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Ministry  
of Justice

# **Youth Justice Reinvestment Custody Pathfinder: Findings and delivery lessons from the first year of implementation**

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## **The authors**

The Hallam Centre for Community Justice at Sheffield Hallam University is a dynamic research-driven centre that exists to stimulate and produce high quality knowledge, understanding and networking in the field of crime reduction, community and criminal justice through the linked provision of information exchange, networking, professional development, consultancy, evaluation and research. The Centre has a broad range of experience and expertise which effectively combines academic, professional, managerial, administrative, knowledge management and research skills. Senior researchers have previously been practitioner and managers in the voluntary and private sector, youth justice services, probation and prisons.

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# 1. Summary

The Youth Justice Reinvestment Custody Pathfinder (Pathfinder) was commissioned by the Youth Justice Board (YJB). It aims to test how local authorities can be incentivised to reduce the use of custody for 10–17 years olds. Youth custody is the most expensive youth justice disposal with an average annual cost per place of almost £100,000, with some places being as high as around £200,000 per annum. For young people released from custody the overall proven re-offending rate is around 70 per cent, which is higher than for any other youth Criminal Justice System disposal.

Under Pathfinder, quarterly funding from the YJB central custody budget is provided up-front to give local authorities freedom and flexibility to develop and implement locally tailored interventions, to respond to local needs and demands. Individual targets were used to measure the sites' performance. These were based on reductions in the number of youth custody bed nights, ranging from 12 to 20 per cent against a 2010/11 baseline. At the end of the pilot, sites which fail to achieve their targets will be required to repay some, or all of the funding through a 'claw back' process. This mechanism aims to drive performance.

Pathfinder was implemented in four pilot sites (one local authority and three consortia of local authorities). The scheme began in October 2011 and will run until September 2013. A 'break clause' was included in the contracts to allow the sites or the YJB to withdraw from the scheme without financial penalty at the end of the first year (Year One). This was viewed by the sites as an important condition for their participation in the pilot. At the end of Year One two sites withdrew from Pathfinder, leaving the other two to continue into the final year of the pilot (Year Two).

A process evaluation was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice to assess the implementation and delivery of Pathfinder and to draw out possible lessons for future schemes. This report covers the development of Pathfinder and implementation during Year One. Findings are based on analysis of qualitative data (interviews, focus groups and workshops with 150 purposively selected participants). The views presented in this report may not be representative of all staff and stakeholders. In addition, analysis of YJB custody bed night data was conducted to assess the sites' progress towards their targets during the first year of the pilot. Some of these findings may change as further information becomes available.

During Year One the four sites implemented a range of interventions, based on different delivery models, including:

- establishing sentence compliance panels, consisting of a range of practitioners and attended by the young person (and if appropriate families or carers), to support sentence compliance and promote flexible ways of engaging young people to reduce the likelihood of breaches;
- providing bail community packages, where appropriate, to encourage sentencers not to remand young people to custody;
- improving court liaison and pre-sentence reports to reduce, where appropriate, custodial sentences;
- extending, or in some cases implementing for the first time, Multi-Systemic Therapy provision (i.e. intensive family- and community-based treatment programme for young chronic and violent offenders) to help reduce re-offending;
- extending post-custody support, for example provision of employment, training and education to reduce re-offending and breaches.

High-level analysis of provisional custody bed night data indicated that at the end of Year One, the sites' progress towards their individual targets differed considerably. While one site reduced the use of custody bed nights by 26 per cent compared to the baseline year (2010/11) – exceeding their target in the first year – the other three sites showed increases ranging from 4 to 23 per cent. Over the same period, a downward trend was seen across England & Wales (-8% or -10% excluding the four pilot sites). Although the sites' results are indicative of progress at the end of Year Two, it is too early to assess whether they will achieve their targets at the end of the pilot.

### **Factors which facilitated implementation and delivery of Pathfinder**

The following factors appeared to facilitate implementation of the pilot in Year One:

- using a relatively simple performance measure (i.e. custody bed nights) that can be easily understood and monitored by providers as well as commissioners;
- conducting detailed analysis of the offender population to identify entry points into custody and areas for possible intervention;
- implementing interventions that could be delivered and had the potential to reduce custody bed nights early in the pilot (for example addressing breaches of sentences, and providing bail community packages to encourage, where appropriate, sentencers not to remand young people to custody);
- strong leadership including:
  - fostering ownership and encouraging a 'can do' culture;
  - providing a simple narrative which resonated with the values of staff and partners;
  - and

- seeing Pathfinder as part of the broader reform agenda;
- timeliness of implementation, including:
  - early planning, briefing and engagement of key staff and stakeholders; and
  - selecting interventions which could be established within Year One;
- capacity and capability of YOTs to regularly analyse data and interpret results, to enable rapid and flexible decision-making (for example, informing targeting of resources, business decisions and monitoring progress against targets);
- partnership working between consortium YOTs by:
  - allocating resources in line with custody bed night reduction targets for individual YOTs;
  - devolving responsibility for delivery to each individual YOT and holding them accountable for achieving their reduction targets; and
  - identifying, sharing and rapidly implementing effective practice.

### **External factors which affected the implementation and delivery of Pathfinder**

The following external factors were perceived to have facilitated implementation and delivery of Pathfinder during the first year of implementation:

- support from YJB, including workshops, quarterly meetings with the sites, and data management information packs; and
- physical proximity between courts and YOTs facilitated close-working relationships between YOT staff and sentencers.

In contrast, the following external factors were perceived to have hindered the implementation and delivery of Pathfinder in Year One:

- YOT inspections, changes to YOT budgets and subsequent restructurings;
- the public disturbances in August 2011 were perceived in three sites to have affected custodial sentencing practices by creating a more severe sentencing climate during and after the disturbances. Interviewees in two sites also felt that this had led to a loss of confidence in their ability to achieve the required bed night reductions.

### **Lessons from Pathfinder**

Key lessons from the first year of Pathfinder, include:

- An agreement between the provider and commissioner on a single data source of sufficient quality to engender mutual trust for the measurement of targets needs to be included in the contract.
- Commissioning a consortium of several local authorities may help to spread risk and address volatility for a performance measure such as youth custody bed nights.

- There is variation in the capacity and capability of YOTs to effectively implement a pilot such as Pathfinder. This suggests that future schemes may need to be accompanied by targeted performance-improvement support to help build capacity and capability in data analysis and interpretation, problem solving approaches, and project implementation.

## 2. Introduction

Youth custody is the most expensive youth justice disposal with an average annual cost per place of almost £100,000, with some places being as high as around £200,000 per annum.<sup>1</sup> For young people released from custody the overall proven re-offending rate is around 70 per cent, which is higher than for any other youth Criminal Justice System (CJS) disposal (YBJ/MoJ, 2013).

The Youth Justice Reinvestment Custody Pathfinder (Pathfinder) was commissioned by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and aims to test how local authorities can be incentivised to reduce the use of custody for 10–17 years olds. The rationale of Pathfinder is to “improve the alignment of financial incentives at a local level, so that youth custody is not seen as a ‘free service’ paid by the State, but is something that local authorities have a stake in”.<sup>2</sup> This concept was supported by the Justice Committee in their report on Justice Reinvestment (2010).

