

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

Cabinet

24th October 2005

**Restorative Justice and Community Reparation Opportunities Provided
by the Youth Offending Service.**

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to highlight the role of restorative justice in the work of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and suggest ways in which the City Council can support the YOS in providing increased community reparation opportunities for young people.

1.2 The aim of the report is to:

- Define the meaning of the terms restorative justice and reparation.
- Provide some current examples of community reparation work with young people in Leicester.
- Identify opportunities for greater integrated working between the YOS and other City Council Departments.
- Seek Council Member endorsement for supporting City Council staff to be able to train as volunteer Panel Members.

2. Summary

2.1 The YOS is required to provide a range of reparation opportunities to enable children and young people who have committed offences to undertake 'community payback' work. In order to ensure that the YOS is able to provide a range of suitable voluntary work placements and to increase the involvement of corporate bodies in the process, the elected Members are asked to endorse the proposal to support Council Departments to provide unpaid work opportunities for young people and to allow staff to train to become community panel member volunteers where this is requested.

3. Recommendations

Its is recommended that Cabinet agree:

3.1 To promote community reparation opportunities for young people across City Council Departments.

- 3.2 To support City Council employees who wish to become trained panel members and attend panel meetings, if necessary during working hours consistent with similar voluntary work undertakings such as the JP service.
- 3.3 That appropriate Council premises being used to hold local, community based panel meetings for the delivery of restorative justice services at a local neighbourhood level.
- 3.4 That the YOS exploring the possibility of identifying a suitable house for regeneration which can be used to enable young people to complete voluntary reparation and obtain key practical and vocational skills and qualifications.
- 3.5 That a restorative justice forum be established, involving elected members and appropriate Council officers, to promote awareness of restorative justice and identify opportunities for new reparation schemes.

4. Headline Financial and Legal Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

Allowing City Council employees to attend Panel Member meetings during working hours would result in a loss of productive time, however it is unlikely in most cases to lead to additional cost as cover would be required only for certain front-line posts. All meetings involve young people and occur in most instances after school between 4pm -7pm. Most volunteer panel members are required to attend meetings for no more than approximately two hours per fortnight. Training is usually held at weekends with no more commitment than two days additional training per year, which may also take place outside of normal working hours.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance Social Care & Health ext 8800.

4.2 Legal Implications

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002, imposes on Local Authorities a joint statutory duty to work in partnership with other agencies to address issues of crime and disorder. In doing so reasonable Authorities are required to work in partnership with a range of other local public, private, community and voluntary groups and with the community itself with the aim of reducing crime and disorder. Under section 27 Children Act 1989 there is a general duty of cooperation between Local Authorities and between Authority Departments, designed to reduce the need to avoid bringing criminal proceedings, and encourage children not to commit criminal offences.

Kamal Adatia, Barrister/Team Manager, ext 7044.

5. Report Author / Officer to contact:

Mary Campagnac

Head of Service
Youth Offending Service
11 Friar lane
LEICESTER
LE1 5RB

Tel 0116 2995830
Fax 0116 233 6003
Email mary.campagnac@
leicester.gov.uk

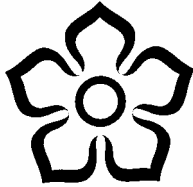
David Thrussell

Service Manager
Youth Offending Service
11 Friar Lane
LEICESTER
LE1 5RB

Tel 0116 2995830
Fax 0116 233 6003
david.thrussell@
leicester.gov.uk

DECISION STATUS

Key Decision	No
Reason	N/A
Appeared in Forward Plan	N/A
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet):



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

Cabinet

24th October 2005

**Report on Restorative Justice and Community Reparation Opportunities
Provided by the Youth Offending Service.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Report of the Deputy Chief executive

1. Restorative Justice

1.1 Restorative justice has emerged as a key component of the youth justice system. It seeks to provide young people with a role in identifying ways to repair the damage their criminal behaviour has caused, recognising that crime harms victims, offenders, families and communities.

