

Consultation on standards and ratings for inspecting youth offending services

HM Inspectorate of Probation

08 November 2017



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Foreword

Earlier this year we consulted¹ on changes we want to make to the way we inspect. We want to do more to drive improvements in youth offending services, where they are needed. Briefly, we intend to inspect YOTs at least every four years, with some inspected more frequently based upon a targeted, intelligence-led approach. We will underpin our inspections with published standards and we will cover a broader range of YOT work, including out of court disposals. We plan to conduct some inspections jointly with others due to the holistic nature of youth offending work. We will rate the quality of services that we find.

Our proposals were broadly welcomed² by those responding to our consultation, and the large majority favoured our plans for standards and for ratings. Since then we have been working with youth offending staff and others to develop draft standards by consensus. I am heartened by the level of engagement from so many in recent months. Over 250 people attended the workshops we have held across England and Wales. They have helped refine our draft standards. Thank you, all those involved.

In this consultation we are asking your views on the way we intend to structure standards, and on the draft standards themselves. I hope you find that they are pitched at the right level, and focused on the things that make a difference to the quality of youth offending services. They reflect in large part the enduring aims of youth justice.

We have also been considering how best to rate youth offending services, and I am grateful to leaders at the Care Quality Commission, Ofsted and other inspectorates for their wise advice. We are suggesting a composite rating for each inspection and also sub-ratings, so that those inspected can see where they have done well and where they can improve, in order to improve the quality of the service they are delivering.

We would like to hear your views on the detail of our proposals, and I hope you will take the opportunity to respond.



Dame Glenys Stacey
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

¹ <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/05/HMI-Probation-statutory-consultation-30-March-2017.pdf>

² [http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/05/Our-response-to-statutory-consultation-22-June-17 .pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/05/Our-response-to-statutory-consultation-22-June-17.pdf)

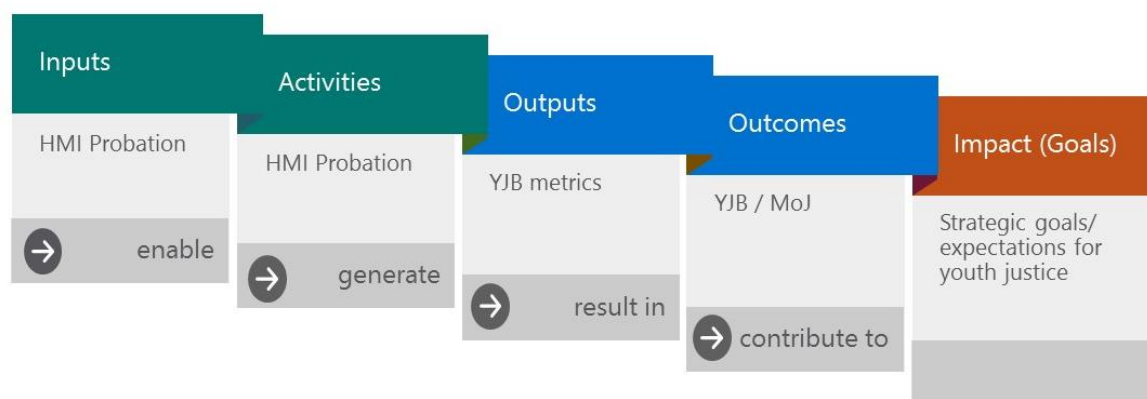
1. Background

- 1.1. Good quality youth offending services can make a big difference to children and young people, to the community at large, and to the criminal justice system. If children turn away from offending, then the demands on the criminal justice system are reduced, of course. But what is more, those children increase their life chances, and are more likely to be able to contribute usefully to society. Families are strengthened, and we are all protected and able to lead happier, safer lives. These things matter to us all.
- 1.2. We generally find that youth offending services perform to a good level, although there are inconsistencies and areas for improvement. Case assessment scores improved over the course of our last inspection programme, and governance, leadership, management and partnership were judged to be more influential than ever in delivering a quality service.
- 1.3. We have decided to change the way we inspect youth offending services, to do more to drive improvements in those areas of youth justice delivery where they are most needed, and to encourage good practice in all youth offending teams. Ministers have agreed to changes we at HMI Probation intend to make.
- 1.4. This consultation covers the detail of two aspects: the underpinning standards we want to use as we inspect, and the rating system we propose. We plan to start using both standards and ratings in the spring of 2018. The consultation period closes on 08/12/2017.
- 1.5. This consultation does not cover our proposals for changes to the way we inspect probation services. We are running a parallel consultation on our plans to develop these inspections.

Our role in overseeing youth offending services

- 1.6. Youth Offending Teams ('YOTs') are regulated through a combination of independent inspection, performance monitoring by the Youth Justice Board ('YJB') and local authority scrutiny arrangements.
- 1.7. The YJB monitors performance of the three main strategic **outcome** measures for youth offending services in the areas of reducing reoffending, first time entrants and the use of custody. Local authorities oversee the performance of their own youth justice services through the scrutiny of their youth justice management board
- 1.8. We at HMI Probation are focused on **inputs and activities**. Without good quality inputs (such as professional staff and comprehensive services) and activities (such as case assessment and effective interventions) youth offending services are less likely to meet their aims.
- 1.9. The figure overleaf sets out the respective oversight roles.

Figure one: the oversight model for youth offending services



What is changing?

- 1.10. As we have done in the past, we will deliver most of our youth offending inspections as a single agency, with a small number each year undertaken with partner inspectorates. We will also continue to conduct thematic inspections and participate in joint inspections with other inspectorates, as now. We are not changing HMI Probation's primary role or focus. Instead, we intend to change how frequently we inspect individual YOTs, and to rate YOTs on each inspection. We will introduce new standards, to underpin our inspections and ratings. And for the first time, our inspections will cover a wider breadth of work done routinely by all YOTs.
- 1.11. We have previously inspected youth offending services as part of a rolling programme of inspection, with individual YOTs inspected every five years or so. In spring 2018, we will move to more frequent inspection, with selection decisions taken based on a set of published criteria, such as performance data and work volumes. Applying these criteria, some YOTs will be inspected every two years, but the majority will be inspected less often; at least every four years.
- 1.12. We will aim to inspect YOTs about every four years, with some inspected more frequently, We think it would be exceptional for us to inspect any YOT more than once every two years.
- 1.13. In our routine inspections of YOTs, we inspect their quality of work in cases where there has been a court disposal, a hearing before the court. However, a notable and increasing proportion of YOTs' work is in cases where the matter has been dealt with out of court. With those cases not inspected, we do not get a full enough picture of the quality of youth offending services. From spring 2018 our inspections will include a sample of out of court disposal cases.
- 1.14. In those inspections we have conducted with partner agencies, we have made judgements about YOT governance, leadership and partnership arrangements. With the benefit of underpinning standards, we intend to rate these dimensions of YOTs in all our routine inspections, whether or not we are inspecting jointly with others.

