience of Welsh children in secure estate?

We endorse the widely held view that Welsh children in the secure estate benefit from being housed within Wales and we fully support the priority within the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy Delivery Plan 2009-11 to increase access to suitable accommodation for young people in the youth justice system in Wales. Maintaining positive local links is important to rehabilitation following release and young people located outside Wales maybe disadvantaged in terms of ease of family contact particularly where long distances are involved. It is very important that a good relationship with wider support services are formed at an early stage and clearly this is harder with distance. In this respect use of modern technology such as video conferencing and web cameras are currently utilised by many organisations to enable contact to be maintained where distance is an obstacle and we would advocate this approach.

2. How effectively does the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy address issues to do with the secure estate?

The Strategy views custody as a last resort. In practice this is very often the case and the Home Office Tackling Knives Action Plan has revealed that in England and Wales it takes on average 25 court disposals before a young person is sentenced to a secure unit (compared to 15 for adults). With this level of offending there is a clear need for a

¹ The causes of negative behaviour are many and varied and were discussed at a Symposium hosted by the Archbishop of Wales and Chief Constable Barbara Wilding in November 2008 and included the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Causes of negative behaviour in young people identified by this group included, the culture of excess, lack of community, lack of self belief, domestic abuse, alcohol abuse, social isolation, lack of hope, the poverty cycle, low literacy levels, systematic exclusion including family, school and community, fear, trust and respect, media absorption of negative messages and the increasing trend of publicly rubbishing people who hold differing views.

secure estate in Wales because no matter how effective the preventative model, there will be some who will commit offences which require them to be placed in secure accommodation to protect the public. It is therefore vital that an effective rehabilitation and resettlement programme for persistent offenders is in place. This is addressed in the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy Delivery Plan 2009 -11 which has reducing the rate of re offending for young people as a key priority through addressing causes of offending and the provision of well-supported local youth justice services. We support this aim but recognise that for persistent and prolific offenders a sustained multi agency holistic approach is required that addresses the often complex mix of causal factors. In addition there is a need to ensure that across Wales provisions are in place to enable courts to utilise non custodial opportunities. In this respect YJB statistics for 2007/8 raise some interesting questions.

**YOUTH JUSTICE BOARD STATISTICS 2007/8
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 18 YEARS**

YOT	Custody disposals	Total court disposals	Custodial disposals as a % of all court disposals	Custodial remands	Total remands	Custodial remands as a % of all remands
Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly	32	641	5.0%	13	419	8.5%
Bridgend	20	199	10.1%	13	192	6.8%
Cardiff	66	829	8.0%	64	853	7.5%
Carmarthenshire	21	344	6.1%	16	200	8.0%
Ceredigion	3	113	2.7%	3	62	4.8%
Conwy & Denbighshire	24	498	4.8%	21	394	5.3%
Flintshire	13	274	4.7%	1	141	0.7%
Gwynedd Mon	17	436	3.9%	7	153	4.6%
Merthyr Tydfil	14	111	12.6%	7	72	9.7%
Monmouthshire and Torfaen	16	413	3.9%	3	215	1.4%
Neath Port Talbot	17	205	8.3%	11	206	5.3%
Newport	22	393	5.6%	13	233	5.6%
Powys	5	203	2.5%	3	82	3.7%
Rhondda Cynon Taff	22	418	5.3%	16	364	4.4%
Swansea	26	298	8.7%	19	283	6.7%
Vale of Glamorgan	17	252	6.7%	10	156	6.4%
Wrexham	39	419	9.3%	19	245	7.8%
TOTAL (England & Wales)			5.7%			6.6%

In some areas of Wales custodial remands were higher than the national average for England and Wales which raises the question as to whether young people were remanded in custody to protect the public or because suitable bail alternatives in those areas were not available. It is also interesting to note that in some areas the custodial remand percentages were higher than those for custody court disposal. Whilst it is not possible to

draw any firm conclusions from these statistics the range across Wales suggests there would be value in pursuing a more detailed investigation.

3. What particular problems are there in implementation and the delivery of support services for children and young people in the secure estate, including mental health provision, support for education and resettlement services?

Some young offenders in the secure estate are extremely challenging individuals in terms of their offending history and individual needs. Many have mental health issues or disabilities such as ADHD and/or backgrounds involving substance misuse. Poor education levels and inadequate social and communication skills often make them under equipped for a positive contribution to society.