2. Community Reparation

2.1 The YOS are responsible for providing and supervising reparation work completed by young people as part of their community punishment following conviction for offences. The amount of hours community work undertaken is either defined by the courts or agreed by the victim, offender and community volunteers.

2.2 The work is unpaid and mostly supervised by trained staff provided by the YOS. Reparation work is an important element of restorative justice. The benefits of the scheme are to:

- i. Provide young people with an opportunity to repair the harm they have caused to their victim and their community.
- ii. Encourage the young person to take individual responsibility for their behaviour and the consequences of their actions.
- iii. Promote opportunities for young people to re-integrate into their communities without re-offending.

3. Victim Involvement

- 3.1 Restorative justice places the victim at the centre of responding to youth crime and provides an important opportunity to improve victim confidence in the criminal justice system. Whilst most victims do not chose to meet individually with the offender, all victims are given the opportunity to express their views on the offence and any community reparation work to be undertaken by the young person.
- 3.2 The YOS are set a target of ensuring that 75% of all victims of youth crime are offered an opportunity to participate in a restorative process and are satisfied with the service provided. Leicester YOS has been able to enhance the provision of community reparation and victim contact services through additional posts funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. These additional posts have assisted the YOS in being able to contact 82% of victims of youth crime. More significantly all victims who have responded to a consultation have indicated that they are satisfied with the service provided.
- 3.3. The YOS contacted 193 victims of crime between November 2004 and June 2005 and of these 94 expressed their views on the offence and the reparation to be undertaken. A further 16 victims agreed to meet face to face with the young person to discuss the impact of the offence and appropriate reparation.
- 3.4 A significant proportion of victims of youth crime are young people themselves and this presents a major challenge to ensure that young people are not re-victimised whilst they are given a genuine opportunity to participate in the restorative process.

4. The Corporate Victim

- 4.1 The annual Youth Justice Plan for 2005/06 has identified the need to provide an increased range of opportunities for corporate victims such as the city council, to participate in the restorative justice process. Although individual cases of crime against the council are not differentiated the YOS identified 44 corporate victims of youth crime between November 2004 and June 2005. The most common offence type against the city council will be criminal damage to council property. There is a clear opportunity here for the council to support the provision of direct reparation where damage to council property is involved.
- 4.2 The city council can also play a pivotal role in providing building premises and open sites to facilitate reparation opportunities at a local community level and to assist in the provision of suitable venues to facilitate community panel meetings.

5. Opportunities for Increased Council Participation

- 5.1 Since the inception of the scheme in 2001 the YOS has organised in excess of 70 reparation placements involving victims and their

communities from across the City. To date there have been some limited opportunities to work in partnership with City Council Departments to provide constructive reparation placements for young people. Examples of collaborative work placements with young offenders that have taken place include garden projects working in centres with Children with Disabilities and special needs.

- 5.2 The YOS will benefit from the Council agreeing that named officers can represent Departments that have been impacted by youth crime to complete a victim impact statement or attend a restorative justice meeting to address the impact of corporate crime on the city council.
- 5.3 Community reparation provides the city council with an opportunity to work with young people and their communities to negotiate local responses to youth crime and anti social behaviour. It provides an opportunity for the city council to promote community cohesion through re-integrating socially excluded young people back into their communities. By supporting reparation opportunities for young people the city council will also be re-affirming it's commitment to corporate parenting, promoting social inclusion, and providing opportunities to prevent young people re-offending or becoming involved in crime.
- 5.4 Through directly supporting increased voluntary work placements for young people the Council will be promoting the opportunities for young people 'making a positive contribution' as outlined in the 'Every Child Matters' strategy and the recently published Green Paper 'Youth Matters'.

6. Report Author / Officer to contact:

Mary Campagnac
Head of Service
Youth Offending Service
11 Friar lane
LEICESTER
LE1 5RB

Tel 0116 2995830
Fax 0116 233 6003
Email mary.campagnac@leicester.gov.uk

David Thrussell
Service Manager
Youth Offending Service
11 Friar Lane
LEICESTER
LE1 5RB

Tel 0116 2995830
Fax 0116 233 6003
david.thrussell@leicester.gov.uk