2. Developing proposed standards

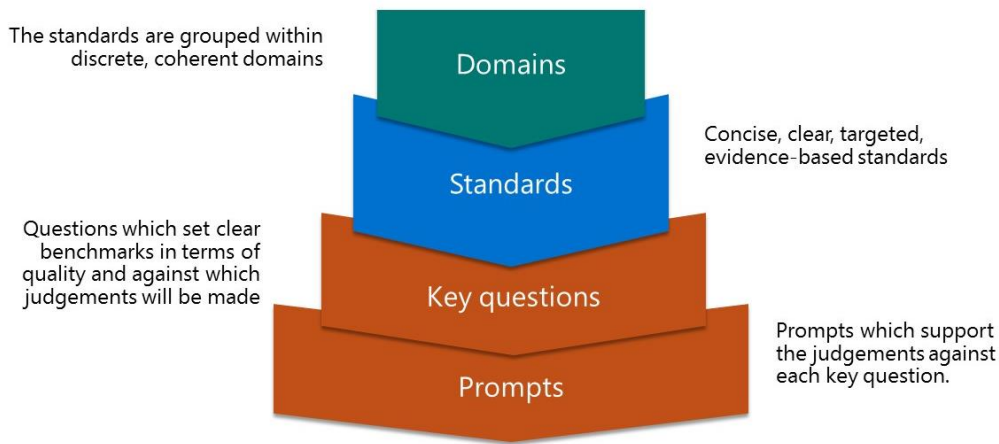
- 2.1. We started our work on standards with a set of principles that we think good standards should meet. They are set out in Annex A.
- 2.2. We then considered the enduring aims for youth offending services and reviewed international and national standards and rules. We also reviewed our own standards and benchmarks, and considered the approaches adopted by other Inspectorates and Regulators, including HMI Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (PEEL assessments), HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (Area Assurance Programme), HMI Prisons (Expectations), the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Ofsted and Ofqual. Our focus was upon identifying approaches that best capture the essence of quality.
- 2.3. In developing draft organisational delivery standards, we studied a range of models and frameworks (e.g. EFQM, Galbraith Star, McKinsey 7S) and sought advice from an independent Organisational Design expert. We reflected on our past experience of inspecting operational arrangements and leadership. We considered our more recent experiences in our Full Joint Inspection Programme. We considered carefully the strengths and weakness we have found on inspection.
- 2.4. As we began to consider how best to structure standards, we spoke with academics in the field, and with other regulators and inspectorates. We developed a proposed structure for our standards, and some early draft standards, keeping in mind the need for our standards to support our inspection judgements.
- 2.5. We then ran six workshops with staff from YOTs, local authorities, the YJB and the MoJ attending. We worked with Clinks³ to run further workshops with the voluntary sector. Details of the workshops are set out in Annex B. We wanted to see the extent to which we could build a common view of the standards expected of youth offending services. We found a lot of common ground. With the help of those attending we have been able to fine tune our draft standards.
- 2.6. We are proposing service delivery standards based upon the well-established and recognised ASPIRE model for case supervision (Assessment, Sentence Planning, Implementation, Review and Evaluation). The standards will apply to all providers of youth offending services.
- 2.7. Our proposed standards are based on established models and frameworks, and we believe they are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. A summary of this evidence and learning is set out in Annex C.
- 2.8. We set out overleaf the way we intend to structure the standards.

³ Clinks supports, represents and campaigns for the voluntary sector working with offenders (<https://www.clinks.org/>).

3. The standards framework

- 3.1. There is no one way to structure standards. The regulators and inspectorates we have looked at each do it differently, but they each tend to group standards together in a sensible way to reflect the industry they work with, and the key things they do. All have standards relating to the way organisations they inspect are run, and many have these in a separate group to the standards relating to the industry product or service. We are proposing such an approach.
- 3.2. Our draft standards are grouped into domains, with each standard underpinned by key questions and prompts. All the key questions and prompts have a binary yes or no response. The framework will be supported by inspection guidance materials, supporting reliable and valid judgements.

Figure two: the way we propose to structure standards



- 3.3. We are proposing three domains. Domain One covers how well the organisation is led, managed and set up. Domains Two and Three cover the quality of work in individual cases, with Domain Two focusing upon court disposals and Domain Three focusing upon out of court disposals. These two domains are structured so that we will be able to enable to report locally and (with consolidated data) nationally on the extent to which key aims of youth offending services are being met, as well as reporting against each standard.

Will the framework or the standards change?

- 3.4. We will be keeping the framework and the standards under review, and we will evaluate how well they work as we inspect. We envisage that the standards framework will endure over time. We expect to always have standards that cover the way the organisations we inspect are run (Domain One) and standards that cover the quality of work in individual cases (Domains Two and Three).
- 3.5. We are likely to make changes to some individual prompts, or even the key questions - as we learn from applying them, on inspection. If and when we do that, we will publish the changes on our website. If we propose to make any significant changes to the standards themselves in any of the domains, we will consult before doing so.

Figure three: our proposed standards framework



Our proposed standards

3.6. The complete framework of standards, key questions and prompts that we propose is attached at Annex D. The framework is set out as follows:

1. Domain heading

1.1 Standard heading

Standard text

1.1.1 Key question


a) Prompts

- 3.7. We are proposing a new set of inspection standards that reflect the high-level expectations government and the public have of youth offending services. They will form the basis for transparent, evidence-based and independent inspection.
- 3.8. We know from experience that there is a close relationship between good strategic and operational management and leadership, and the quality of delivery in individual cases. One leads to the other. Domain One standards will cover these pre-requisites, and Domains Two and Three will cover enduring expectations of youth offending services: supporting desistance, protecting the public and keeping the child or young person safe.
- 3.9. The number of key questions differ across the domains, as the content and substance differ. We explain how we will use the answers we find (on inspection) to the key questions and prompts later in this consultation document.
- 3.10. We want our standards, key questions and prompts to be coherent, sufficiently comprehensive and balanced. They must also be sufficiently discrete, one from another and they must be workable: they must support fair and transparent inspection judgements. The greater the number of prompts underpinning a key question, the more difficult it becomes to balance them into a single judgement, and we have taken the view that no key question should have more than ten prompts. Some have as few as two.
- 3.11. Please read our proposed standards, key questions and prompts and let us have your views on the following questions:

Question 1	Does the standards framework cover the key areas that contribute to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If not, what is missing?
Question 2	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If so, which ones?
Question 3	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently precise? If so, which ones?
Question 4	Are any of the proposed prompts unrealistic? If so, which ones?
Question 5	Are any of the proposed prompts difficult to address at the individual YOT level? If so, which ones?