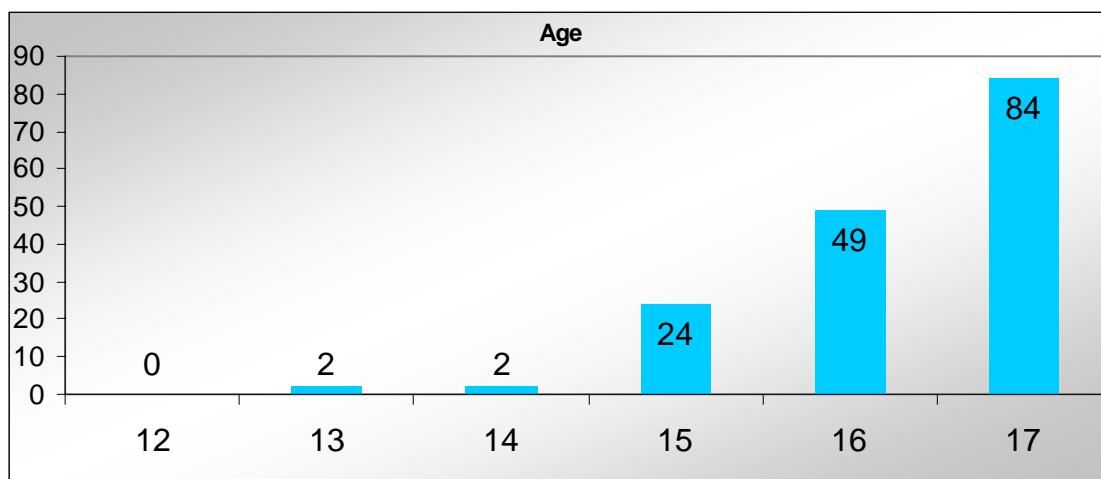
In summary, many are repeat offenders, are socially excluded and disadvantaged and their entry into the secure estate represents a failure on the part of many bodies and individuals to address problem behaviour at an earlier stage. In this respect there is a view that some young offenders are themselves victims of a lack of joined up working across agencies which provide youth and family services. That in turn could be due to the lack of a performance framework across the full range of children, youth and social services that could be used to examine levels of support to individuals and their families and to hold agencies to account.

Rehabilitation is a critical issue and in this respect a period in the secure estate can be a positive development if it provides an opportunity to address causal factors and to break the cycle of offending. For this to happen, each individual has to be risk assessed and a programme created tailored to their needs to promote good citizenship and to help equip them to become positive members of society e.g. with skills for the labour market. We therefore fully support the priorities within the Delivery Plan 2009-11 to increase engagement in education, training and employment for young people in the youth justice system and to ensure that children and young people with identified substance misuse needs gain timely access to appropriate specialist assessment and treatment services. In this respect we also welcome measures within the proposed WAG Youth Offending Team Guidance for Treatment of Offenders with substance misuse problems as contained in the current consultation document. It highlights that many young people who offend are likely to be at an early stage of their substance using career and may be more amenable to treatment than those with more long standing problems and the importance of immediate intervention. It also includes provision for discharge and

aftercare support for people leaving the custody with significant risk of substance misuse and/or dual diagnosis mental health problems.

Effective re-settlement into the community following a period in the secure estate is extremely important if any gains made whilst in custody are not to be lost and in this respect there is a clear need for sustained mentoring and supervision. Indeed, in interviews with young people the former Children’s Commissioner found that many young inmates were fearful of release because they valued the support within and felt release would see them return to the downward spiral of offending.

A vital aspect of rehabilitation is stability and it is very important that young offenders who are homeless, particularly those in the 16- 17 age bracket, have suitable accommodation to go to on release and support to help them become a positive member of society.



Snapshot of young people in custody as at 1st May 20-09

Support is vitally important to help them counter negative factors that could lead to re offending. It is a key issue for YOT’s and their accommodation officers and again is included as a priority in the new Delivery Plan. In this respect ACPO Cymru also welcomes the WAG sustainable homes strategy for Wales 2009 which sees the potential to use housing as a catalyst to improve lives. This modern approach to delivering public services is exactly the leadership needed to meet the expectations of young adults who appear to be more willing to access mental health services if they are integrated into other public services such as schools, housing benefits office and social care.

