

STRONG & SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 10
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Report of the Executive Director of Children’s Services

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RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN PETERBOROUGH

1. PURPOSE

To consider a list of priorities to support the development of the Restorative Justice Approach and make recommendations to Cabinet for inclusion in the budget.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. The Committee are asked to endorse the Restorative Approaches in Peterborough.
- ii. That Peterborough is to work towards becoming a Restorative Authority so that everyone who works with children, young people, families and with communities in Neighbourhood management, employ a restorative approach as a philosophy underpinning every aspect of their practice.
- iii. That the Cabinet is recommended to consider the requirement for additional resources during the development of the councils budget for 2010/11 along side other budget pressures.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In broad terms a “restorative approach” constitutes a different way of dealing with, and resolving, conflict. This type of approach puts repairing the harm caused to relationships and victims over and above assigning blame and dispensing punishment. It is not, and should not be seen as, a “soft” approach. Indeed, the process is both challenging and effective as it confronts those who have caused harm with the real impact of what they have done from the point of view of those who have been ‘harmed.’ Everyone affected by harmful behaviour, a conflicting situation or a problem has the opportunity to talk about what has happened, explain how they have been affected by it, describe how they are currently feeling about the situation and what they want to do to repair the harm caused. Restorative approaches seek at all times to restore the ‘relationship’ between people when it has been damaged by inappropriate, anti-social or offending behaviour. In terms of influencing future behaviour the impact of a restorative approach can be highly effective.

3.2 Restorative Justice is a system which has been used worldwide and is based on three principles – responsibility, reparation and re-integration.

There are different elements to Restorative approaches: there can be a full restorative conference; shuttle mediation; circle time; family group conferencing; and community circles. Restorative Justice is also being used successfully outside the Criminal Justice System, in schools, workplaces, care homes, health services and in communities for example,

3.3 Restorative Justice Works

Government research shows that Restorative Justice is wanted by approximately 50% of victims and helps those victims who choose to take part by reducing stress and the desire for revenge.

Restorative Justice also helps offenders. UK trials have proven that Restorative Justice reduces the number of crimes offenders commit (results indicate that an average of 27% fewer crimes are committed by offenders who took part in a restorative justice conference).

Reductions in reoffending lead to savings of up to £8 for every £1 spent delivering the Restorative Justice Service (source Professor Joanne Shapland RJC brief of the Ministry of Justice Research into Restorative Justice 2008). Restorative practices are the most evaluated practice in the criminal justice system.

It has also been used alongside other initiatives to support and engage with families and work in communities.

3.4 Current Restorative Activity in Peterborough

Currently, there is some work through the Youth Offending Service, including working with victims of crime, working with offenders on victim empathy, direct and indirect reparation work and restorative conferences. The majority of the Safer Schools Officers are trained in restorative approaches and use this in their work with young people, families and school staff.

There was also a pilot and role out of restorative practices in Jack Hunt School, which used a whole school restorative approach which includes circle time, restorative conversations and restorative meetings/conferences.

3.5 Restorative Practices in other areas

Many other areas have taken the lead/leap in piloting and developing restorative practices in varying formats, whether it is focused on schools, issues within the community; developed with young people in the community, peer mentoring etc. Please see **Appendix 2** for examples and results used elsewhere.

4. Proposal

To develop restorative practices in Peterborough, the first step is to pilot restorative practices. The restorative approaches vision for Peterborough is to:

- Work restoratively with our partners and members of the public to improve services, resolve conflicts - including anti social behaviour and to enhance relationships within communities.
- Help achieve the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes for Peterborough Children and young people through working with them using Restorative Approaches.
- To make restorative approaches sustainable in Peterborough through the development of a restorative approaches business/training unit.

4.1 Using the restorative approach we have the potential to:

- Provide an early intervention preventing young people from going on to a career of crime
- Reduce re-offending by changing behaviour
- Reduce Crime and Anti Social Behaviour
- Enable victims to get better closure on an offence
- Increase the quality of life in communities
- Reduce repeat calls for police assistance

4.2 The first step is to set up and establish a Restorative Approaches Steering Group (RASG) of senior staff including Police. This would ensure 'buy in' from the top down and sharing the vision and development of restorative practices. It would also ensure the key areas of the business were included in restorative practices. It would be responsible for development of restorative practices and monitoring the key areas of work in particular the three phase pathfinders.