4. Rating youth offending services

- 4.1. No one categorisation is used in the criminal justice sphere, and so there is no one established model for ratings. We propose a four-point ratings system (outstanding; good; requires improvement; inadequate). Similar systems are used by regulators and inspectorates such as CQC and Ofsted. The public is familiar with these categories and knows broadly what they mean.
- 4.2. We propose to have an overall (composite) rating for each YOT, derived from individual ratings at the standard level. Composite ratings are common in other spheres and they are used in the criminal justice arena by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. We believe that an overall (composite) rating for each inspection will best drive improvements where needed. We have seen that approach work in other inspectorates. An overall rating will provide a prime measure of the quality of youth offending services, complementing any output and outcome measures established by government.
- 4.3. We also propose ratings at the standard level. They should enable providers of youth offending services to see clearly where they are performing well and where they can improve, and so improve the quality of service and any future overall rating.
- 4.4. A visual representation of mock ratings is set out below.

Overall rating		Good 
1	Organisational delivery	
1.1	Governance and leadership	Good
1.2	Staff	Good
1.3	Partnerships and services	Outstanding
1.4	Information and facilities	Requires improvement
2	Court disposals	
2.1	Assessment	Good
2.2	Planning	Good
2.3	Implementation and delivery	Good
2.4	Reviewing	Requires improvement
3	Out of court disposals	
3.1	Assessment	Requires improvement
3.2	Planning	Good
3.3	Implementation and delivery	Good
3.4	Joint working	Outstanding

- 4.5. When we inspect, we propose to determine the ratings for each standard using our inspection judgements in relation to the key questions, underpinned by the prompts. We know from studies across differing disciplines that judgements

(such as rating judgements) are likely to be more reliable and valid if the way they are made is structured, and that is what we propose.

Domain Two and Three ratings

- 4.6. Domain Two and Three ratings will be driven by the results of our inspection of individual cases. We inspect cases by interrogating the full case records, and interviewing the relevant case manager, and we will continue to do that.
- 4.7. Yes/no judgements at the key question level will be made by inspectors in each case, informed by the prompts. Those judgements will not be individually rated. Ratings will be at the standard level, and will be based upon the consolidated results (at key question level) of all cases inspected in the relevant domain.
- 4.8. For the consolidated results, we are not proposing to change the four performance bandings we have used in past years:
- Minority: <50%
 - Too few: 50-64%
 - Reasonable majority: 65-79%
 - Large majority: 80%+
- 4.9. We believe there is value in keeping the performance bandings matched to that of previous years. In this way, we are not increasing or decreasing our expectations of the quality of youth offending services, but maintaining our long-established view.
- 4.10. For each standard, the rating will be aligned to the lowest banding at the key question level, recognising that each key question is an integral part of the standard.

Lowest banding (key question level)	Rating (standard)
Minority: <50%	Inadequate
Too few: 50-64%	Requires improvement
Reasonable majority: 65-79%	Good
Large majority: 80%+	Outstanding

- 4.11. For example, implementation and delivery will be rated as outstanding when there is a sufficient focus on all three key questions (desistance, keeping the child or young person safe and keeping other people safe) across a 'large majority' (80%+) of the cases examined. But if the banding is a 'reasonable majority' (65-79%) in relation to one of the three key questions, then we will rate implementation and delivery as good rather than outstanding.
- 4.12. We will aim for case samples for each inspection that will give us an 80% confidence level, in statistical terms. That should give all great confidence in our findings.

- 4.13. However, to be sure of our findings it is always important that inspectors form similar judgements in similar cases. We conduct training and quality management exercises now, to check and if necessary refine our inspectors' consistency of judgement. In anticipation of the changes we are making, we are intensifying our focus on training, quality assurance and quality control. We are recruiting a Head of Methodology and Quality Management and a Head of Inspection Training, to give these matters continuing attention.

Domain One ratings

- 4.14. We propose that Domain One ratings for each inspection will not be driven by our findings in individual cases, although we will always check the correlation between domains and the need for further interrogation. Instead, the evidence we need for Domain One ratings will come from elsewhere: primarily from data, documents and evidence submitted by the organisation, and through interviews with leaders, managers, staff, the children and young people themselves and other relevant stakeholders.
- 4.15. Domain One ratings will be proposed by the lead inspector in each case. It will be a single judgement, using all the relevant sources of evidence. The evidence obtained in advance of the fieldwork will be reviewed to make preliminary assessments against the prompts and key questions, as well as identifying gaps in the evidence and thus lines of enquiry for the fieldwork.
- 4.16. All regulators and inspectors find that in rating organisational delivery (Domain One here) it is important to have mechanisms for making sure that judgements are sufficiently consistent across all inspections. Each does this in a different way. These mechanisms are especially important in the early days of any new inspection regime, to make sure that the right benchmarks are set. We are proposing that provisional Domain One ratings are proposed by the lead inspector in each case, and that they are each reviewed in a timely way by a new HMI Probation Ratings Panel.
- 4.17. Following the fieldwork and review of all the evidence, an HMI Probation ratings panel will convene. The panel will be chaired by our Director of Operations. The lead inspector will propose ratings to the panel in a structured process, for verification. It will be the panel's job to ensure that ratings are evidence based and fully reflect the balance of evidence and issues, and that they are sufficiently consistent, across inspections.