4. To what extent is the Welsh Assembly Government’s “rights based agenda”, in its support to children and young people, delivered to Welsh children in the secure estate?

We support the Assembly's rights based agenda particularly the principle that custody should be a last resort.

The rights based agenda is distinct to Wales and underpins the Youth Offending Strategy. It is another reason why young people housed outside Wales could be disadvantaged compared with those housed in secure accommodation in Wales.

An independent 'champion' for young people in the secure estate such as the Children's Commissioner is important in reinforcing the rights based agenda.

5. Do specific groups of children and young people need additional support e.g. BME groups, young people with a disability or learning impairment, Welsh speakers, young carers, and girls and young women?

Yes. From a policing perspective our experience is that support must be based on individual need. It requires a holistic multi agency approach that is properly resourced so that welfare and other specific needs can be addressed.

For example, we support the strategy's aim, 'effective attention to the mental health needs of young people to avoid being inappropriately dealt with by the youth justice system.' To this end we are working with agencies such as Autism Cymru to raise police officer awareness and better understanding of Autistic Spectrum Disorders through appropriate training e.g. an important initiative has been the development of a card which young people with autism can carry to show to police. The intention is to alert police officers to the condition in order that they can make informed judgements and take the most appropriate courses of action.

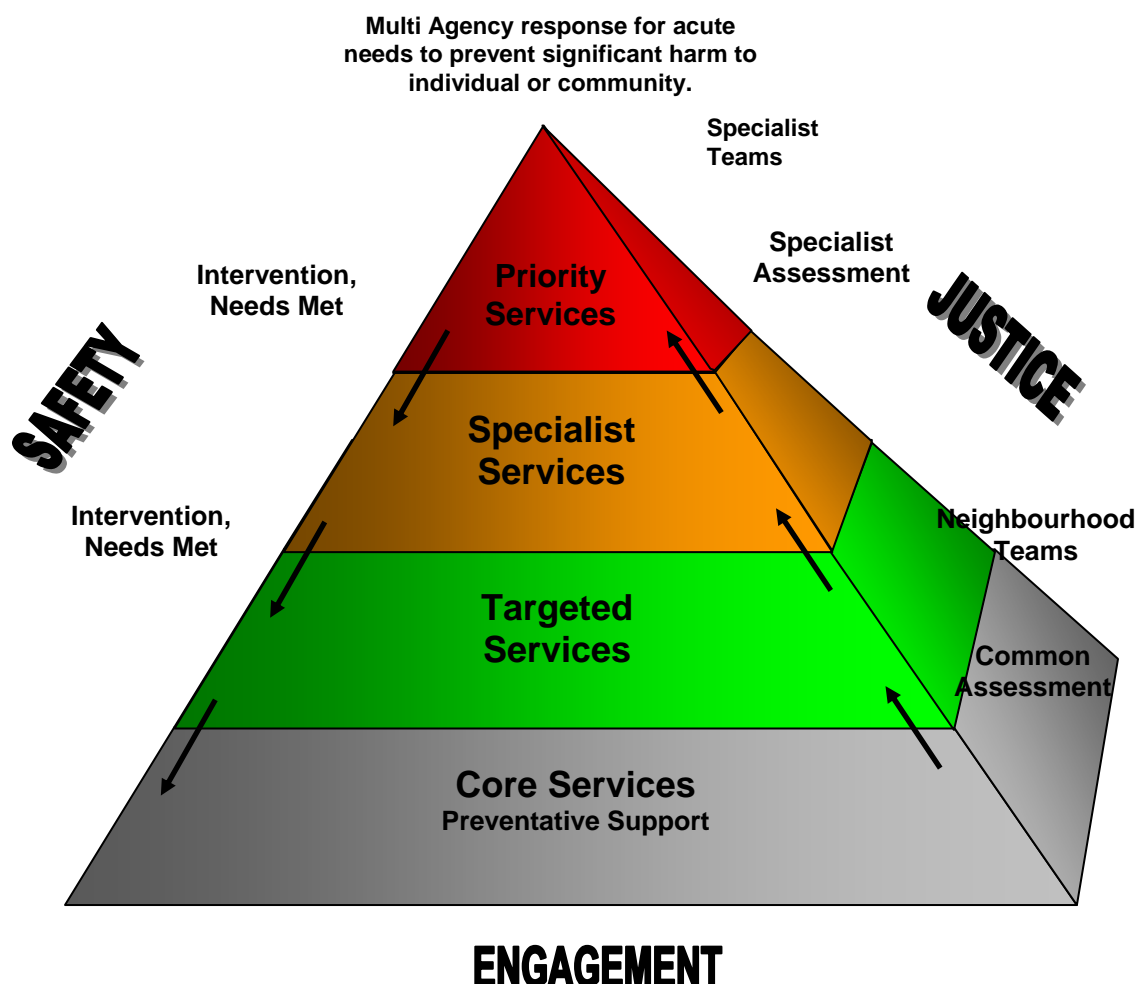
6. What further action is needed to reduce use of custody and to promote alternative measures to detention for children in conflict with the law?