Under this scheme, quarterly funding from the YJB central custody budget is provided up-front to give local authorities freedom and flexibility to develop and implement locally tailored interventions, to respond to local needs and demands. Individual targets were used to measure the sites’ performance. These were based on reductions in the number of youth custody bed nights, ranging from 12 to 20 per cent against a 2010/11 baseline. At the end of the pilot, sites which fail to achieve their targets will be required to repay some, or all of the funding through a ‘claw back’ process. This mechanism aims to drive performance.

The pilots began in October 2011 and will run until September 2013 (Year One: October 2011 to September 2012; Year Two: October 2012 to September 2013). Four sites, one single local authority and three consortia of local authorities, were selected by the YJB following a bidding process. The single local authority pilot site is located in the Midlands. Of the consortium sites, one is located in the north of England and consists of five authorities. The other two are located in London, one consisting of four boroughs and the other of seven boroughs. Throughout this report the term ‘site(s)’ refers to one (or more) of the Pathfinder pilot areas.

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<sup>1</sup> The sectors of the youth secure estate are currently as follows: Under 18 Young Offender Institutions (Under 18 YOIs); Secure Training Centres (STCs); and Secure Children’s Homes (SCHs). They have an annual average cost per place of £65,000, £178,000 and £212,000 respectively. Ministry of Justice (2013).

<sup>2</sup> See: <<http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/youth-justice/reducing-re-offending/YouthJusticeReinvestmentPathfinderInitiativeinformation.pdf>> accessed 2 July 2013.

At the end of the first year both the sites and the YJB were able to invoke a 'break clause', enabling withdrawal from Pathfinder without financial penalty. At the time of writing, two sites had withdrawn from the pilot, leaving the remaining sites to continue into the second year.

## Research aims

A process evaluation was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice to assess the implementation and delivery of Pathfinder and draw out possible lessons for future schemes. This report covers the early development of Pathfinder and implementation of the pilots during Year One. It aims to answer questions in relation to:

- target negotiations and contract agreements;
- development of partnerships;
- nature and scope of interventions developed by the sites; and
- perceived levers and barriers to delivery.

In addition, this report seeks to draw out lessons learnt from the first year of implementation of Pathfinder. Full details of the research questions are provided in the Appendix.

## Methodology

The methodology for this process evaluation was primarily qualitative. Fieldwork was conducted between November 2011 and February 2012 (Phase One) and between July and November 2012 (Phase Two). A total of 98 interviews were undertaken (based on a purposive sample designed to address the research questions) with the following participants: MoJ and YJB staff; YOT heads and operational managers; chairpersons of YOT boards;<sup>3</sup> local authority managers and the police; health and Voluntary and Community Sector service providers; and magistrates. Four modelling workshops were undertaken in Phase One, involving 26 YOT heads and operational managers. In Phase Two, further qualitative interviews and focus groups were undertaken with 26 front line YOT staff.

The findings from interviews, focus groups and workshops were supplemented with documentary evidence relating to the pilot and its implementation across the four sites. High-level analysis of provisional YJB youth custody bed night data was also conducted with the aim of assessing progress against targets at the end of Year One. Further details of the methodology are contained in the Appendix.

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<sup>3</sup> Hereafter referred to as YOT stakeholders.

## **Interpreting the findings**

The findings presented in this report are based on the first year of the implementation of Pathfinder, and as further information becomes available results may be subject to change. In addition, findings are mainly qualitative in nature and are based on purposively selected interviews, as detailed in the Methodology section above. Not all interviewees had the same degree of direct involvement with the design and delivery of the pilot. As a result, the conclusions and learning points presented in this report may not be representative of all views held across the pilot sites or stakeholders, and as such need to be interpreted with a degree of caution. With regard to the high-level analysis of provisional youth custody bed night data, in the absence of a matched comparison group it is not possible to directly attribute change to Pathfinder.

## **Report outline**

Section 3 outlines the process for commissioning, bidding and contracting Pathfinder schemes. Section 4 focuses on the delivery and implementation of Pathfinder. Section 5 addresses the question of partnership working. Section 6 considers the impact of external factors on the implementation of Pathfinder. Section 7 addresses the termination of agreements in two of the four pilot sites. Section 8 assesses progress across the sites at the end of Year One. Section 9 outlines the main conclusions and implications for policy at the end of Year One.

### 3. Commissioning, bidding and contracting

#### **Learning points: Performance measure and data source**

Using youth custody bed nights as a metric seemed to be easily understood by frontline staff and managers involved in delivering Pathfinder. It is also a measure that YOTs were able to monitor themselves, using their own data.

Future schemes may need to include a contractual agreement between the provider and commissioner on a single data source for the measurement of targets. The data source should be of sufficient quality to engender trust and confidence in the monitoring of targets among both the provider and commissioner.

#### 3.1 Developing the funding bids

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs),<sup>4</sup> which are the principal delivery organisations for Pathfinder, were encouraged by the YJB to bid as consortia, based on the requirement of having on average at least 50 young people in custody at any one time in 2009/10. Given that many individual local authorities have a relatively small number of young people in the youth secure estate at any one time, this requirement excluded a substantial number of authorities from being eligible for the pilot. However, this requirement was necessary to ensure reductions had the potential to deliver savings during the duration of Pathfinder. In order to manage risk, consortia also needed to be of sufficient size to absorb potential short-term increases in their custody population, which may be triggered by criminal incidents involving a number of young people. From a governance viewpoint, YJB interviewees indicated that the rationale for encouraging consortia was to test partnership working.

Local authorities with enough young people in custody at any one time were invited to bid for Pathfinder funding. To inform their bids, they were encouraged to review their use of custody bed nights from 2007/08 to 2009/10 with data made available by the YJB on request.<sup>5</sup> After the initial bidding phase, the YJB provided short-listed bidders with a 'value for money tool' to enable them to determine whether their proposed reduction targets offered value for money.

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<sup>4</sup> A Youth Offending Team is multi-agency team, co-ordinated by a local authority. They provide support to and supervise young people (aged 10 to 17 years) who offend or are at risk of offending. The YJB has responsibility for overseeing the work of YOTs.

<sup>5</sup> In addition, some YOTs requested segmented data based on breaches, age and other demographic information.

To measure performance in the four selected sites, targets were set to achieve reductions in the number of youth custody bed nights.<sup>6</sup> This metric was chosen for Pathfinder because it is directly related to secure accommodation costs and can easily be understood by pilot staff and stakeholders.

The sites individual targets were set against the baseline year (April 2010 to March 2011) to achieve the following reductions:

- Site 1: 20%;
- Sites 2 and 3: 12%; and
- Site 4: 19%.<sup>7</sup>

Stakeholders across all four sites reported during interviews that they were reasonably confident they could meet their targets at the time when they submitted their business plan to the YJB.