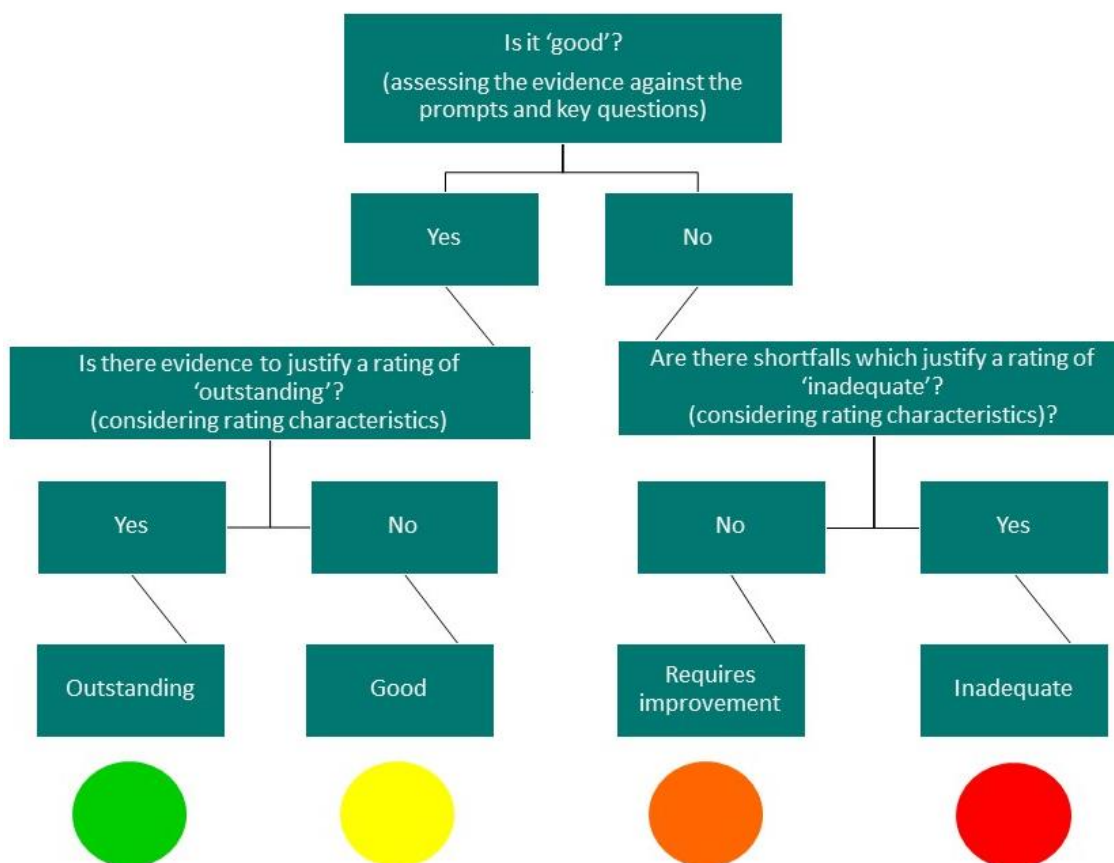
Outstanding and Inadequate performance

- 4.18. The way our proposed standards, key questions and prompts are worded indicates broadly what will result in a 'good' rating, for the three domains. For Domains Two and Three, the ratings will be determined by case assessment results and the percentage of positive answers to the key questions.
- 4.19. We think providers of youth offending services will want to know broadly what will characterise an 'outstanding' and 'inadequate' judgement at Domain One level, where the approach is inevitably different. We propose publishing characteristics to show what we think should guide a lead inspector to recommend an outstanding or inadequate rating for each of the four Domain One standards.

4.20. An example of such characteristics for the governance and leadership standard is set out in Annex E. We would like your views on the level of detail we are suggesting, and the broad level we are proposing for the outstanding or inadequate rating. Importantly, these characteristics provide a framework to support the lead inspector's recommendation rather than being a checklist; we would not expect every characteristic to be present for the corresponding rating to be given.

4.21. We envisage the decision-making process as shown in figure four below.

Figure four: coming to an outstanding or inadequate rating for the Domain One standards



Question 6	Does the example of rating characteristics include the right amount of detail and appropriately describe 'outstanding' and 'inadequate'? Why/why not?
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Overall provider rating

4.22. Straightforward scoring rules will be used to generate the overall provider rating. Each of the 12 standards will be scored on a 0 – 3 scale in which 'inadequate' = 0, 'requires improvement' = 1, 'good' = 2 and 'outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score from 0-36, which will be banded to produce the overall rating as follows:

- 0-6 = Inadequate
- 7-18 = Requires improvement
- 19-30 = Good
- 31-36 = Outstanding

- 4.23. These bandings are aligned to the tipping points between the ratings at the standard level, e.g. an overall rating of 'good' is produced through seven standard ratings of 'good' and five standard ratings of 'requires improvement'.
- 4.24. To account for all potential nuances, we will allow for some professional judgement to depart from the scoring rules when necessary (e.g. when the standard ratings are close to the rating boundaries or very diverse). And such departure will be agreed through the HMI Probation ratings panel, with the reasons being clearly set out, aiding transparency and full understanding.
- 4.25. We are not currently intending to include any weightings in the scoring rules. The rationale is that all parts of the standards framework are strongly linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, and we have restricted ourselves to those that are most essential. Our view is that providers need to focus across all of the standards, and we do not want to distort behaviours in any undesirable ways. Furthermore, the underpinning evidence is stronger in terms of the inclusion of the standards/key questions rather than their relative weightings.
- 4.26. We will, however, keep this approach under review and consider the need for any weightings in future years, reflecting upon our inspection findings.

Question 7	Should any parts of the standards framework be weighted more heavily within the ratings system? If so, which parts?
Question 8	Is there anything in our proposed standards or the way we suggest we will rate youth offending services that you think could lead to undesirable behaviours, outputs or outcomes? If so, please tell us.

5. Impact assessment

Regulatory

- 5.1. We intend to inspect YOTs at least every four years, with some inspected more frequently based upon a targeted, intelligence-led approach. We believe that this is a proportionate approach and will maximise the use of our resources.
- 5.2. The quality of youth offending services is important for all, and we believe that our proposals will help to drive improvements where they are needed.
- 5.3. There is a clear need for a comprehensive set of standards exemplifying what good youth offending work looks like, helping to focus attention. For the first time, we will have a set of standards covering organisational delivery, court disposals and out of court disposals.
- 5.4. We have seen in other areas how an overall (composite) rating for a provider can drive improvements. The ratings at the standard level will enable YOTs to see clearly where they are performing well and where they can improve, and so improve the quality of service and future overall ratings.

Equalities

- 5.5. The standards highlight the need for a personalised and responsive approach in each case, whilst a number of the underlying prompts require providers to consider diversity factors and personal circumstances.
- 5.6. It is thus clear within the standards framework that YOTs must have a good understanding of each child and young person, recognising their diversity and their different needs and expectations. The need to pay attention to issues of disproportionality is also highlighted.
- 5.7. The framework will be supported by inspection guidance documents, which will include material relating to specific sub-groups.
- 5.8. We will collect data on protected characteristics during our inspections, enabling us to periodically report in an aggregated way on the delivery for differing sub-groups. We will also use this data to inform the consideration of thematic inspection options.

6. How to respond

The full list of consultation questions is set out below:

Question 1	Does the standards framework cover the key areas that contribute to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If not, what is missing?
Question 2	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If so, which ones?
Question 3	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently precise? If so, which ones?
Question 4	Are any of the proposed prompts unrealistic? If so, which ones?
Question 5	Are any of the proposed prompts difficult to address at the individual YOT level? If so, which ones?
Question 6	Does the example of rating characteristics include the right amount of detail and appropriately describe 'outstanding' and 'inadequate'? Why/why not?
Question 7	Should any parts of the standards framework be weighted more heavily within the ratings system? If so, which parts?
Question 8	Is there anything in our proposed standards or the way we suggest we will rate youth offending services that you think could lead to undesirable behaviours, outputs or outcomes? If so, please tell us.
Question 9	Please do provide any further comments on the standards and ratings proposed.

The deadline for responses is Friday 8th December.

