



Out of Courts Resolutions Scrutiny Panel

24/25 Annual Report

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Introduction

The Out of Court Resolution (OoCR) Panel has been instrumental in scrutinising and assessing the use of OoCR (such as cautions, community resolutions and youth restorative disposals) by Dyfed Powys Police. Membership includes representatives from across the Criminal Justice System, who provide feedback on individual cases with the aim of improving the use of OoCR. Whilst the Panel cannot change the original outcome of a case they can provide recommendations to the Force to promote best practice, identify training needs and influence policy change.

Rebranding / Panel Development and Leadership

In June 2024 following guidance from the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) the Scrutiny Panel rebranded from the Out of Courts Disposals scrutiny panel to the Out of Courts Resolutions Panel.

The NPCC noted that the Out of Court Disposals had been an umbrella term used for many years, but lacked any real identity or ownership. Therefore, after consultation with all Forces it was decided that this would change to the Out of Court Resolutions.

In February 2024 Mr David Evans JP stepped down as chair of the scrutiny panel following his retirement from the Magistrates. A discussion ensued regarding the suitability of Magistrates chairing any scrutiny panel meetings as this may impact their impartiality. It was therefore agreed that the Chief Executive of the OPCC would chair future OoCR scrutiny panel meetings from March 2024.

In January 2025 a new governance structure was created within Dyfed Powys Police. A panel representative from the OoCR now attends the Strategic Meeting for OoCR to provide the panel's feedback on adult cases considered. The meeting is chaired by the Chief Inspector of the Criminal Justice department and a similar structure is being considered for the youth cases.

Out of Court Resolutions

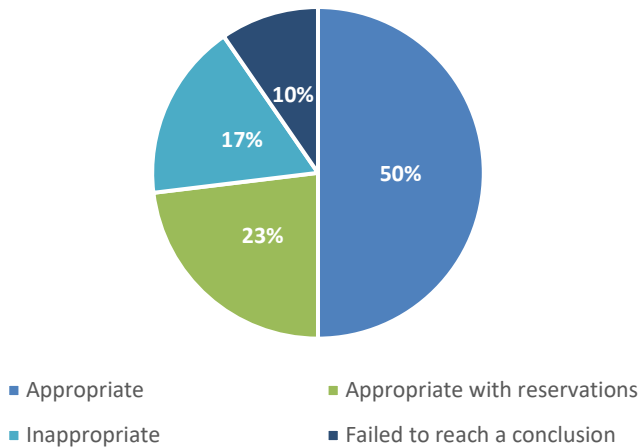
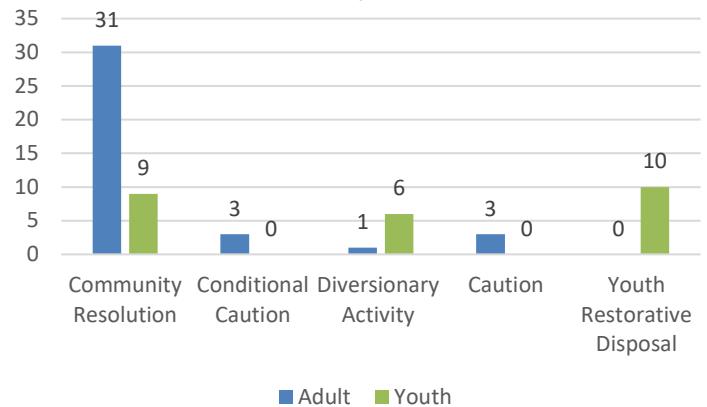
Delivering justice with fair outcomes
for victims, offenders & communities

Overview

During the period 24/25 the Panel have met on four occasions and have reviewed 32 adult cases and 24 youth cases. Themes covered during this period have been:

- Drug possession
- Assault and Actual Bodily Harm Offences
- Women/Hate Crime and Disproportionality
- Knife crime offences

Panels Assessment 24/25

Disposals considered by the Panel
24/25

Out of the cases reviewed this year the panel determined that **50% were an appropriate** use of the OoCR, **23% were appropriate with some reservations**, **17% were inappropriate** and the panel failed to reach a conclusion on **10% of the cases**.

Key Work Streams Reviewed in 2024 - 2025

1. Drug Offences – June 2024

The Panel reviewed a selection of nine youth and nine adult cases involving either the possession of drug(s) or the intent to supply drugs, which had been dealt with by way of an OoCR.

Of the 18 cases, 7 were deemed as an acceptable use of the OoCR, 3 appropriate but the panel had some reservations, 6 inappropriate and the panel failed to reach a conclusion on 2 of the cases.

The key findings/recommendations of this meeting included:

- Dyfed Powys Police officers to be reminded of the OoCR policy and when it is appropriate to issue an OoCR.
- Dyfed Powys Police officers to be reminded that Youth Referral Disposals (YRD) are not appropriate to be used in circumstances whereby by a youth has been involved for drug offences.

2. Assault and Actual Bodily Harm Offences – September 2024

The panel reviewed a selection of nine youth and nine adult cases involving the offence of Assault or Actual Bodily Harm which had been dealt with by way of an OoCR.

Of the 18 cases reviewed the panel determined that 8 were an appropriate use of the OoCR, 5 were appropriate but the panel had some reservations, 3 were inappropriate and the panel failed to reach a conclusion on 2 of the cases.