## **3.2 Contract negotiations**

### **Break clause**

The sites negotiated a break clause to be included in their contracts. This enabled the sites or YJB to withdraw at the end of the first year without financial penalty to the local authority. This clause was critical in achieving buy-in from senior local authority officials and elected members. YOT stakeholders in all sites reported that being able to leave the programme after the first year with no financial penalty was seen as an important safety net.

### **Spike clause**

The sites also negotiated the inclusion of a 'spike clause' in their contracts. This was designed to address the sites' concerns about any future events that could cause a sharp increase (or spike) in the custody population, and the resulting impact this increase might have on the target. 'Spike clauses' excluded young people who had been involved in proven offences committed by three or more young people, and which led to them being remanded or sentenced to custody. In addition, to qualify for exclusion from the target, these individuals

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<sup>6</sup> Youth custody bed night data are management information, which is used to support YJB business decisions. The data are drawn from a live system and as such they are subject to change as more information is made available and records are updated.

<sup>7</sup> Overall this equates to a notional reduction of 63 youth secure places across the four sites. However, a reduction in youth custody beds does not necessarily equate to a decrease in the number of secure places needed. Reductions in demand for secure places are likely to be geographically dispersed across the country and also across the secure estate sectors, and therefore it is unlikely there would be sufficient decreases in one area to enable substantial savings from decommissioning.

must not be known to the YOTs, Children's Social Services, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services during the two years prior to commencement of Pathfinder.

### **Performance measurement**

There appeared to be some confusion regarding the time period for target measurement. YOT interviewees across the sites reported that the YJB 'value for money tool' they had used at the time of bidding had led them to believe targets were split between the two years of the pilot. However, the YJB's intention was that the targets would be assessed at the end of Year Two. This ambiguity was something that, in hindsight, YJB interviewees acknowledged had not been identified prior to the contracts being signed and they recognised that clarity on performance measurement was important.

In April 2012 the YJB clarified, in writing, the target: Year One was the foundation year to enable services to be established; and, Year Two would be the period for target measurement. This was welcomed by three of the sites; however, Site 1 (whose contract specified target reductions in Year One and Year Two) negotiated and retained their own performance process with their target being split equally across both years.

### **3.3 Motivation for bidding**

The YOTs involved in Pathfinder shared the YJB commitment to reduce the use of custody when a community sentence is likely to be more appropriate. Other considerations which motivated sites to bid were:

- obtaining additional funding to help replace income from other sources lost due to reducing public sector budgets;
- maintaining existing services which might have otherwise been cut;
- providing funding for new services; and
- some YOTs were also aware of the potential transfer of youth custodial budgets to local authorities and saw Pathfinder as useful preparation for this legislative change.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012. From December 2012 offenders aged 10 to 17 years can no longer be remanded to youth detention accommodation for an offence that when sentenced at court would not attract a custodial sentence. In addition, the LASPO Act gives local authorities greater financial responsibility for remands to youth detention accommodation, starting from 1st April 2013. For further details see: <<http://www.justice.gov.uk/legislation/bills-and-acts/circulars/new-youth-remand-framework-and-amendments-to-adult-remand-provisions>> accessed 2 July 2013. Based on interview data, YOT interviewees in some sites were aware that there might be a transfer of custodial budgets to local authorities but the final scope of the Act was not yet known (i.e. the Act only applies to youth secure remand).

### 3.4 Data reconciliation between YJB and YOTs

One of the advantages of using youth custody bed nights as a performance measure has been the ability of the sites (at a YOT level) to monitor their progress almost on a real-time basis using their own locally held data. However, this highlighted discrepancies between the centrally held YJB management information, extracted from a live system (i.e. subject to change) and data collected locally by the Pathfinder YOTs. Progress was made – partly through YJB workshops – with the sites to resolve these discrepancies and most sites acknowledged that the pilot and close working with the YJB data team had provided an important opportunity to improve their understanding of the data and its quality. Nevertheless some discrepancies continued through implementation and featured in the negotiations around exiting (see section 7). According to both YOT and YJB interviewees, such discrepancies were sufficiently important to trigger a potential ‘claw back’ payment.<sup>9</sup>

An important lesson, acknowledged by YJB interviewees, was that despite the significant additional resources YJB allocated to resolving data discrepancies, these issues should have been addressed before the scheme started. The data matching exercise organised by the YJB highlighted the need for YOTs to ensure the quality and consistency of data recording.

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<sup>9</sup> In one site, YOT staff said that while the variance between the consortium and the YJB was 2 per cent, this masked discrepancies at the individual YOT level which varied from 2.5 per cent to 11 per cent, which suggested that some YOTs (within pilot consortia) were more at risk that such discrepancies would potentially trigger a ‘claw back’ payment.

## 4. Delivery and implementation of Pathfinder

### 4.1 Delivery models

#### **Learning Points: Delivery models**

Delivery models should be developed with the allocated timeframe in mind – two years in the case of Pathfinder. To reduce custody bed nights early in the pilot, sites should undertake data analysis to identify entry points into custody and areas for possible intervention; for example: *breaches* of community and custodial sentences; the *number of* custodial sentences; and, *remands* into custody. Identifying quick wins to obtain buy-in from stakeholders can help to build confidence in the ability of local agencies to deliver.

The document review and findings from interviews with strategic and operational YOT managers provided details of the development of three Pathfinder delivery models. During Year One the four sites implemented a range of processes and interventions based on different delivery models. While some of these were already in place prior to Pathfinder in some YOTs, the funding enabled interventions to be scaled up and implemented across the consortia sites. The total amount of funding provided by the YJB was £1,500,000 for Site 1, £300,000 for Site 2, £974,500 for Site 3 and £750,000 for Site 4.

During Year One, Sites 1 and 2 implemented a range of YOT and court-related process changes (with other supporting interventions) as part of a multistage, ongoing ‘process model’ (La Vigne *et al*). They adopted a strategic and data based approach to reducing custody bed nights which began by identifying potential entry points into custody. For example, Site 1 focused on reducing breaches, custodial sentences, and secure remands, which they perceived had the potential to reduce custody bed nights early in the pilot. Site 3 focused on community interventions, in particular Multi-systemic Therapy (MST),<sup>10</sup> with some YOT and court-related process changes. Site 4 used Pathfinder funds to implement MST, and post-custody education training and employment (ETE). Half-way through the first year of implementation Site 4 introduced process changes to reduce breaches and use of secure remand places, using funding from other sources.

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<sup>10</sup> Multi-systemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive family- and community-based treatment programme for young chronic and violent offenders (usually targeted at 12 to 17 year olds). It aims to prevent re-offending and out-of-home placements. The treatment typically runs between 3 and 6 months. See <<http://mstservices.com/>> accessed 2 July 2013.