We fully support the principle underpinning the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy that the best way to prevent young people from offending is to stop problem behaviour from occurring. For this to happen the term 'youth justice' needs to be viewed in its widest sense as the management of Children and Young People. From this perspective, if a child or young person falls into the Youth Justice system then many agencies will have failed that child.

We hold the view that much is to be gained from placing emphasis on correcting bad behaviour at the earliest stages through appropriate engagement and interventions before it results in breaches of the criminal law. We would argue that this principle needs to be accepted by all stakeholders. High level buy in resulting in clear policy and

procedures in each of the agencies would allow the vision to be transferred into day to day activities. This is the approach DCC Carmel Napier in her capacity as national police lead for children and young people is developing for the ACPO Children and Young Persons Strategy for Wales and England.

Underpinning the ACPO strategy is a commitment to engage and listen to young people. Our view is that engagement and support in the widest sense will build trust and confidence amongst young people and provide a comprehensive means through which their fears can be addressed and risks can be identified early and managed through support and intervention before enforcement becomes necessary. The strategy has a tiered approach of support and intervention based on threat risk and harm. Its pyramidal shape is designed to signify the proportion of those young people that will be affected by that support/intervention and the graduated approach to solve problems.



A number of multi agency projects centred on comprehensive schools in some of the most deprived areas of South Wales are currently underway and provide practical examples of the strategy in action. In Swansea a multi agency partnership that is focused around the preventative agenda has the full support of the city's Children and

Young People's Partnership, the Director of Education and the headmaster of the school. Young people are the key elements of this project and are fully engaged. Individuals with behavioural problems that could result in offending have been identified and are subject of multi agency meetings that create tailored action plans that could involve the school, the YOT, social services, youth services, health, ethnic youth support teams or indeed any agency. Local police also co-ordinate a weekly youth night where the school and other voluntary groups manage and support the most problematic young people for that area, this is by invite only and is not a general youth club. Through the above process an initiative was developed which led to 18 young people attending an Easter holiday school where in the morning they received extra tuition and in the afternoon the police and other agencies provided them with team building activities. This initiative is not only providing support to young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system by placing a team around the child but has also seen wider benefits such as better information sharing between partners, more effective multi agency working, and reduced anti social behaviour

Restorative justice

The All Wales Young Offending Strategy and Delivery Plan emphasises the importance of restorative justice. It is a means by which those who have committed minor offences can be dealt with in a manner which helps them understand the impact and consequences of their actions on others and in doing so limits the likelihood of their re-offending. Restorative justice measures are an extremely effective method of not only dealing with offenders but also those who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system. We fully support this approach, which is in place to various degrees in all the Welsh forces. We have attached as an appendix to this paper a detailed explanation of the emerging good practice that is resulting from a national pilot undertaken by North Wales Police which is supported by the Welsh Assembly Government.

7. How effective are arrangements for implementation and the delivery of provisions that blend reserved and devolved functions?

The four Welsh police forces fully support the aims of the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy and we work closely with devolved bodies in its implementation. The modern policing ethos is based around a citizen and customer focused partnership approach that is aimed at improving the quality of life of our communities. Through our neighbourhood policing teams we engage with communities and partners to identify and address local problems. The approach provides great flexibility particularly at a local level.