4.3 The proposal is for a three phased pilot:

- **Phase 1** would be to have three pathfinder projects – one focusing on anti social behaviour/neighbourhood issues etc - working alongside the Safer Peterborough Partnership anti social behaviour team and neighbourhood management team.
- The second pathfinder would be to extend restorative practices to one other secondary school
- The third pathfinder would be as part of the Family Recovery Project to use restorative practices to engage and work with families
- **Phase 2** would be the evaluation and assessment of the three pathfinders and feeding back into the Restorative Approaches Steering Group.
- **Phase 3** would be the development and roll out of restorative practices citywide.

4.4 There would need to be development and co-ordination of the initial work. A co-ordinator/project lead is necessary to roll out the initial action plan, to engage and work with partners. Also, to co-ordinate and deliver the training (this may need to be done alongside external consultants). This could pull together the few existing 'restorative practice champions' to establish a 'virtual' restorative approaches operations team who could then be utilised for support and encouragement for new projects. This role would also have responsibility for the quality assurance of all restorative work in Peterborough to ensure that it is of a high professional standard.

4.5 Costs estimated for one year are approximately £60,000 (not verified by JE). Plus 'Train the Trainer' costs of approximately £1,000 per course.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1.1 **Performance:** the impact on performance would be against NI 111, a local area priority; the DCSF has set a target of reducing the numbers of first time entrants by 2% year on year. Also, if used in the community it could impact on NI 17 perceptions of how anti social behaviour is seen by the public and NI 121, dealing with local concerns regarding anti social behaviour and crime issues by local councils and Police.

5.2 **Value for money:** Restorative practices are an 'invest to save' process by investing in the awareness raising, having a Peterborough restorative centre/team and providing training for staff and partners. This also works alongside the Neighbourhood Management, Integrated Services and Locality Agenda to ensure that needs are met early rather wait until problems escalate. The costs for the outlay of the project could be recoverable against the saving of young people not getting involved in the criminal justice system; not being excluded from school and needing alternative provision; time, effort and manpower in dealing with anti social behaviour issues; and the cost of young people who are Tier 4, not needing intensive intervention etc.

5.3 **Funding for restorative approaches:** – funding will need to be sourced through Children's Services, schools, the Youth Offending Service, Safer Peterborough Partnership, and Operations Directorate – observing the financial constraints and pressures that Peterborough City Council and partners are currently under.

6 CONSULTATION

The issues raised in this paper have been discussed and debated at the Youth Offending Service and with the Director of Childrens Services, and the Safer Peterborough Partnership Community Safety Manager. Also the Director of Operations has also seen this proposal.

7. NEXT STEPS

To ask the Committee to agree to the proposal of a RASG and the pathfinder pilots. Plus support re the budgetary needs.

To bring a delivery plan in January/February to the Scrutiny Committee.

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Youth Crime Action Plan Update

For those Committee members who do not have access to the internet please call Sheila Kelly on 01733 864682 for a copy of this very informative report which is 37 pages long.

Restorative justice: Helping to meet local needs

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/rj-local-needs-guidance?view=Binary>

Useful websites

Restorative justice consortium – [restorative justice.org](http://restorativejustice.org) and International institute of restorative practices.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Glossary of Restorative Terms

Appendix 2 - What's happening elsewhere?

Appendix 3 - Restorative Pathfinder Vision for Peterborough

Glossary of Restorative Terms

Restorative Conference – is a well prepared ‘meeting’ of all those who have been affected by conflict or harm. It is a formally, structured, process that gives all participants the opportunity to tell their stories and talk about how they and others have been affected. Everyone gets the opportunity to be heard, to listen to others and to work together to find solutions to the harm.