Responses can be submitted online here:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-hmi-probation/consultations/>

Alternatively, responses can be sent to:

Claire Fallows
Data Officer
HM Inspectorate of Probation
1st Floor
Manchester Civil Justice Centre
1 Bridge Street West
Manchester
M3 3FX
Email: claire.fallows@hmiprobation.gov.uk

As part of your response, please ensure that:

- You state clearly who the submission is from, i.e. whether from yourself in a personal capacity or sent on behalf of an organisation.
- You include a brief description of yourself/your organisation.
- You state clearly if you wish your submission to be confidential and/or you do not want to be contacted with follow-up enquiries (see confidentiality statement below).

Confidentiality statement

The information you send HM Inspectorate of Probation may be published in full or in a summary of responses.

All information in responses, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want your response to remain confidential, you should explain why confidentiality is necessary and your request will be acceded to only if it is appropriate in the circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding.

7. Next steps

A paper summarising the responses to this consultation will be published in due course. Our consultation on our standards and ratings for inspecting probation services is running in parallel and we will consider all responses together, paying attention to those areas in which the youth offending and probation standards/ratings should be aligned and where they should differ.

Our standards, inspection methods and ratings will be further developed through transitional inspections, tests and simulations in late 2017 and early 2018 before we go live with the new inspection programme in 2018/19.

Once the programme has launched, we will continue to work with providers and others to keep the inspection standards relevant, comprehensive and up-to-date.

Annex A: Guiding principles

The principles set out below have guided the structure, format and content of the standards, highlighting our desire to drive improvements, whilst at the same time meeting requirements of relevance, robustness and timeliness.

<i>Driving improvement</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. drive the right behaviours and improvements in outcomes, enabling providers to focus their attention.2. capture those key research findings and evidence based principles on what contributes to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, exemplifying what good youth offending work looks like.3. be achievable, but challenging where necessary.
<i>Relevance</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. be clear, unambiguous, easily understood by providers and seen as relevant to current delivery models and practice.5. be restricted to those standards that are most essential, ensuring that they are not unduly restrictive and leave scope for innovation.6. be sufficiently broad, covering organisational, workforce, inter-agency and practice elements.7. make use of existing national and international standards (including previous inspection criteria) where possible and desirable.8. be provider-neutral and likely to endure over time (while also being easily adjustable).
<i>Robustness</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. be balanced across domains which are sufficiently discrete and coherent.10. be concise and sufficiently precise for their intended purpose, supporting evaluation and legitimate claims of compliance and conformity.11. support objective, consistent judgments by inspectors and between inspections.
<i>Timeliness</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">12. support regular, cost-effective inspections.

Annex B: Building a consensus

In developing the standards, we have worked constructively with providers and others to build a common view of high quality youth offending services and what should be expected.

Six workshops were conducted with 220 attendees from YOTs, local authorities, the YJB and the MoJ. With the assistance of Clinks, a further four workshops were conducted with the voluntary and community sector. These workshops were held in London, Cardiff, Newcastle and Manchester and attended by a total of 40 individuals.

The findings from all these workshops have been collated and used to refine wording (e.g. strengthening links to desistance theory; highlighting engagement with the child/young person, parents/carers and significant others) and to identify those prompts deemed to be most essential, ensuring that they are grounded in current practice and thinking.

A series of meetings have been held with policy leads and operational delivery leads across the MoJ and YJB, which have included a review of the oversight model and respective roles. It has been recognised that our standards may not fully align with provisions set out elsewhere.

Any tension is not in itself unhealthy – quite the opposite. For transparency and to be clear for providers, we will *map* our standards against other expectations, but we will not *align* our standards with them in all senses. As an independent inspectorate, we wish to set standards that will support valid inspection and ratings, and that are focused on the quality of youth offending services.

Annex C: Underpinning evidence and learning

Organisational delivery

Governance and leadership

Organisational design models and frameworks, informed by reviews of the evidence and the latest learning and practical experience, consistently highlight the importance of governance and leadership to high levels of employee engagement and performance.

Leaders must set out a clear vision and strategy which is compelling and authentic. They should be empowering and visible, with regular two-way communication between leaders and employees at all levels. They must be aware of current and future challenges for the YOT, both short and long term, and be proactive in assessing risks and acting to prevent them, ensuring that appropriate mitigations are in place. Progress against the strategy must be proactively and regularly reviewed, with leaders continually striving to deliver and develop the strategy, adjusting mitigations where necessary.

The YOT operating model must allow for personalised delivery for children and young people – the evidence is clear that one-size-fits-all processes and interventions will not work. Effective partnership arrangements are crucial – enabling all to know what is expected of each other and to maximise the benefits for children and young people through the appropriate sharing of expertise, resources and knowledge.

Staff

The highest performing organisations ensure that its staff are engaged and have the necessary resources, competencies and support to do their jobs well and deliver a quality service.

Excessive pressure at work can have a significant adverse effect on employee health and wellbeing, and staff under unreasonable levels of stress work less effectively and make less effective decisions. An adequate staff complement is thus essential to a YOT's effectiveness and efficiency, with workloads needing to be assessed in a holistic way through an assessment of the demands of individual cases. Only if workloads are reasonable can individual members of staff achieve their best practice. Management must devise strategies to manage demand and to assign a reasonable and equitable workload to its staff, with people's skills and abilities matched to the demands of the specific roles.

Staff can only perform to the expected standards when appropriately supported and where the organisation is well-ordered and well-managed. Line managers need to invest time in regular supervisions and managing performance, having open and honest conversations with their staff. Employees should receive regular and constructive feedback, and be actively supported in striving for high performance at all times. In addition to reviewing individual performance, managers must assess whether staff are adequately resourced and supported in undertaking their work. Managers must also promote positive behaviours, with systems in place to enable and encourage them to deal with unacceptable behaviour.

Evaluations have identified the positive impact of staff training upon effective practice and outcomes. Tailored learning and development opportunities must be provided to enable employees to achieve their full potential, considering their differing tasks and responsibilities, and their stages of career development. In the highest performing organisations, employees are encouraged to develop and utilise their skills. They must know what support is available and how and when to access it, and be given opportunities to learn from identified good practices.

Strong organisations also recognise the achievements of their staff. There should be a culture of appreciation where people feel valued and are recognised for their efforts and performance. At the same time, the YOT must support staff in what can be extremely demanding and complex work. This should include encouragement, motivation, professional development and responsiveness to staff concerns.

Partnerships and services

To provide the range of services required, the YOT must have a clear understanding of their children and young people, recognising their diversity and their different needs and expectations. The children and young peoples' risks and needs must be the paramount consideration in deciding on the appropriateness of differing services, which, in combination, should provide a holistic package. As highlighted in the desistance literature, services should also build upon personal strengths and skills.

A comprehensive range of services requires a diverse range of professional skills and expertise, some of which are provided by partners and other providers and agencies. Notably, some cases involve safety and wellbeing concerns and/or risks to others. These concerns/risks are most effectively managed by agencies using their skills and knowledge in a complementary way.