The partial devolution of youth justice can sometimes result in a confusion of objectives. For example, until fairly recently some Home Office performance indicators for policing aimed at increasing sanction detections did have the effect of encouraging police forces to deal with young people who had committed very minor offences through the criminal justice route. This had the effect of reducing police discretion to deal with young people for minor offences and in some areas did increase numbers of young people entering the criminal justice system. The contrast in individual force policies was striking, for example one English force saw a 60% increase in young people being criminalised whereas South Wales Police saw numbers decrease through following a proportionate problem solving approach. These performance indicators have now changed but it does illustrate how strategic objectives can conflict. Similarly, Ministry of Justice targets for sanction detections can create tensions with restorative justice measures. This is because restorative justice measures do not count as sanction detections for statistical purposes. Whilst forces which pursue the restorative justice approach gain community benefits through resolving problems in a constructive and proportionate way, they could be disadvantaged in performance measurement terms and in 'league table' comparison with forces who take the criminal justice route. This is an area that ACPO Cymru is seeking to address nationally.

The role of DCC Napier, the ACPO lead on the Youth Justice Committee for Wales is therefore very important in linking the devolved and non-devolved elements of the strategy and its implementation.

In terms of the relationship between the Welsh Assembly Government and Youth Justice Board, the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy is a good example of joint working and has resulted in a plan that is tailored to Wales. The observations of the Police Liaison Officer, of chief superintendent rank, based in the Youth Justice Board who has responsibility for England and Wales and has national oversight is of interest. It is his view that the close relationship between the YJB in Wales and WAG has given clarity in direction that is lacking in England e.g. YOT's have a clearer role and YOT staff have better training in Wales.

8. Should responsibility for the secure estate be devolved to Wales?

A holistic approach to the provision of services to young people is essential. Youth justice is only one aspect and the secure estate falls within the youth justice strand.

In terms of the secure estate, there is a need is for more places to be made available within Wales. It is unclear whether Youth Justice Board funding will allow for this. In

our view devolution of the secure estate would enable the Welsh Assembly Government greater flexibility to address priority areas. However this would be dependent on the provision of adequate funding and resourcing.

9. Are there any specific recommendations you think should be considered as part of this inquiry?

We recommend:

- (i) Use of technology such as video conferencing and web cameras to enable contact with offenders in the secure estate where distance is a factor.
- (ii) That much is to be gained from placing emphasis on early identification and correcting bad behaviour at the earliest stages through appropriate engagement and interventions before it results in breaches of the criminal law. We would argue that this principle needs to be accepted by all stakeholders
- (iii) A performance framework be created across the full range of children, youth and social services that could be used to examine levels of support to individuals and their families and to hold agencies to account.
- (iv) The secure estate be used as a deterrent with a view to changing the behaviour of young people by illustrating the consequences of continued bad behaviour e.g. individuals subject to anti social behaviour contracts, breaches of which could lead to anti social behaviour orders and ultimately to the secure estate, could be shown a secure unit.
- (v) The Welsh Assembly Government endorses the concept of Restorative Justice as a part of our systems in Wales.
- (vi) That the All Wales Youth Crime Action Plan includes a priority for the inclusion of restorative approaches to youth crime and anti social behaviour issues.
- (vii) That the Supporting Offenders through Restoration Inside (S.O.R.I.) programme currently used in the adult secure estate is adopted for use in relation to children and young people in the secure estate. It is understood that this is subject of a separate submission by Ministry of Justice staff engaged with The Cardiff Prison project.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute evidence to the Inquiry.

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Chair ACPO Cymru

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Restorative Justice

Purpose of this paper:

To highlight emerging good practice in Wales that shows a proven reduction in criminalisation and repeat offending of young people and to suggest alternative measures to detention for young people in conflict with the law.

Background:

“Restorative Justice (RJ) is a process whereby parties with a stake in a specific offence come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future.”²

The use of RJ has been embedded in Aboriginal and Maori cultures in Australia and New Zealand for centuries but the uptake of the process has been much slower in the northern hemisphere, particularly within the United Kingdom. There is a school of thought however, that a form of restorative justice was being practised in Wales as far back as the 9th and 10th centuries through the law of Hywel Dda – cyfraith Hywel Dda. These laws showed compassion rather than punishment, plenty of common sense and a respect towards women and children which was unheard of in Europe at that time. The laws remained active throughout Wales until the Norman conquest and were not abolished by the English Parliament until the 16th century.