Reparation - using either direct or indirect reparation:

- Direct Reparation – appropriate reparation provided directly to the victim (usually work of a practical nature i.e. gardening, cleaning off graffiti),
- Indirect Reparation – where the ‘work’ relates to reparation activity in the community and where there is no direct victim involvement.

Circle Meetings / Circle Time - a process which encourages the use of many restorative skills and values – mutual respect, empathy, active listening, impartiality, non-judgemental acceptance of difference and win-win problem solving. Circle meetings can be used with young people to begin a lesson, as a morning meeting, to close the day or at anytime. They can be used for team building, developing emotional literacy, celebration, planning new projects, as well as dealing with behavioural issues and conflicts. They can be used by staff teams (whole staff as well as smaller groupings like departments and faculties) to build trust and communication, and a sense of shared purpose.

Community conferencing - a meeting involving members of a community who come together to resolve a conflict facilitated by an impartial third party in a safe and positive way used particularly to deal with anti social behaviour.

Family Group Conference (FGC) - a group meeting/conference where extended family are invited to come together with the aim of resolving conflict or behavioural issues. It can involve social workers, education welfare officers etc. There are two main forms of Family Group Conferencing, which were first introduced in New Zealand in 1989, based on traditional Maori methods and later used in other countries, including the UK. In the ‘welfare’ Family Group Conferencing, a young person is invited to attend with his or her extended family and other persons who have a significant place in his life. After the problems have been outlined and agencies have explained what resources are available, the family is allowed private time, with no one else present, to work out an action plan for the young person. The ‘youth justice’ Family Group Conference is similar, except that the victim is also invited to attend, with a supporter if desired, and the action plan often contains an element of reparation.

What's happening elsewhere?

Hull: Restorative practices in Hull officially began in August 2007, with the creation of Hull Centre for Restorative Practices (HCRP). The centre comprises of four practitioners, including a Project Consultant, a Lead Trainer and Families Project Co-Coordinator.

They have worked on the proactive, community and relationship building side of Restorative Practices and not just focussed on the reactive. They have made a conscious decision to make building, maintaining and repairing relationships at the heart of everything that is done in Hull.

Initial findings from Hull in the schools where it has been launched are: -

Phase 1

- 44.5% reduction in FTE (fixed term exclusion)
- 59.4% reduction in incidents of physical abuse
- 62.5% reduction in total days staff absence (A saving of over £60 000 in 8 months)

Phase 2

- 80.6% reduction in FTE days (fixed term exclusion)
- 79.4% reduction in internal supervision at lunchtime
- 94.6% reduction in incidents referred to SLT/HT

Durham: the vision for Durham, initially to establish a common understanding of the principles across the community of County Durham, was to establish the practice of Restorative Practice/Approaches throughout the County Council and Police force, as the way they work with employees and the way in which they engage with the public.

Having been established within the practices of residential care, they are now moving steadily into fostering and across the 'looked after' social work teams. They have undertaken training with the community police officers.

Restorative approaches are about to be delivered in two pilot schools in County Durham as direct result of the success of the RJ work undertaken within Residential Services. The grant bid for work in schools was made by Residential Services and the lead remains with Residential Service Manager.