Working with partners and other providers can also play an important part in addressing the complex needs of children and young people, supporting desistance. The YOT partnership should encourage and support community agencies to undertake their responsibilities to all children and young people. Where necessary, advice should be provided to help other agencies make sure that mainstream services are relevant and readily accessible.

Effective liaison with other providers and agencies requires clear and sound inter-agency arrangements, including, for example, referral processes. Information exchange and regular communication is particularly important – in relation to specific cases and in general, helping to influence policies and practice.

It is well established that the likelihood of achieving successful outcomes is impacted by quality of delivery, and that putting procedures in place to monitor quality will improve outcomes. Monitoring 'treatment integrity' is essential, ensuring that all services are delivered as intended, with remedial actions taken when necessary. Where gaps in service delivery are identified, YOT managers should be supported in their efforts to resolve them.

Information and facilities

The highest performing organisations ensure that its people have the necessary tools do their jobs well and deliver a quality service. YOT staff should have access to the necessary knowledge and information, facilitated through the YOT's ICT systems, with

clear policies and procedures in place to support them in making the decisions required in their specific roles.

The importance of physical environment must also be recognised. Well-designed safe and decent physical environments can support a rehabilitative culture through encouraging positive and open interactions, and can have a positive effect on staff morale, reducing stress and maintaining safety and security.

Strong organisations have in place: (i) efficient and robust quality assurance processes through which they can evidence the ongoing quality of the service; and (ii) a meaningful mix of performance measures, enabling efficiency and effectiveness (including whether the service is having the intended impact) to be monitored and reviewed. Performance trends should be analysed to understand current and potential capabilities and capacities and identify where development is needed to achieve the strategic goals.

Evidence must be used to learn and adapt, with the relevant learning translated across the YOT. Transparency is important, with the effectiveness of service delivery being evaluated, and successes and failures being openly communicated. The child or young person's experience of the value of the service received should be an important part of the YOT's learning, with attention being given to general themes that indicate both strengths and ways in which the quality of the service could be improved.

Case management

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of case supervision, with theoretical models and research findings consistently highlighting the importance of understanding the specific characteristics of the individual child or young person. Assessment should be well-informed, paying particular attention to the wider familial and societal context, engaging parents/carers and significant others as appropriate. It should identify factors linked to desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risks to others, as well as strengths and protective factors. Assessment should generate a holistic picture of the child or young person and the interactions between all of these factors. It is important to ensure that the information is not merely presented but a sufficiently comprehensive analysis of the different factors affecting the child or young person's life is conducted.

The process of assessment – how it is undertaken – is as important as the outcome. A wide range of sources of information should be utilised, including previous records and assessments and, in appropriate cases, information gained from other agencies or people who know the child or young person. This helps to build a rounded view of the child or young person, capturing the full range of risks and needs.

Research has highlighted the importance of engagement, not passive involvement, with the child or young person. Engaging the child or young person in the process of assessment provides the opportunity for them to feel listened to, meaningfully involved and supported in working out what they want to achieve. Giving the child or young person a voice and treating them with respect helps to build the one-to-one trusting personal relationships which can be a powerful vehicle for change.

Planning

There must be a strong and natural connection between assessment and planning, with the planning process specifying what is to be done about the needs and risks identified. The well-established principle of responsiveness requires that interventions and activities are delivered so that they are accessible to the individual child or young person and optimise their ability to engage in change, encouraging full participation. One-size-fits-all processes and interventions will not work.

Planning should be set in the wider familial and social context of the child or young person, involving parents/carers and significant others as appropriate. Key practitioners working across different agencies should also be involved where necessary, making appropriate links to other work which may be ongoing within these agencies. Research further demonstrates the importance of services and interventions being multi-modal, holistic and sequenced, with strengths and protective factors being reinforced and developed.

Objectives should be specific and measurable (so that progress can be monitored). They must also be achievable and realistic, setting out clear timescales. Where necessary, the plan should be broken down into a smaller number of 'steps' with realistic, short-term objectives. The child or young person may have multiple complex problems that cannot sensibly be tackled all at once and they may disengage if the work plan is over-ambitious.

As with assessment, a plan that the child or young person does not sufficiently understand or agree with is unlikely to be implemented. Practitioners should thus make efforts to engage the child or young person as an active participant and help them to set goals. Research evidence suggests that when the child or young person feels engaged, and the plan is drawn up collaboratively, they will be more likely to have a direct investment in achieving its outcomes. The language in the plan should be clear and easily understood, as well as making sure it avoids phrases which can label the child or young person in a way which confirms an offending identity.

Implementation and delivery

The child or young person should experience an integrated approach, with relationships, interventions, and services combining holistically to address their individual risks and needs. Service delivery should reflect the wider familial and social context of the child or young person, and sufficient emphasis should be placed on building upon strengths and enhancing protective factors. Responsivity needs to be maintained so that trusting relationships continue to build and delivery remains tailored to the individual. If the child or young person receives consistent and integrated support, particularly at critical times, through an approach which is engaging, supportive and motivating, desistance is more likely.

The desistance literature promotes the importance of positive, non-judgemental and trusting relationships between practitioners and the child or young person. Wherever possible, practitioners should reinforce desired behaviours and use natural opportunities to demonstrate and teach thinking and behavioural skills. Attention must be given to promoting compliance, including helping the child or young person to recognise the positive changes and benefits from a non-offending lifestyle. Any instances of non-compliance should be dealt with in a proportionate, fair and transparent manner.

Reviewing

Reviewing progress is another integral part of service delivery, recognising that a child or young person's risks, needs, protective factors and circumstances can change over time. The reviewing process should be used to: (i) analyse new information (including information from other practitioners and agencies); (ii) verify changes in a child or young person's behaviour; (iii) adapt or change actions that are completed or no longer appropriate; and (iv) explore the full range of available resources. It is also a critical opportunity to recognise and record progress.

Changes in factors related to the child or young person's safety and welfare and/or risk of harm to others should be emphasised. Practitioners also need to be alert to the possibility of changes in the child or young person's life that could impact upon their engagement, considering the views of parents/carers and significant others as appropriate. Work plans must be adapted to any change in the assessment. Any obstacles to compliance and engagement should be identified and discussed, with strategies developed to enable the child or young person to fully engage.

As with planning, efforts should be made to engage the child or young person as an active participant in the reviewing process, helping them to recognise and celebrate their achievements, to review and refresh their goals towards desistance and to take further charge of their own lives.

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Annex D: Proposed standards framework

1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Governance and leadership

The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.