More recently, the use of Restorative Justice within the police forces of Wales and England is increasing at a significant pace. In addition, there is growing national interest in its’ application as a method of developing both a victim-focused but low-bureaucratic disposal for low-level offending and as a critical tool within neighbourhood policing, to assist in problem-solving and meeting community expectations.

Restorative Justice processes are different to anything else the criminal justice system has to offer because they involve interaction between offenders, victims and the community - bringing them together and empowering them to work out how to resolve the harm caused by an incident and prevent a recurrence - including through reparation and rehabilitation. Victim participation is always voluntary and offenders need to have admitted some responsibility for the harm they have caused. RJ approaches give everyone involved a voice, and a personal stake in the outcome. Often these processes can give victims answers to questions, and a sense of closure, that information or support on their own cannot. Victims are far more likely to receive an apology through an RJ process than at court. Similarly for offenders, RJ processes offer a unique opportunity to face up to what they have done, to take responsibility and make up for the harm they have caused.

Restorative Justice experience in North Wales:

Notwithstanding that RJ has been an unofficial and largely informal aspect of policing and problem solving for many years, North Wales Police recognised that a more structured approach was worthy of investigation and a pilot was set up in 2006. In addition to a number of police officers and Police Community Support Officers having been trained, the following partners have also benefited from the joint training:

² (Tony F. Marshall, 1998 – “Restorative Justice an Overview”: Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate).

Housing Associations and Housing Authorities - Housing officers from every authority and association in North Wales have been trained to assist in their dealings with disputes amongst their tenants.

Environmental Health Officers - RJ used to deal with mainly noise issues between neighbours.

Youth Justice Service - Police officers seconded to the YJS are trained as are other YJS staff including Referral Order co-ordinators, Victim Liaison Officers and Prevention co-ordinators.

Probation Service - Two officers are piloting RJ with Priority Prolific Offenders in Denbighshire.

Flintshire Neighbourhood Watch and Voluntary Services - RJ conferences have been organised and facilitated across Flintshire.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service - All 14 Fire Safety Officers have been trained with the intention of holding RJ conferences with youths responsible for starting fires in their respective areas. A number of joint police/fire service conferences have been completed.

Altcourse Prison Staff - RJ approaches are used to resolve disputes between prisoners and between prisoners and wardens. Their experience suggests it can promote safer custody and decency among staff and prisoners. The National Offender Management Service are also using the S.O.R.I programme (Supporting Offenders through Restoration Inside) both at Altcourse and at HMP Cardiff where it was first developed. S.O.R.I is a victim awareness course, giving offenders the opportunity to make amends for their crime to both the victim and the community. It also enables victims to understand more about the cause of crime and offending behaviour through dialogue with offenders.

Restorative Justice in Schools.

Other than criminal Justice, the arena in which RJ is having its greatest impact is within schools as a response to anti-social behaviour, bullying truancy and crime. A total of 63 RJ interventions have taken place in schools in North Wales, mainly by the School Liaison Officers but also by Community Beat Managers. Every single RJ intervention in schools has been successful with no further problems among pupils involved in the process reported to police. RJ interventions have been used for:

- Bullying (including internet bullying)
- Assault/violent behaviour
- Name-calling (including racial and homophobic)
- Family feuds
- Friendship/relationship breakdowns
- Gossip
- Theft
- Truancy
- Incidents outside school

RAiN (Restorative Approaches in Neighbourhoods)

North Wales Police signed up to RAiN national project in March 2008 and are one of ten forces involved. Two districts in the force's Central Division were chosen to pilot the initiative with the overall objective of equipping Neighbourhood Teams with the skills they need to deploy restorative approaches:

- Contribute to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour by reducing the risks of repeat incidents and re-offending

- Provide a better service for victims and their families and neighbourhoods
- Increase levels of community involvement in tackling local issues
- Reassure residents that their concerns are being addressed.

Good examples involving conflicts in schools and the use of Youth Restorative Disposals for level crime and anti-social behaviour have been identified. A total of 81 RJ conferences have been conducted in the project areas since March 2008.

Youth Restorative Disposals (YRDs)

North Wales Police is one of eight forces (and the only Welsh force) across the UK piloting YRDs which are backed by The Home Office and The Ministry of Justice.

The YRD supports the Government paper “*Delivering Simple, Speedy, Summary Justice*” advocating the use of alternative disposals to the court process and to keep relatively lower level matters away from the criminal justice system. All the local Youth Justice Teams and The North Wales LCJB fully support the force by working jointly in the management of YRDs.