**Table 4.1: Pathfinder key interventions implemented in Year One (from October 2011 to September 2012)**

|   | New | Existing,<br>conducted with<br>renewed energy/<br>intensity | Extended<br>across<br>YOTs |
|---|-----|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Site 1</b>   |     |   |                            |
| <b>Compliance panels</b> , consisting of a range of practitioners and attended by the young person (and if appropriate families or carers) to support young peoples' compliance with their sentence and promote flexible ways of engaging them to reduce the likelihood of breaches |     | ✓   | ✓                          |
| Appropriate <b>community packages</b> , including intensive supervision, to develop sentencers' confidence to encourage them to use community sentences for those young people on the cusp of being sentenced to custody  |     | ✓   | ✓                          |
| Supporting <b>defence appeals</b> against sentence length to reduce the duration of custodial sentences   |     | ✓   |                            |
| Offering courts appropriate <b>community bail support</b> packages to reduce the use of remand into custody   |     | ✓   |                            |
| <b>Site 2</b>   |     |   |                            |
| Improving <b>court liaison</b> by identifying high risk of custody cases early and engaging with sentencers to reduce the use of custody where appropriate  |     | ✓   | ✓                          |
| Reducing the number of custodial sentences by improving both the quality and presentation of <b>pre-sentence reports</b> at court   | ✓   |   |                            |
| Offering courts appropriate <b>community bail support</b> packages to reduce the use of remand into custody   |     | ✓   | ✓                          |
| <b>Reducing breach</b> of community orders through enhanced interventions, such as intensive supervision (The project management and delivery of enhanced interventions was outsourced to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) agencies – which was new)                            |     | ✓   |                            |
| <b>Site 3</b>   |     |   |                            |
| <b>MST</b> provision to reduce the number of young people being at risk of custody  |     | ✓   | ✓                          |
| <b>Strengthen pre-court processes</b> and relationships between YOTs and courts. For example, holding 'at risk of custody' conferences with the aim of devising appropriate community alternatives to custody for young people on the cusp of being sentenced to custody            |     | ✓   | ✓                          |
| <b>Analysis</b> of remand, sentencing (including Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) provision) and re-offending trends to better inform the targeting and delivery of interventions to reduce use of custody  | ✓   | ✓   |                            |
| <b>Professional development</b> programme to ensure that staff are sufficiently trained to deliver approaches and processes to reduce the use of custody and breaches   | ✓   |   |                            |

|   | New | Existing,<br>conducted with<br>renewed energy/<br>intensity | Extended<br>across<br>YOTs |
|---|-----|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Site 4</b>   |     |   |                            |
| <b>MST</b> provision to reduce the number of young people being at risk of custody  | ✓   |   |                            |
| <b>ETE</b> provision and mentoring (part funded by Pathfinder) to provide post-custody support to increase young people's employability and to help reduce re-offending |     | ✓   |                            |
| <b>Texting system</b> to increase young peoples' compliance with sentence requirements (introduced in September 2012) to reduce breaches                                | ✓   |   |                            |

The rationale for implementing MST as the primary intervention in Sites 3 and 4 was based on the international evidence that supports its effectiveness in reducing proven re-offending (e.g. Allen, G. 2011; Social Research Unit (SRU), 2012). Delivery of MST, and in particular when establishing MST for the first time or extending provisions across YOTs, appeared to be affected by the following:

- delays in recruiting specialist staff, developing referral pathways, engaging relevant stakeholders and in securing agreements from pilot partners to roll-out MST; and
- as with any intervention, MST can take time for practice to embed fully and to operate at its optimum level.<sup>11</sup>

The qualitative findings and high-level analysis of custody bed night data (see Figure 8.1 in section 8) suggest that the design of the delivery model was important for the implementation of Pathfinder and for the sites' progress towards achieving their targets. The sites that made the most progress towards their targets at the end of Year One implemented a range of process changes (with supporting interventions) as part of a multistage, ongoing process based on:

- conducting detailed data analysis of the offender population to inform areas for intervention;
- addressing the multiplicity of factors which resulted in custody, rather than relying, for example, on a single intervention; and
- focusing on changes that could be implemented early in the pilot and could therefore impact on custody bed nights during the first year.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> A small scale trial of MST, the first to be conducted in the England and Wales, compared MST with standard support and supervision delivered by a YOT. The study showed that MST became more effective at reducing non-violent re-offending in the last six months of an 18-months follow-up period than 'treatment as usual' delivered by the YOT. See Butler *et al* (2011).

<sup>12</sup> All delivery models require a lead-in time to be set up and once implemented, these models are also likely to involve a time lag before they can impact on custody bed nights. The sites, which appeared to have made the most progress in Year One prioritised and focused on interventions and system changes that had the potential to deliver a reduction of custody bed nights in the early stages of the pilot.

## 4.2 Implementation

### Learning points: Implementation process

The factors that appeared to facilitate implementation in the first year of Pathfinder were:

- leadership: fostering ownership, encouraging a ‘can do’ culture, providing a simple narrative (reducing the use of custody can deliver better outcomes for young people) which resonated with the values of staff and partners, and seeing Pathfinder as part of the broader reform agenda;
- timeliness of implementation, including: early planning, briefing and engagement of key staff and other stakeholders, and selecting interventions, which could be established within the timeframe of the pilot;
- capacity and capability of YOTs to regularly analyse data and interpret results, to enable rapid and flexible decision-making, for example, informing the targeting of resources, business decisions and monitoring progress against targets.

The interview and focus group findings triangulated with documentary information suggest that the following factors appeared to facilitate the implementation of Pathfinder.

- **Leadership** – In Site 1 this was demonstrated by managers with: a strategic vision, in particular viewing Pathfinder as part of the broader reform agenda for the transfer of youth secure remand budgets to local authorities in April 2013; a ‘can do’ culture (“*We don’t do failure*”<sup>13</sup>); as well as a detailed operational understanding of YOTs and what could be implemented within the timeframe for Pathfinder.
- **Communication and engagement with front line staff** – Staff in Site 1 had been briefed about the pilot many months before commencement and had a good understanding of the delivery of Pathfinder. They were also consulted and involved in determining the types of interventions to be implemented to reduce custody bed nights, thereby facilitating a sense of ownership. Managers obtained buy-in for Pathfinder by providing a simple narrative (reducing the use of custody can deliver better outcomes for young people) which resonated with the values of staff and partners. YOT management at this site ensured a focus on delivering Pathfinder through team meeting updates, supervision, and by displaying monthly bed night targets in a prominent place. YOT operational managers were concerned that staff could become complacent because the site was performing well, and/or regard Pathfinder as “last

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<sup>13</sup> A description by a strategic manager from Site 1 on their approach to Pathfinder.

year's initiative"<sup>14</sup> and divert their attention to newer schemes. They indicated that they were planning to address this through staff briefings and supervision. In contrast, interview and focus group findings from the other three sites suggested there was, on the whole, less engagement among front line staff, as well as less clarity and understanding of Pathfinder and their role in delivering it.

- **Continuity of key staff** – Continuity of key individuals through the different phases of the pilot facilitated implementation, in particular at the consortium sites. Conversely, leadership changes impacted negatively on relationships among staff and on the commitment of YOTs to Pathfinder.
- **Timeliness of implementation** – Early planning, briefing and engagement of key staff and other stakeholders and selecting interventions, which could be established relatively quickly, enabled a timely start. Interviewees from Sites 2, 3 and 4 reported that delays in the start of their full programme of activities (e.g. due to time to embed a new intervention, recruit staff and to finalise contracts) had an on-going impact on the achievement of their targets. This indicates there is a need for planning and a realistic and informed assessment of the time required for project set-up.