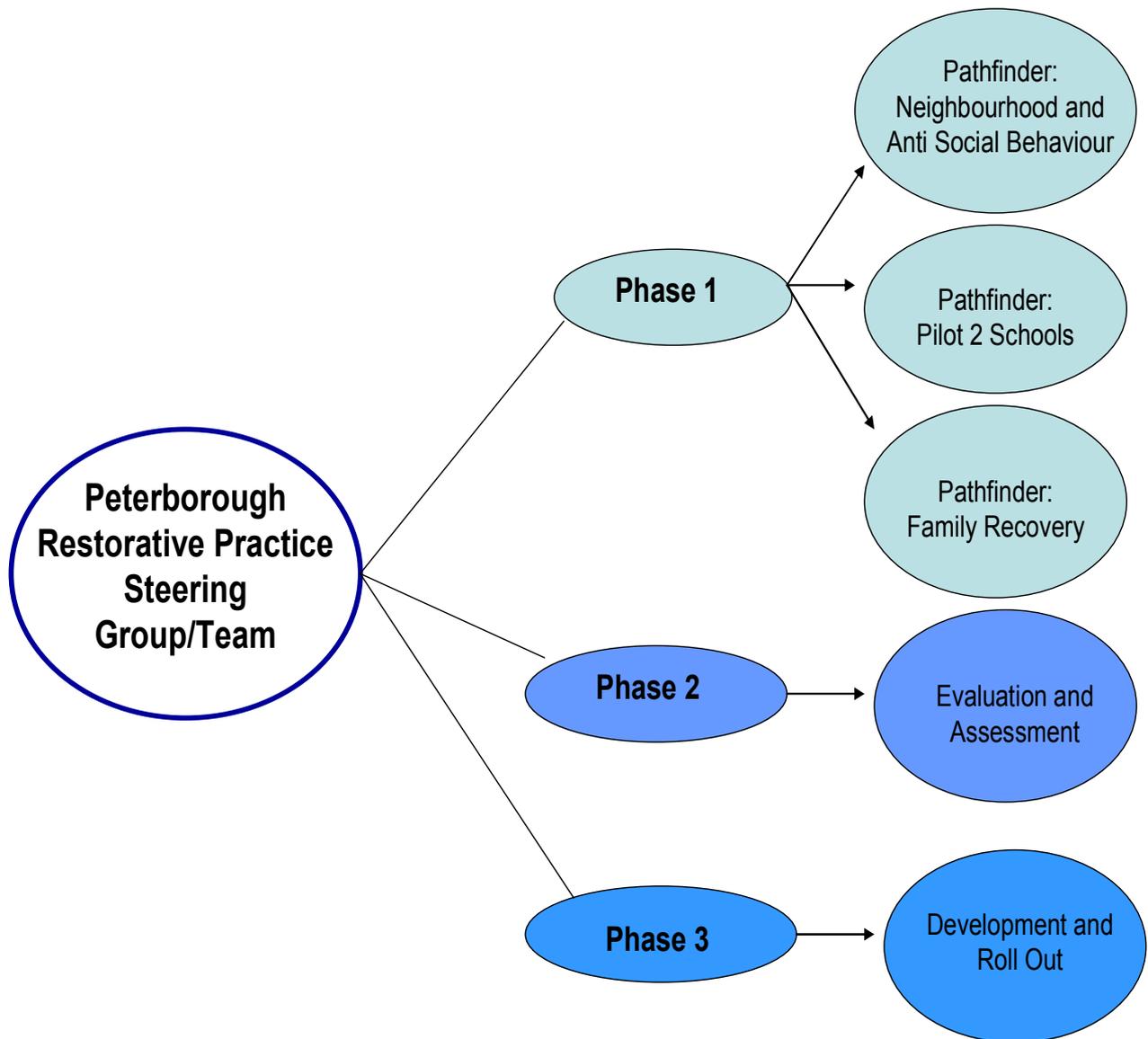
The success of RJ in Residential Services has led to joint work with the teenage foster carers, local Youth Offending teams and community police officers. They have come together in a pilot to look at how difficult situations, through a restorative approach, could assist. Only recently, Residential Services have been approached by a school to help in a particular racist incident.

Lancashire: in Lancashire, they have focused on the joint belief that building positive relationships is at the heart of emotionally healthy and productive communities, and that all children, young people and families have the right to live lives where conflict is resolved in a safe and secure way. They have developed through different work in the communities. They have established the Lancashire Restorative Justice Centre which incorporates family group conferencing, community conferencing, victim offender mediation, and restorative peer interventions.

Bristol: two years ago Bristol launched RAiS (Restorative Practices in Schools) which was focused on delivering restorative practices in schools. Interim findings have shown a reduction in temporary and fixed term exclusions. The schools which have achieved the most positive results are the ones that have gone for a full school approach.

To summarise; many other councils and areas in the UK are realising and identifying the benefits of restorative practice and taking it forward.

Restorative Pathfinder Vision for Peterborough



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