A YRD does not count as a First-time Entrant to the Criminal Justice Service³. A key aim of the YRD is to reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system. The restorative nature of the YRD is intended to prevent re-offending by nipping it in the bud. The goal is to reduce the number of young people in the youth criminal justice system and avoid unnecessary court appearances particularly for minor offences, where it is not in the public interest to prosecute.

What are YRDs?

- A YRD uses restorative techniques to allow young persons aged 10 to 17 years to apologise for committing an offence and to take responsibility for their actions, usually soon after the offence and at the scene. Only officers trained in RJ techniques are authorised to issue YRDs
- They are intended to deliver swift, simple and effective justice, that carries the support of victims and complainants, and provide a learning opportunity for young offenders to appreciate the effect of their behaviour and to hopefully prevent them from re-offending
- YRDs are intended to be a quick and proportionate response to young persons' low level offending and should, in the main, be dealt with on the street without the need for arrest
- A YRD cannot be issued if the young person has previously received a YRD, Reprimand, Final Warning, PND or Conviction
- The YRD is not a criminal conviction; it does not create a criminal record which can affect future education and employment opportunities as Reprimands and Final Warnings can.

Performance to date (31/03/09)

A total of 400 officers have been trained as RJ facilitators. Of these 155 are trained to level 2 and 245 are trained to level 1.

Level 2 - Officers are authorised to facilitate the more complicated cases which require more planning as well as the street/instant RJ interventions including the issuing of YRDs. The level 2 training course is a 3 day course and is offered to Community Beat Managers, Schools Liaison Officers and PCSOs.

Level 1 - Officers are authorised to facilitate street/instant interventions as well as YRDs. The level 1 training is a half day course and is available to Response Officers, Community Beat Managers and PCSOs.

³ PSA14: Increase the number of children & young people on the path to success. Indicator 5: Reduce the number of first time entrants to the Criminal Justice System aged 10-17

A total of **250 RJ** interventions have been completed across the North Wales area. Of these, 86 cases had cost implications i.e. repeat calls as opposed to one off incidents and victim/offender mediation.

As well as for victim/offender mediation RJ has been used to resolve:

- Neighbourhood Disputes
- Anti-social behaviour
- Hate crime
- Issues in schools
- Police complaints
- Persistent persons missing from home.

Based upon average officer costs, the following calculations (savings) emerged.

Savings on repeat calls - £96,165
Cost of resolving dispute - £ 5,155
Total saving - £91,010
Average saving per case - £ 1,058

A total of **313 YRDs** have been issued from 261 incidents (August 08 - March 09).

YRD Data

Types of offences:

Damage - 71
Assaults - 84
Theft - 78
ASB - 28

There have been 203 male offenders and 110 female offenders. To date there have been 18 re-offenders.⁴

Ages of offenders:

10yrs - 22 11yrs - 36 12yrs - 47 13yrs - 55 14yrs - 57 15yrs - 50 16yrs - 35 17yrs - 11.

There have been 239 verbal/face to face apologies and 74 letters of apology. Compensation has been paid on 28 occasions and Reparation has been made on 14 occasions.

Efficiency savings from issuing YRDs as opposed to Reprimands from the 313 issued - **£32,996**.

In summary

- > RJ is victim focussed and effective in reducing re-offending
- > It has significant cost benefits, increases efficiency and use of resources
- > YRD/Instant RJ allows officers to spend more time on the street dealing with more serious crime and reduces bureaucracy
- > RJ increases public satisfaction with the criminal justice system - rather than excluding the public from the resolution of the incident, RJ seeks to improve satisfaction by directly engaging the affected parties in the disposal.

⁴ PSA23: Make Communities Safer. Priority action 4 - Reduce re-offending through the improved management of offenders

Recommendations:

That The Welsh Assembly Government endorses the concept of Restorative Justice as a part of our systems in Wales.

That the All Wales Youth Crime Action Plan includes a priority for the inclusion of restorative approaches to youth crime and anti social behaviour issues.

That the S.O.R.I. programme currently used in the adult secure estate is adopted for use in relation to children and young people in the secure estate. It is understood that this is subject of a separate submission by Ministry of Justice staff engaged with The Cardiff Prison project.