As noted in section 3.2, Year One was the foundation year and Year Two was the formal measurement period (i.e. when the custody bed night reduction target would be counted).<sup>15</sup> Events in Year One, however, could nonetheless have affected the sites' targets in year Two. In particular, custodial sentences given in Year One (even during the first month) could potentially have resulted in young people serving time in custody in Year Two, and therefore impact on the final custody bed night count. Interview findings from some sites indicated that this was not fully understood during the development and early implementation of the pilot. Thus, if custody bed nights are to be used as a performance measure, providers need to 'hit the ground running' and reduce the number and duration of custodial sentences from the commencement of the pilot.

- **Capacity and capability of YOTs to analyse data and interpret results to enable rapid and flexible decision-making** – Some sites and YOTs had not adapted to the challenge posed by Pathfinder, which required a change in the way in which data were used by YOTs. Whereas in the past data were collected and provided to the YJB and

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<sup>14</sup> Quote from YOT operational manager from Site 1.

<sup>15</sup> Except in Site 1 where the targets were split equally across Year One and Year Two.

other funders for analysis, Pathfinder required YOTs to conduct analysis in a regular and timely fashion. YOT managers were also required to interpret data and use findings to inform decisions about delivery, to target resources and assess financial risk.

Triangulation of qualitative findings with custody bed data indicated that the sites and YOTs which understood these demands appeared to more readily bring about change and reduce the number of custody bed nights in Year One.

- **Appropriate targeting of interventions** – There was variation between the sites in the extent to which Pathfinder interventions were appropriately targeted to have the potential to reduce youth custody bed nights. For example, some YOTs identified, from the start of the pilot, that breaches of community orders and licences were an important contributor to custody bed night usage. In response to this, they implemented compliance panels to facilitate engagement with young people to reduce breaches.

Conversely, in Site 2, YOT front line staff expressed concerns that the interventions delivered by a VCS provider were not targeted at those most at risk of custody. They perceived that this may impact negatively on their ability to reduce custody bed nights within the timeframe of the pilot. Also, YOT staff expressed concern that the VCS interventions duplicated existing YOT provision.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> YOTs in this site had undergone a considerable level of restructuring and job losses. Some interviewees indicated that fears over job security may have contributed to a reluctance to make referrals to the VCS provider.

## 5. Partnership working

### Learning points: Partnership between YOTs

Partnership working between consortium YOTs appeared to be facilitated by:

- allocating Pathfinder resources on a proportionate basis (in line with custody bed night reduction targets) to individual YOTs;
- devolving responsibility for the delivery of Pathfinder to each individual YOT;
- ensuring that an operational manager in each YOT was responsible for local delivery;
- ensuring that the delivery models were tailored and responsive to local circumstances;
- holding each YOT accountable for delivering their reduction targets; and
- identifying, sharing and rapidly implementing effective practice.

While there was an expectation from some YJB and MoJ interviewees that Pathfinder would involve a wider range of local partners, the critical relationships were as follows: across YOTs in consortium sites; between YOTs and the commissioned health and VCS service providers; and between YOTs and sentencers.

### Relationships between YOTs in the consortium sites

In the consortium sites interview findings suggested that the relationships between YOTs appeared to be determined by the following:

- **Existing relationships** – prior experience of YOTs working together varied across the three consortium sites, and this may have affected the implementation of the pilot. In Site 1, strategic and operational stakeholders acknowledged that Pathfinder had benefited from good existing working relationships between the YOTs and a ‘natural partnership’ due to sharing common administrative boundaries. In Site 2, while some of the YOTs had worked together before, the relationship with one of the YOTs was new. In Site 3, interviewees explained that prior to Pathfinder there was limited experience of working together due to (long existing) perceived competition between YOTs. Such competition, however, was not viewed to have affected YOTs in other sites.
- **Allocation of Pathfinder resources and level of incentivisation for individual YOTs within consortium sites** – the way in which Pathfinder funding was allocated between YOTs within consortia may have affected implementation of the pilot. In Site 1, the allocation of resources acted as an enabler because each YOT committed to a custody bed night reduction target and received proportionate funding based on these targets, thereby linking risk to funding. Although, each YOT was held accountable for

their performance, they agreed that reductions over and above individual targets would be shared proportionally to the level of risk.

As an example of a barrier, in Site 3 the lead authority received a substantially larger allocation of funding than the other YOTs (in part to cover project management costs and consortium work). However, risk was apportioned equally across all the YOTs up to a specified figure, irrespective of the allocation of resources (e.g. the lead YOT had a significantly larger allocation of MST places than the others). In this site, YOT interviewees acknowledged that as a result of this arrangement, YOT involvement and commitment to implementation varied considerably.

- **Co-ordination and information sharing arrangements within consortium sites –** dedicated Pathfinder groups/boards facilitated co-ordination and information sharing between YOTs. In terms of perceived effectiveness, interviewees in Sites 2 and 3 indicated that these groups required time to develop and were also affected by changes in personnel, which may have adversely impacted on implementation. In Site 1, the existing YOT operational managers group provided this function. Using a group where relationships were already established appeared to have facilitated more effective co-ordination and information sharing.

### **Relationships between the sites and service providers**

Interviewees across the sites indicated that the management of relationships with service providers was important. In Site 3, the NHS Trust developed relationships with YOTs and other agencies in areas which had no previous MST provision. Trust interviewees reported these relationships took time and effort to establish, impeding delivery, and seemed to provide a 'dis-economy' of scale, given the relatively small number of MST places (five) allocated to each of these YOT areas. Due to issues with the targeting of interventions (see section 4.2), contracts between Site 2 and VCS agencies were terminated on a 'no fault' basis. The resulting changes in roles were reported by interviewees to have impeded the implementation of the pilot.

Although Site 2 commissioned VCS agencies to deliver interventions, they did not pass on the risk to their providers. Only Site 3 passed on risks (i.e. financial liability) to a commissioned provider. YOT interviewees at the other sites reported that their providers would have refused to undertake the contracts had risk been transferred onto them.

## **Involvement of sentencers**

Sentencers interviewed in Sites 1 and 2 confirmed that they were aware of Pathfinder. They generally supported the aim of avoiding criminalising children and young people and finding appropriate alternatives to custody.<sup>17</sup> They suggested that (in these sites) their engagement with Pathfinder had reinforced their trust in YOT staff, who provided valid and balanced views of young people's likelihood of re-offending and appropriate interventions to affect behaviour change.

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<sup>17</sup> Due to the time taken to apply for and receive permission to interview sentencers it was not possible to interview sentencers from all the sites in Year One (see Appendix).

## 6. External factors

### Learning points: Influence of external events

The following external factors were perceived to have facilitated the implementation and delivery of Pathfinder in Year One:

- YJB support (including workshops, quarterly meetings with the sites and data management information packs);
- physical proximity between courts and YOTs facilitated close-working relationships between YOT staff and sentencers.