- 1.1.1 Is there a clear local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
- a) Does the YOT Management Board set the direction and strategy for the YOT?
 - b) Does the YOT Management Board include all statutory partners and non-statutory partners where these would add value?
 - c) Are YOT Management Board members active in their attendance and participation, recognising the contribution their own agency makes to the YOT?
 - d) Is the Chair of the YOT Management Board well engaged with a sufficient understanding of the YOT's work?
- 1.1.2 Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?
- a) Do YOT Management Board members advocate the work of the YOT in their own broader roles?
 - b) Do the YOT's partnerships arrangements facilitate the delivery of effective operational work, in relation to both court disposals and out of court disposals?
 - c) Do staff understand their roles and responsibilities within the partnership arrangements, and what they are accountable for?
 - d) Do other relevant local strategic partnerships give priority to work to support desistance and prevent harm, supporting integration with wider services for children and young people?
- 1.1.3 Does the leadership of the YOT support effective service delivery?
- a) Does the YOT leadership team provide an effective link to the Management Board?
 - b) Does the YOT leadership team effectively communicate the vision and strategy of the YOT to staff and stakeholders?
 - c) Does the YOT leadership team successfully deliver the vision and strategy of the YOT?
 - d) Are risks to the service sufficiently understood, with appropriate mitigations and controls in place?

1.2 Staff

Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.

- 1.2.1 Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
 - a) Are practitioners and managers' workloads reasonable, given the profile of the cases and the range of work undertaken?
 - b) Are workloads actively managed?
 - c) Is there an effective strategy to maintain the quality of delivery during periods of planned and unplanned staff absences?

- 1.2.2 Do the skills of YOT staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
 - a) Do the skills and diversity of the workforce meet the needs of the children and young people?
 - b) Are medium, high and very high risk of harm cases and cases with safety and wellbeing concerns allocated to staff who are appropriately qualified and/or experienced?
 - c) Are staff motivated to contribute to the delivery of a quality service?

- 1.2.3 Does oversight by managers support high-quality work and professional development?
 - a) Do managers provide effective supervision of staff to enhance the quality of work with children and young people?
 - b) Is the appraisal process used effectively to ensure that staff are competent to deliver a quality service?
 - c) Is sufficient attention paid to identifying and addressing poor performance?
 - d) Do managers recognise and reward exceptional work to encourage improvement and development and retention of staff?

- 1.2.4 Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?
 - a) Does the YOT identify and address the learning needs of all staff?
 - b) Does the YOT provide sufficient access to in-service training to support the delivery of a quality service?
 - c) Does the YOT promote and value a culture of learning and continuous improvement?

1.3 Partnerships and services

A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children and young people.

- 1.3.1 Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up to date analysis of the profile of children and young people, to ensure that the YOT can deliver well targeted services?
 - a) Is there an up to date strategic and operational analysis of the offending related factors presented by the children and young people?
 - b) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to factors for desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm?
 - c) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to diversity factors and to issues of disproportionality?
 - d) Is the analysis used effectively to influence service delivery?

- 1.3.2 Does the YOT partnership have access to the volume, range and quality of services and interventions to meet the needs of all children and young people?
 - a) Is there access to the right specialist and mainstream services and interventions to meet the desistance needs of children and young people?
 - b) Is sufficient attention paid to building on strengths and enhancing protective factors?
 - c) Are diversity factors and issues of disproportionality considered in the range of services provided?
 - d) Is the quality of services monitored and remedial action taken where required?

- 1.3.3 Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?
 - a) Are there effective arrangements and communication in place with partners and providers to support desistance through access to specialist and mainstream services?
 - b) Are there effective arrangements and communication in place with partners and providers to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people?
 - c) Are there effective arrangements and communication in place with partners and providers to manage the risk of harm to others?
 - d) Are courts made sufficiently aware of the services available to support sentencing options?

1.4 Information and facilities

Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children and young people.

- 1.4.1 Are the right policies and guidance in place to enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?
 - a) Are the right policies in place that describe and guide effective service delivery?
 - b) Are policies and guidance communicated effectively?
 - c) Do staff understand how to access the right services from partners and providers?

- 1.4.2 Does the YOT's delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and young people and enable staff to deliver a quality service?
 - a) Does the YOT deliver its work to children and young people in safe and accessible places?
 - b) Does the YOT delivery environment enable staff to undertake appropriate personalised work and engage effectively with children and young people?
 - c) Is the YOT delivery environment a safe place for staff working with children and young people?

- 1.4.3 Do the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?
 - a) Do the ICT systems enable staff to plan, deliver and record their work in a timely way, and to access information as required?
 - b) Do the ICT arrangements allow access to and exchange of the right information to and from partners and providers?
 - c) Do the ICT systems support the production of the necessary management information?

- 1.4.4 Is analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?
 - a) Are service improvement plans supported by relevant up to date information and through monitoring and development of the underlying evidence base?
 - b) Do performance and quality assurance systems drive improvement?
 - c) Are processes in place to ensure that the YOT learns from things that go wrong?
 - d) Are the views of service users (including children and young people, parents/carers, victims and sentencers) sought, analysed and used to review and improve the effectiveness of services?
 - e) Where necessary, is action taken promptly and appropriately in response to audit or inspection?

2. Court disposals

2.1 Assessment

Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 2.1.1 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child or young person's attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?
 - b) Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, utilising information held by other agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment focus on the child or young person's strengths and protective factors?
 - d) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation, and their likelihood of engaging with the court disposal?
 - e) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child or young person?
 - f) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?
- 2.1.2 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve partner agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
- 2.1.3 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child or young person, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve partner agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child or young person?

2.2 Planning

Planning is driven by the assessment, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 2.2.1 Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does planning set out the services, activities and interventions most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?
 - b) Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?
 - d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation, and seek to develop these as necessary?
 - e) Does planning address the key structural barriers facing the child or young person, and seek to overcome these as necessary?
 - f) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?
- 2.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does planning address the factors identified in assessment and promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does planning involve partner agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning set out the necessary controls, interventions and contingency plans to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
- 2.2.3 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does planning address the risk of harm factors identified in assessment and promote the safety of other people?
 - b) Does planning involve partner agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to identifiable actual and potential victims?
 - d) Does planning set out the necessary controls, interventions and contingency plans to manage those risks that have been identified?

2.3 Implementation and delivery

High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.

- 2.3.1 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered those most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?
 - b) Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, involving parents/carers or significant others where appropriate?
 - c) Does service delivery build upon the child or young person's strengths and enhance protective factors?
 - d) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child or young person and where appropriate their parents/carers or significant others, and to ensuring that services respond to their concerns?
 - e) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration including access to services post-supervision?
 - f) Is sufficient attention given to engagement with the child or young person and their compliance with the work of the YOT?
 - g) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?
- 2.3.2 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?
- a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Is the involvement of other organisations in keeping the child or young person safe sufficiently well coordinated?
- 2.3.3 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?
- a) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?
 - b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of victims and potential victims?
 - c) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm sufficiently well coordinated?