The key findings/recommendations of this meeting included:

- Dyfed Powys Police officers to be reminded of the parameters surrounding evidence led prosecution.
- Dyfed Powys Police officers to be reminded to include their rationale when issuing OoCR and explaining the justification.

3. Women/Hate Crime and Disproportionality – December 2024

The Panel reviewed 7 adult and 6 youth cases involving an offence involving Women/Hate Crime and Disproportionality which had been dealt with by way of an OoCR.

The panel concluded that of the 13 cases reviewed 4 were an appropriate use of the OoCR, 7 appropriate with reservations, and 2 inappropriate.

Key findings / recommendations made during this meeting included:

- Throughout the adult cases the panel identified that where a racially aggravated offence was identified the authorisation from an Inspector rank or higher was not present within the reports.
- The Panel raised concerns after noticing that racially aggravated charges were being dropped instead of being noted as no further action required. The Panel also noted that the charges were being dropped as a result of the suspect denying the allegation. The Panel agreed that this is an unacceptable reason to drop an offence. The Panel suggested that further training is required to educate officers of how to record a racially aggravated offence.
- A number of cases reviewed contained some inappropriate comments within the occurrence entry log. The Panel stressed the importance of ensuring all detail within any Force report is professional.
- The Panel identified the need to remind all staff of the importance to adhere to the OoCR policy and ensure all relevant detail is noted and captured within the reports.
- Concerns were raised with the inconsistent approach to issuing OoCR's across Dyfed Powys. The Panel raised their concerns that Youth Restorative Disposals were being issued for serious offences such as racially aggravated offences.

4. Knife Crime – March 2025

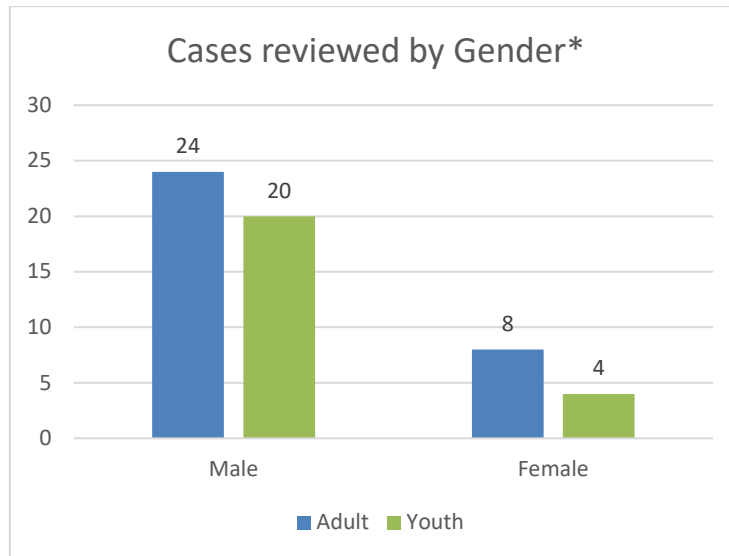
The Panel reviewed a selection of 6 adult and 6 youth cases involving a knife crime offence which had been dealt with by way of an OoCR. This report will focus on the panel's findings in relation to the youth cases.

The panel determined that of the 11 cases reviewed that 7 were an appropriate use of the OoCR, 1 appropriate with reservations, 2 were inappropriate and the panel failed to reach a conclusion on 1 of the cases.

The key findings/recommendations of this meeting included:

- Concerning to read that all youth cases occurred within a school setting. Although the panel noted the proactive work currently ongoing with the Youth Offending Team's (YOT's) and Dyfed Powys Police to develop a protocol for knife incidences in schools.

- Inconsistencies of OoCR's being issued across Dyfed Powys.
- In case 3 the panel raised their concerns that the offensive weapon charge was dropped and combined with the drug possession charge when it should have been dealt with separately.
- Some of the reports that the panel were provided with were not clear and were missing important information.



*Self-defined gender

Key Developments to improve efficiency

- Revised version of the new Terms of Reference.
- New Teams channel developed.
- Establishment of the new Strategic Out of Courts Resolution Board.
- Improved list of cases being brought to the panel to consider.

Impact of OoCR Scrutiny Work

As a result of the OoCR Scrutiny Panel's work has led to:

- Youth case marked on NICHE to ensure any future cases are to be brought to court.
- Individual feedback and areas of improvement given to officers involved in the cases.
- Message disseminated and cascaded to officers in Dyfed-Powys Police regarding the identified inappropriate use of Youth Restorative Disposals.
- Reminders sent to Dyfed-Powys Police officers regarding the importance of effectively working with the Youth Offending Teams.
- Improvements have been made in receiving Youth bureau reports.
- Feedback provided to Dyfed Powys Police, through the new strategic meeting on the below concerns:

- Inspector authorisation required for racially aggravated offences.
- Training on how to correctly record and de-record racially aggravated offences.
- OoCR Policy and checklist to be followed.
- Inappropriate comments being recorded within reports.
- Consistent approach to issuing OoCR across Dyfed Powys.

Looking Ahead

The OoCR will continue to independently assess, scrutinise and quality control the use of OoCR by Dyfed-Powys Police, to enhance public confidence and service delivery.