In contrast, the following external factors were perceived to have hindered the implementation and delivery of Pathfinder in Year One:

- YOT inspections, changes to YOT budgets and subsequent restructurings;
- the public disturbances in August 2011 were perceived in three sites to have affected custodial sentencing practices by creating a more severe sentencing climate during and after the disturbances. Interviewees in two sites also felt that this had led to a loss of confidence in their ability to achieve the required bed night reductions.

Interview and workshop findings indicated that external factors had a major effect on the way in which the sites responded to Pathfinder during the bidding process and the implementation phase in Year One.

### 6.1 Impact of other initiatives and events

The delivery of Pathfinder has taken place in a rapidly changing policy and fiscal environment beyond the control of the sites and the YJB. The bids were developed within a context of increasing local accountability that provided youth justice services with new opportunities to exercise discretion.

The following developments both benefited and hindered implementation.

- **Unexpected events** – The August public disturbances in 2011<sup>18</sup> were seen by the YJB and interviewees from Sites 2, 3 and 4 as a major disruptive factor in the implementation of the pilot during Year One. There was a perception among YOT interviewees in those sites that the disturbances had impacted on the custody bed

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<sup>18</sup> In August 2011, thousands of people caused disturbances and looting, in several London boroughs and in cities and towns across England, after a protest in Tottenham (London) about the police shooting of a local man. Of the 3,103 people brought before the courts by 10th August 2012 for offences related to the August public disorder, 27% were aged 10–17 years. See: Ministry of Justice (2012).

night target by creating a more severe sentencing climate during and after the disturbances. Interviewees at Sites 3 and 4 felt that this had also led to a loss of confidence in their ability to achieve the required bed night reductions.

It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to verify objectively the views from the sites. National figures demonstrate that there was a small increase in the duration of custodial sentences for youths (7.3 to 8.0 months), comparing sentencing outcomes in England and Wales in 2010 with those following the disturbances in August 2011 (Ministry of Justice, 2012). Following the disturbances, YJB worked with the sites in cross-site workshops and meetings to explore staff perceptions regarding the impact of these events and to provide additional data.

- **Changing offending background of young offenders – YOT** interviewees suggested that the more successful they were in diverting young people from custody the more difficult it became to reduce custody bed nights. This is because those sentenced to custody would have committed more serious offences and/or had a longer offending history, and therefore would have received longer custodial sentences.<sup>19</sup> High-level analysis of sentence length data in Site 1 showed that although the number of young people receiving Detention Training Orders (DTOs)<sup>20</sup> had fallen, the average length of detention for DTOs had increased. However, further analysis would be required to confirm whether this increase in sentence length was sufficiently important to affect custody bed night targets.
- **Funding – YOT** interviewees from across all the sites reported financial reductions (although funding actually increased when calculated on the basis of YOT-caseload).<sup>21</sup> YOTs perceived this to affect their ability to achieve their targets due to a possible range of factors (including re-structuring and job losses in some sites; and some staff felt their motivation and confidence levels were also affected). Interviewees anticipated further financial reductions in Year Two.  
In addition, some interviewees expressed concerns regarding the forthcoming transfer of police budgets from the Home Office to the Police and Crime Commissioners in

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<sup>19</sup> As the national proven re-offending rate has risen in the last few years the overall number of young people in the re-offending cohort has decreased, with particular reductions among those with no previous offences and those receiving pre-court disposals. As a consequence of this, the young people in the youth CJS are likely to be, on balance, more challenging to work with. See: YJB/MoJ (2013).

<sup>20</sup> DTOs are determinate youth (10 to 17 years) custodial sentences which can last from four months to 24 months in length. A young person spends the first half of the order in custody and the second half released on licence.

<sup>21</sup> In each of the four sites the total funding divided by number of young people on YOT caseload increased between 2010-11 and 2011-12 (Sources: 2010-11 unpublished figures provided by YJB; 2011-12 figures derived from MoJ/YJB 2013). Figures for 2012-13 will be published in early 2014.

November 2012.<sup>22</sup> As YOTs received a proportion of their budget from the Home Office, some interviewees felt this change might reduce their funding, and thereby hinder the implementation of Pathfinder.

On the other hand, external developments, such as the Troubled Families programme introduced in April 2012,<sup>23</sup> were perceived as opportunities. Some interviewees saw this as a way to develop early-intervention work. In one site, staff saw this programme as a source of funding through which MST could be maintained post-Pathfinder.

The effect on Pathfinder of the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) 2012 had at time of writing yet to be observed. However, in preparation for the transfer of youth secure remand budgets to local authorities in April 2013, some YOTs had begun to use the YJB remand toolkit<sup>24</sup> to help them reduce custodial remands.

- **Inspections and local changes** – In Sites 2 and 3 YOTs were undergoing inspections around the time when Pathfinder commenced (November 2011 to January 2012).<sup>25</sup> Some interviewees at these sites suggested that these inspections had diverted focus away from the pilot early in the early stages of implementation, which could have led to delays. Following local restructurings in Site 2, some YOTs are now part of the same joint service. Interviewees at this site indicated that it is principally this restructure, rather than Pathfinder, which improved partnership working among YOTs.
- **Court and YOT location** – physical proximity between courts and YOTs facilitated close-working relationships between YOT staff and sentencers. However, in Site 3 YOT interviewees perceived that court closures had hindered their work, as this required them to engage with unfamiliar court staff.

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<sup>22</sup> Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) were introduced with the aim of making the police accountable to the public. PCCs are also responsible for working in partnership with a number of agencies at a local and national level. In London police funding was transferred to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

<sup>23</sup> 'Troubled families' are those that have a range of complex needs and also cause problems to their community putting high costs on the public sector. In April 2012, the Government launched the Troubled Families programme, which aims to: get children back into school; reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour; put adults on a path back to work; and reduce the high costs these families place on the public sector each year. The government is increasing local authority budgets by £448 million over three years on a payment-by-results basis to implement the programme. For further details see: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-troubled-families-turn-their-lives-around>> accessed 2 July 2013.

<sup>24</sup> See YJB Remand Toolkit: <<http://www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/toolkits#remand>> accessed 2 July 2013.

<sup>25</sup> The YOT representatives interviewed acknowledged that these were planned inspections; therefore they were aware that they were going to take place at the same time as Pathfinder.

## 6.2 The support role of the YJB

Pathfinder is intended to give local authorities the freedom and flexibility to respond to local needs and demands. This, along with the financial claw-back mechanism, was intended to encourage innovation and improve performance. During interviews, YJB staff discussed having to balance the aims of the pilot with the need to provide the sites with the necessary support.

- From the start, YJB made the sites aware of the aims of the pilot and that they would be responsible for their own performance improvement.
- At the same time 'facilitative' support was provided to enable YOTs to share best practice. This included: quarterly information and best practice sharing workshops; quarterly meetings with the sites to review progress; attendance at project board meetings and conferences; the provision of quarterly management information packs, including data analysis; a dedicated email address for dealing with queries; a formal dispute resolution process; and a formal process to deal with data discrepancy. In addition, general offers of support were made at the quarterly workshops, although these were only taken up by one site towards the end of the first year.