2.4 Reviewing

Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 2.4.1 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors linked to offending behaviour or desistance?
 - b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the child or young person's strengths and enhancing protective factors?
 - c) Does reviewing consider motivation and engagement levels and any relevant barriers?
 - d) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others encouraged to contribute to reviewing their progress and engagement?
 - e) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to support desistance?
- 2.4.2 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to safety and wellbeing?
 - b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from partner agencies involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
- 2.4.3 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to risk of harm?
 - b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from partner agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?
 - c) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others encouraged to contribute to reviewing their risk of harm?
 - d) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm?

3. Out of court disposals

3.1 Assessment

Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 3.1.1 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child or young person's acknowledgement of responsibility, attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?
 - b) Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, utilising information held by other agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment focus on the child or young person's strengths and protective factors?
 - d) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child or young person?
 - e) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice?
 - f) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation, and their likelihood of engaging with the out of court disposal?
 - g) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?
 - h) Is assessment timely, proportionate and appropriate to the type of disposal received?
- 3.1.2 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve partner agencies where appropriate?
- 3.1.3 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child or young person, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including any other assessments that have been completed, and other evidence of behaviour by the child or young person?

3.2 Planning

Planning is driven by assessment, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 3.2.1 Does planning focus on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does planning set out the services, activities and interventions most likely to support desistance and minimise future involvement in the criminal justice system?
 - b) Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?
 - d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation, and seek to develop these as necessary?
 - e) Does planning take sufficient account of opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services following completion of out of court disposal work?
 - f) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim?
 - g) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?
 - h) Is planning proportionate to the disposal type, with interventions capable of being completed within appropriate timescales?
- 3.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does planning address the factors identified in assessment and promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?
- 3.2.3 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does planning address the factors identified in assessment and promote the safety of other people?
 - b) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to identifiable actual and potential victims?
 - c) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?

3.3 Implementation and delivery

High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.

- 3.3.1 Does service delivery support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered those most likely to support desistance and minimise future involvement in the criminal justice system?
 - b) Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, involving parents/carers or significant others where appropriate?
 - c) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child or young person and where appropriate their parents/carers or significant others, and to ensuring that services respond to their concerns?
 - d) Is sufficient attention given to engagement with the child or young person and, where necessary, their compliance with the work of the YOT?
 - e) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services?
 - f) Is the delivery of services proportionate to the disposal type and completed within the required timescales?
- 3.3.2 Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child or young person?
- a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Is the involvement of other agencies in keeping the child or young person safe sufficiently well utilised and coordinated?
- 3.3.3 Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?
- a) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of victims and potential victims?
 - b) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?

3.4 Joint working

Joint working with the police supports the delivery of high-quality, personalised and coordinated services.

- 3.4.1 Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child or young person, supporting joint decision making?
- a) Are the recommendations by the YOT for out of court disposal outcomes, conditions and interventions appropriate and proportionate?
 - b) Do the recommendations consider the degree of the child or young person's understanding of the offence and their acknowledgement of responsibility?
 - c) Is a positive contribution made by the YOT to determining the disposal?
 - d) Is sufficient attention given to the child or young person's understanding, and their parents/carers' understanding, of the implications of receiving an out of court disposal?
 - e) Is the information provided to inform decision making timely to meet the needs of the case, legislation and guidance?
 - f) Is the rationale for joint disposal decisions appropriate and clearly recorded?
- 3.4.2 Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out of court disposal?
- a) Does the YOT inform the police of progress and outcomes in a timely manner?
 - b) Is attention given, in Youth Conditional Caution cases, to compliance with and enforcement of the conditions?
 - c) Are Youth Conditional Caution conditions consistent with YOT planning, and focussed on supporting desistance from offending and the needs of the victim?

Annex E: Example of rating characteristics

1.1 Governance and leadership

The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.

Outstanding

- Leaders set and communicate a clear direction and strategic focus, inspiring staff and uniting them to deliver the organisation's goals. The vision and strategy is stretching, challenging and innovative, focused upon the quality of delivery for children and young people, while remaining achievable.
- Leaders create a culture of involvement, ownership, empowerment and improvement. Safe innovation is celebrated, with staff feeling empowered to identify ways to improve how they do their job, and leaders consistently listening and explaining their decisions. A diverse range of views are encouraged.
- A collaborative and outward-looking approach is taken to working with statutory partners and non-statutory partners, maximising the benefits for children and young people through the appropriate sharing of expertise, resources and knowledge. The YOT is represented on all relevant strategic groups, representation is consistent and those attending demonstrate appropriate decision-making authority.
- It is clear how staff are to work together within the partnership arrangements, with strong collaboration and support, clear lines of accountability and the avoidance of duplication. There is a common focus on improving the quality of delivery for children and young people.
- Where changes are required, they are communicated in a timely and transparent way across the organisation, with a clear proactive approach to embedding and monitoring new ways of working.

Inadequate

- The vision and strategy is unclear, out-of-date or insufficiently focused on quality. Staff are not aware of or do not understand the vision and strategy.
- The culture is top-down and directive. It is not one of fairness, openness, transparency, honesty and challenge. Staff do not feel valued, supported and appreciated. Their views are not sought and decisions are not explained, resulting in a lack of alignment between the issues described by staff and those understood by leaders. When staff do raise concerns, they are not treated with respect. The culture is defensive.
- There are no detailed or realistic plans to deliver the vision and strategy, progress is not being reviewed and leaders are out of touch with what is happening during day-to-day services. There is minimal evidence of learning, reflective practice or innovation. Where changes are made, the impact on staff and the quality of delivery for children and young people is not recognised.
- The YOT is represented on few strategic groups, and/or representation is sporadic or at an inappropriate decision-making level, impeding collaborative working. There is evidence of blaming others.

- There is no effective system for identifying, capturing and managing issues and risks. Any mitigating actions or improvements that leaders have sought to make have been inadequate. Consequently, leaders are not doing enough to tackle poor delivery, significantly impairing the progress of children and young people.
- There is poor collaboration or cooperation between teams and high levels of division and conflict. Staff do not understand the fit between their roles and the partnership arrangements, and there is a lack of clarity about the authority to make decisions.

Annex F: About HMI Probation

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We provide assurance on the effectiveness of work with adults and children who have offended to implement orders of the court, reduce reoffending, protect the public and safeguard the vulnerable. We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice, and use our data and information to encourage good quality services. We are independent of government, and speak independently.

Our values:

Integrity - being honest, open, professional, fair and polite, and doing the right thing.

Accountability - being reliable, standing by the evidenced conclusions and accounting fully for our actions.

Effectiveness - setting quality standards by consensus and driving improvement through valid inspection and published reports.

Inclusion - promoting attention to diversity in all aspects of our work, and making sure that the needs of potential and actual victims and service users are taken into full account by youth offending and probation services.