



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Embargoed until 00.01hrs on Tuesday 10 March 2020**

### **Youth Offending Teams celebrate 20 years of success with a call for a new commitment to working in partnership**

The Association of Youth Offending Team Managers (AYM) celebrated 20 years of success for youth offending teams (YOTs) at a reception in the House of Lords last night and called on their partner agencies - Police, Probation, Health, Education and Children's Social Care - to renew their commitment to work together to prevent offending by children.

The event in the House of Lords was hosted by two former chairs of the Youth Justice Board (YJB), Lord Norman Warner and Lord Tom McNally, and was attended by 70 guests including the new Minister responsible for Youth Justice, Lucy Frazer MP, and current chair of YJB, Charlie Taylor.

AYM Chair, Andy Peaden, who is also Head of Service at Leeds YOT, described YOTs as "the success story of multi-agency working in the 21<sup>st</sup> century" pointing to the reductions in the numbers of children entering the criminal justice system and the numbers of children in prisons.

Andy Peaden warned that continuing success depends on all partner agencies playing a significant role in the work of YOTs, so that YOTs remain as genuine multi-agency partnerships. He pointed to a recent poll of YOT managers which suggested that nearly half of managers believed that partner agencies had become less engaged with the work of the YOT, leaving local authorities to take key decisions, such as the appointment of the YOT manager, without reference to them.

"Genuine partnerships between local authorities, police, probation, health and social care have been a huge success", said Andy Peaden, "but these partnerships require hard work from all agencies. We have started to see agencies pulling back from their commitment. This can only have adverse consequences for children and victims of youth crime."

For further information contact Hazel Williamson, Vice-Chair of AYM and Head of Staffordshire Youth Offending Service on 01785 895313/07773574585

**END**

Notes for editors:

1. The full text of our bulletin on the governance arrangements for youth offending teams can be found on our website: <https://aym.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Special-Bulletin-March-2020.pdf>
2. The Association of YOT Managers Ltd (AYM) is the professional body representing managers in youth offending teams across England. Membership is voluntary, by subscription, and around 90% of YOTs have managers who are members.
3. YOTs are multi-agency teams, established under the Crime and Disorder (1998) Act, with the aim of co-ordinating local strategies to prevent offending by children. Every local authority with responsibility for children's social care is under a duty to ensure there is a YOT for its area. Police, Probation and the NHS have a duty to support the work of YOTs.