YOT interviewees indicated that the YJB had been helpful and responsive during the bidding process and during early discussions. There was consistent positive feedback from the sites on the learning opportunities offered by YJB workshops.

Notwithstanding this support, interviews with some sites later suggested that they had not fully understood the implications of Pathfinder. Staff in those sites may therefore have expected more direct intervention and assistance from the YJB from an early stage (over and above the support already provided). However, this would not have been consistent with approach underpinning the pilot.

## 7. Exiting

At the time of writing, two of the sites had invoked the 'break clause' (see section 3.2) and had withdrawn from Pathfinder.<sup>26</sup>

### Negotiations around exiting

From an early stage in the pilot, operational managers in one site, which later withdrew from Pathfinder, had concerns about meeting their target and had begun to think about invoking the 'break clause'. Local partners in this site believed that given the performance against their target during Year One, some level of 'claw back' would be likely at the end of Year Two. Thus, staying in Pathfinder was not seen as an option. YJB interviewees indicated that they had met with senior managers from this site and others to discuss ways in which they could remain in the pilots. However, towards the end of Year One, some YOT interviewees perceived that communication sometimes broke down during negotiations in relation to exiting. This may have led to a mismatch of expectations about the potential for renegotiation.

There was a perception from interviewees in one site that greater flexibility from the YJB at an earlier stage might have changed their decision, particularly had YJB accepted proposals to change the baseline year (e.g. using a three- or five-year average rather than 2010/11). However, YJB interviewees indicated that in terms of the underpinning logic model, shifting the baseline period (so that the target would require a lower reduction in custody bed nights) would not provide a true test of the model. This could also draw potential criticism from independent bodies for "moving the goal posts"<sup>27</sup> to account for under-performance of a particular site. Furthermore, the majority of the Pathfinder sites themselves had agreed to the baseline period and metrics and did not want any retrospective changes applied.

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<sup>26</sup> Payments for the sites that withdrew were stopped when their contracts were terminated and monies under-spent were recovered by the YJB.

<sup>27</sup> Quote from YJB interviewees.

## 8. Progress against targets at the end of Year One

The following findings are based on a high-level analysis of provisional youth custody bed night data, provided by the YJB. These figures will be finalised in early 2014.

Table 8.1 sets out the total number of custody bed nights for the baseline year and for Year Two (target measurement period). The number of bed nights used during the first year is also included to show indicative progress towards the target; however, bed nights used during this period will not be counted in Year One, as this is the foundation year (see section 3.2).<sup>28</sup>

At the end of Year One compared to the baseline: Site 1 achieved a 26 per cent reduction, Site 2 showed an increase of 4 per cent, and Sites 3 and 4 demonstrated larger increases (14% and 23% respectively). Over the same period, a downward trend was seen across England & Wales (-8% or -10% excluding the four pilot sites).

**Table 8.1: Total youth custody bed nights across the four Pathfinder sites in Year One compared to baselines**

|               | No. of custody bed nights<br>Baseline Year<br>(Apr 2010 to<br>Mar 2011) | Target number<br>of custody bed<br>nights in Year<br>Two (Oct 2012<br>to Sept 2013) | Target percentage<br>reduction of<br>custody bed nights<br>in Year Two (Oct<br>2012 to Sept 2013) | No. of custody<br>bed nights in<br>Year One<br>(Oct 2011 to<br>Sept 2012) | Percentage<br>change<br>between Year<br>One and the<br>baseline |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Site 1</b> | 47,157  | 37,725  | -20%  | 34,938  | -26%  |
| <b>Site 2</b> | 20,262  | 17,871  | -12%  | 21,086  | +4%   |
| <b>Site 3</b> | 50,069  | 44,061  | -12%  | 57,324  | +14%  |
| <b>Site 4</b> | 27,649  | 22,396  | -19%  | 33,934  | +23%  |

Figure 8.1 shows the sites' progress to date against a standardised end of pilot target.<sup>29</sup> Custody bed night figures rose during the quarter preceding the pilot (July-September 2011) across the four sites. This may be due to the August disturbances in 2011, although in some sites this upward trend had already started in the previous quarter. By the end of the first year of Pathfinder, many of the young people brought before the courts for disturbance-

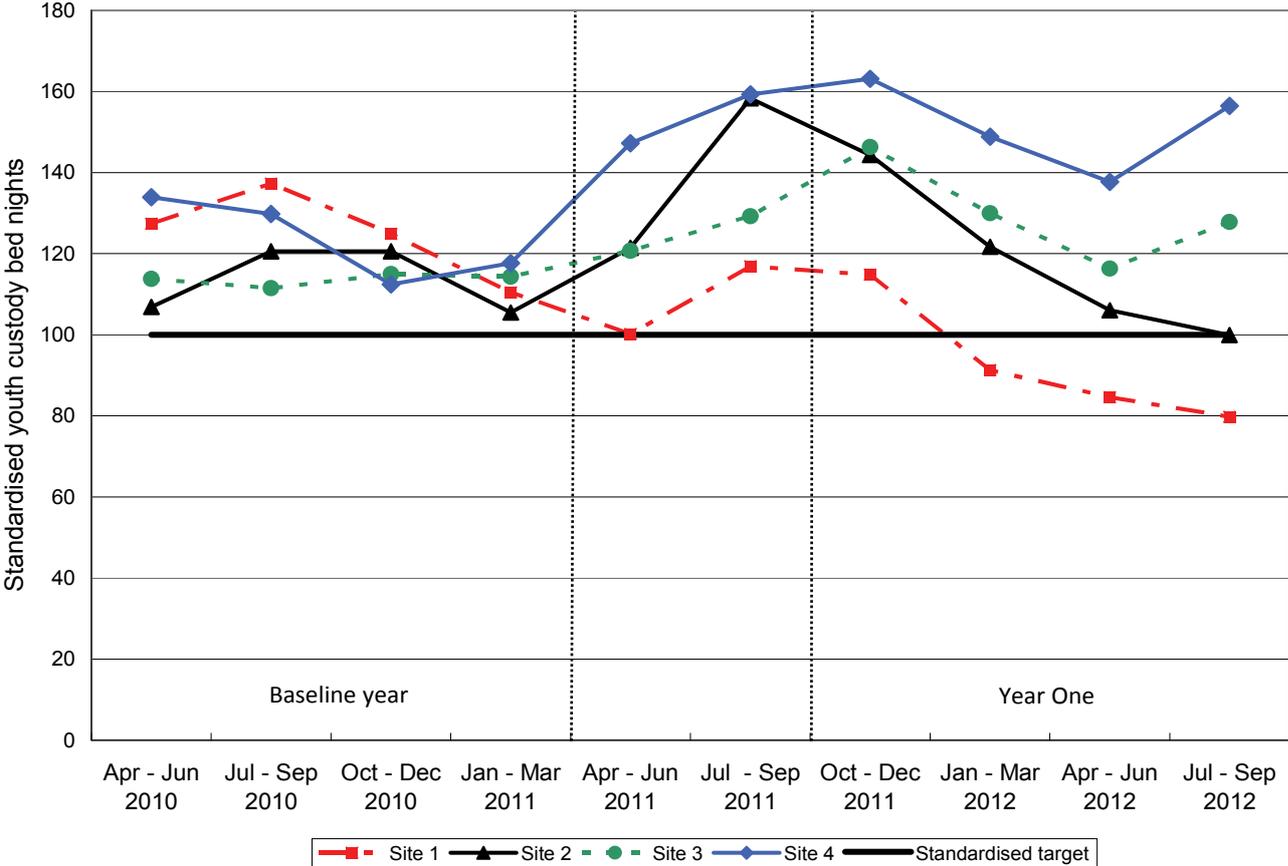
<sup>28</sup> Except Site 1 which negotiated its targets to be split across the two years (i.e. 10% in Year One and 10% in Year Two).

