

Lancaster Three Tier Forum

Support given to young people on release from prison.

When a young person is released from Custody on licence they will be supervised by a member of staff from a Youth Offending Team (YOT) and they will have a good support package in place.

Sentence planning and resettlement for a young person starts at the point of a custodial sentence being imposed so that any difficulties/resettlement issues are immediately identified and can be addressed. Each young person who receives a custodial sentence will be allocated a YOT Supervising Officer and the custodial estate allocates a Key Worker.

Prior to the Initial Detention and Training Order (DTO) meeting the Key Worker will have met with the young person and explained the Key Worker role. Part of the Key Worker role is to link with the external YOT. The Key Worker will read all community documents to familiarise themselves with the case.

It is important that the assessment (Core Asset) of the young person is up to date and accurate because it is from this assessment that the sentence plan is devised and specific interventions are identified, such as to address reasons why the young person offended, victim awareness, substance misuse, communication issues, emotional and mental health and learning new skills. By having an agreed sentence plan with specific targets the young person is fully aware of what they are expected to achieve and by when.

Within custody there are a range of interventions that a young person can be referred to. However, if it was identified that a young person required a specific intervention that the custodial estate did not provide, then the Key Worker could complete this work during a one to one session. Having an allocated Key Worker within custody is vital because they are the link to the external YOT, family and other community professionals such as Social Workers. Whilst it is acknowledged that the young person is allocated a Personal Officer and has access to custody wing staff, these officers do not necessarily have an hour to spend in discussion with the young person. The Key Worker will see the young person at least weekly and in addition, the young person can request to see the Key Worker if they need someone to speak to.

Throughout the custodial sentence there are regular DTO review meetings during which progress and resettlement are discussed. If it is identified that the young person may have resettlement issues such as no accommodation, no education, training or employment, family issues or if they need any further additional support then consideration will be given to an Integrated Resettlement Support (IRS) programme. This is a voluntary programme which enables the YOT to provide additional work with the young person throughout the licence period but also after the licence expiry date.

Once a young person is released from custody they will receive a home visit from their YOT Supervising Officer within five working days. The contact a young person has with their Supervising Officer on release is dependent on their licence conditions. If they are on an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) licence then the ISS programme is a

minimum of 25 hours per week. The standard contact for a young person on a DTO licence is two contacts per week for the first three months and then fortnightly thereafter. To support the young person on a licence then additional conditions can be applied, for example non associations, exclusion zones and curfews.

Within the first ten days of their release from custody a community review should take place. Attendance is required from the professionals working with the young person in the community, the Key Worker from the custodial estate, the young person and their parent/carer. The purpose of this meeting is to review and give praise for any progress made but also to identify any gaps in services and look at how these can be addressed. Following the community review there are also regular Case Management Reviews chaired by a YOT Practice Manager, with all relevant parties. These meetings are important because if any issues are identified then relevant professionals can be tasked with actions and given a timescale of when any action points should be completed.

In some circumstances dependant on the young person's sentence and age then they may be transferred to the Probation Service prior to release. If this is a likely outcome for the young person then transition work should be implemented prior to them being transferred to Probation. For example, the Probation Officer attending the final DTO meeting with the YOT Supervising Officer to explain what the differences in practice are and also the differences in the services that will be provided. Having a hand over meeting will also provide the young person the opportunity to have any questions clarified.

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