<sup>29</sup> This method allows for measurement of progress across the four sites relative to their individual targets. Standardised figures were calculated by dividing quarterly custody bed night figures by the sites' respective average quarterly targets (i.e. total number of bed nights in Year Two divided by 4) and multiplied by 100. The standardised quarterly target is shown at 100 on Figure 8.1. For example, a figure of 120 indicates that the quarterly custody bed nights figure in the site in question was 20% above the average quarterly end of year target.

related offences may have already been sentenced and released from custody.<sup>30</sup> As final performance is not measured until the end of Year Two,<sup>31</sup> further analysis would be needed to quantify the impact of the disturbances on the end of pilot targets.

By the last quarter of Year One, Sites 1 and 2 ended below, or on the standardised target, whilst Sites 3 and 4 finished above.

**Figure 8.1: Progress to date against standardised end of pilot targets**



<sup>30</sup> In 2011/12 in England and Wales, the average length of time young people spent in custody was 77 days. The majority of young people (58%) were serving DTOs for an average of 107 days. A further 24% were held on custodial remand for an average of 42 days. The remaining 18% were serving longer-term sentences for an average of 353 days (YJB/MoJ 2013).

Longer-term sentences are: Section 90 sentences are for young people convicted of murder. Section 91s are equivalent to a discretionary life sentence, this indeterminate sentence is for young people convicted of an offence other than murder for which a life sentence may be passed on an adult. Section 226 (detention for life and detention for public protection) is imposed if the court decides that on the basis of the risk presented by the young person an extended sentence would be inadequate to protect the public. Section 228 sentences are for specified offences where the young person is assessed as dangerous and in these cases the court can impose an extended sentence for public protection. The extension applies to the licence period and does not affect the length of the custodial term (YJB/MoJ 2013).

<sup>31</sup> Except Site 1 which negotiated its targets to be split across the two years (i.e. 10% in Year One and 10% in Year Two).

## 9. Lessons

This section sets out the main lessons from the first year of implementation of Pathfinder.

- There needs to be agreement between the commissioner and the provider on a single data source to be used for target measurement and this needs to be included in the contract. The data used should be processed and quality-assured to a standard which engenders mutual trust and confidence in the findings (e.g. badged as official or national statistics).<sup>32</sup>
- Commissioning a consortium of several local authorities could help to spread risk and address volatility in relation to custody bed nights. At a local authority level the numbers of young people in custody can be small, and therefore trends are more likely to be volatile and also susceptible to changes produced by 'spike events'. Also, a consortium allows custody bed night increases to be offset against reductions across the participating local authorities.
- A model based on detailed data analysis to help identify entry points to custody should be considered. This approach could help inform the future development and delivery of interventions that have the potential to deliver change within the allocated timeframe.
- There is considerable variation in the capacity and capability of YOTs to effectively implement a pilot such as Pathfinder. This suggests that future schemes may need to be accompanied by targeted performance-improvement support to help build capacity and capability in data analysis and interpretation, problem solving approaches, and project implementation.

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<sup>32</sup> See UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics  
<<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/>> accessed 2 July 2013.

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## Appendix

### Research questions, methodology and fieldwork

#### Research questions

This process evaluation was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to answer the following research questions:

- How were target negotiations, agreement and contracts drawn up? What were the perceptions of those involved?
- What was the nature of the interventions scoped and delivered as part of the project?
- What other youth interventions were being delivered and what was their perceived impact?
- Was Pathfinder delivered by one or a number of agencies? How did partnership working operate? Did inter-agency working impact on the implementation and delivery of the project?
- To what degree did the initiatives and ways of working resemble those outlined in the original bid? What was the level of programme integrity?
- What were the stakeholder and delivery partners perceptions of what did and did not work, and why?
- What was the perceived impact of proposed national legislation (Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012) and did this affect the delivery of Pathfinder?
- What were the levers and barriers to delivery?
- What were the lessons from Pathfinder?

#### Methodology

Documentation from the MoJ and the Pathfinder sites was reviewed and purposive samples of stakeholders (selected to address the research questions) were obtained through consultation with the sites, MoJ and YJB. Fieldwork was conducted between November 2011 and March 2012 (Phase One) and between August and November 2012 (Phase Two), comprising (see Table A1.1):

- Interviews with strategic stakeholders and operational managers involved in Pathfinder. In total, 98 interviews were undertaken (48 interviews were conducted in Phase One and 50 interviews in Phase Two). These interviews took place with MoJ and YJB staff; Youth Offending Teams (YOT) heads, operational managers; chairpersons of YOT boards; local authority managers and the police; voluntary and community sector (VCS) service providers; and magistrates;

- Four Modelling Workshops were undertaken in Phase One involving 26 YOT heads and operational managers;
- In Phase 2, focus groups and interviews were undertaken with 26 front line YOT staff and workshops were conducted with 26 YOT heads and operational managers;
- Research team members also attended Pathfinder operational meetings and workshops held by the YJB with the pilot sites;
- Analysis of provisional YJB custody bed night data;
- Document review of business plans, contracts and other relevant papers.

**Table A1.1: Phases One and Two research activities across the sites and numbers of participants during Year One.**

| Research Activity | Phase One<br>(November 2011 to March 2012) |                | Phase Two<br>(August to November 2012) |                  |              | Totals     |
|-------------------|--|----------------|--|------------------|--------------|------------|
|                   | Strategic and Operational Staff            |                | Strategic and Operational Staff        | Front Line Staff |              |            |
|                   | Interviews                                 | Four workshops | Interviews                             | Interviews       | Focus Groups |            |
| MoJ and YJB       | 9  | -              | 4                                      | -                | -            | 13         |
| Site 1            | 12   | 4              | 20                                     | 1                | 6            | 43         |
| Site 2            | 9  | 10             | 10                                     | 1                | 10           | 40         |
| Site 3            | 9  | 7              | 9                                      | -                | 8            | 33         |
| Site 4            | 9  | 5              | 7                                      | -                | -            | 21         |
| <b>Totals</b>     | <b>48</b>                                  | <b>26</b>      | <b>50</b>                              | <b>2</b>         | <b>24</b>    | <b>150</b> |

Interview data were transcribed, coded and analysed by theme using MAXQDA software. Other qualitative data were analysed against the same themes. The purposive sampling of interview, focus group and workshop participants was dependent on stakeholder availability

