

**Safer & Stronger Communities  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**5 November 2019**



**County Durham Youth Justice Service (CDYJS)**

**Youth Justice Plan 2019 - 2021**

---

**Report of John Pearce, Corporate Director of Children & Young People's Services**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 This report presents the updated Youth Justice Plan 2019 – 2021. It highlights some of the key achievements in reducing re-offending during 2018/19 and provides the areas for improvement which the service will be focussed upon during the next twelve months. This is set out in the Service Improvement Plan (Appendix 4 of the Youth Justice Plan).

**Executive summary**

**Youth Justice Plan 2019 - 2021**

2. A copy of the Youth Justice Plan is attached (Appendix 2) for information.
3. The Plan outlines how the service will:
  - Reduce First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System;
  - Reduce re-offending by young people;
  - Reduce the use of custody for both sentenced and remanded young people.

By:

  - Improving how we communicate with young people and the interventions we complete with them;
  - Putting victims, including young victims, and restorative justice at the heart of everything we do;
  - Reducing re-offending by targeting our resources on those young people committing the most offences and improving their

engagement in opportunities for education, employment and training;

- Ensuring we have robust quality assurance and staff management processes in place and a skilled management team to manage those processes;
- Ensuring we listen and respond to what young people and their families are telling us;
- Ensuring volunteering, by both adults and young people, is a key component of the work we undertake with young people and victims;
- Ensuring that case management systems and administration support provide the highest quality support to staff and managers in the delivery of services to courts, communities and young people.

- 4 HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) are 18 months into a four-year programme of inspections of Services. County Durham is still awaiting inspection. HMIP published, in March 2018, an 'Inspection Framework for Youth Offending Services' which sets clear standards expected of Youth Offending Teams (YOT) which ensures the provision of a high quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people. Whilst there are many aspects of good performance contained within the current plan, the service is not complacent and continues to assess the quality of its provision against the new inspection standards. The outcome of this work informed the production of the new Youth Justice Plan for the period 2019 – 2021.
- 5 As part of the commitment to our long-held approach of 'children first and foremost', after the report on the plan to the council's cabinet, we changed our name to County Durham Youth Justice Service. This better represents the work of the service, presents a more positive image and underlines that young people who offend are not just offenders but have a range of attributes, skills and issues.

### **Recommendation(s)**

- 6 Safer & Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to:
  - (i) Note the contents of this report
  - (ii) Receive the Youth Justice Plan 2019 – 2021.

### **Background**

7. Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) – known in County Durham as the Youth Justice Service - are statutory partnerships, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people. Local Authorities are responsible for establishing a Youth Offending Team. Police, National

Probation Service (NPS) and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.

8. Local authorities continue to have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth offending partnership's responsibilities in producing this plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out:
  - How youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded;
  - How the YOS will be composed and funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.
9. The YJB welcomes plans that cover more than one year with the proviso that an annual refresh will be submitted which provides an update of key information, particularly in relation to finance and governance.
10. The current YJ Plan covers the two year period 2019/20 and 2020/21. The Plan provides an update covering the period 2018/19 for performance data and the period 2019/20 for service budgets, operational and strategic developments within the service and partnership, service structure and the Service Improvement Plan.
11. In accordance with statutory requirements the plan was approved by CDYOS Management Board on 21 May 2019, DCC Cabinet on 10 July 2019 and also by DCC County Council on 17 July 2019.
12. The refreshed Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. The deadline for submission was 5 August 2019. The Plan was approved by the YJB, the feedback being that the plan is considered '**Excellent Plan. Well structured. Several notable areas of effective practice and innovation. Positive emphasis on research**'. (YJB). After submission to the YJB, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP - lead for YOS inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons library for Ministers.

### **Key Achievements 2018/19**

13. Four key achievements have been identified and are outlined in the Executive Summary of the Plan. These are:-

## **(a) Performance against National Outcome Measures 2018/19**

### **(i) First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System (FTEs):**

Between October 2017 and September 2018 the rate of FTE per 100,000 10-17 population in County Durham is 250. This has reduced from 324 in the previous year. The rate is slightly higher than the national rate of 248 but is significantly lower than the North East Regional rate which is 329.

### **(ii) Re-offending**

Ministry of Justice (MoJ) data (April 2016 – March 2017 cohort) shows a re-offending rate of 41.4% which is a 10.8% reduction compared to the previous year. This is higher than the England rate which is 40.9% but below the North East rate which is 41.8%. It should be noted, however, that given the consistently reducing size of the cohort of young people entering the youth justice system, the reoffending figure can vary considerably when compared to previous years.

### **(iii) Use of Custody**

#### **(a) Custodial Sentences:**

The performance remains on par with previous years with a rate per 1,000 10-17 years of 0.42 during January - December 2018. This is higher than both the National and North East averages with rates of 0.32 and 0.30 respectively.

#### **(b) Remand Bed Nights: 679**

This is a 62% increase on the previous year. This is despite there being a reduction in both the number of young people being remanded to youth detention accommodation and the number of episodes, when compared to the previous year – 14 to 11 young people and 22 to 13 episodes. The increase in bed nights is due to most remands being for a significantly longer period (more bed nights) than those in the previous year.

### **(b) Co-Commissioned Health Model:**

During 2018/19 we have managed to 'mainstream' the funding for most of the health staff within the Service. The Health Team based in CDYOS comprises Public Health Nurse, Clinical Psychologist, Speech Language Therapists, Substance Misuse Specialists, and Mental Health Specialists. All posts, with the exception of the Clinical

Psychologist post (funded through NHS England Collaborative Commissioning Network) are now funded through the various mainstream commissions. This has provided a stable base from which we can plan future developments. This work has also been recognised nationally through the MJ Local Government Achievement awards where it was a finalist in the care and health integration category.

**(c) Work With Victims, including Young Victims:**

Our work with the victims of youth crime has engaged over 130 victims in restorative approaches. In particular, our work with young people who are the victims of youth crime has provided dedicated support and an opportunity to rebuild and restore confidence. The support group for young victims of all crime ('With Youth in Mind') has continued to develop and is now working with an average of 35 young people at any one time throughout the year. 'With Youth in Mind' is a finalist in the Children & Young People Now Awards 2019. We will learn whether we are a winner at a ceremony in November 2019. Young people who offend have also completed almost 3,000 hours of unpaid work in and across communities in County Durham as a means of reparation.

**(d) Targeting those young people committing the most offences**

The Service has continued to prioritise our work with young people who are persistently offending. The Service operates an enhanced, intensive, case management model for this cohort of young people. Each case is reviewed monthly by a panel chaired by the YOS Manager. The Service is developing a partnership-based trauma recovery model of enhanced case management for this cohort of young people. Monitoring of this work has continued to show that whilst significant reductions in offending are difficult to achieve, it is possible to have a meaningful impact in reducing both the frequency and seriousness of offending for this cohort.

**Conclusion**

14. This report presents the Youth Justice Plan for 2019/21 for the information of this committee. The plan has been approved by CDYOS Management Board, DCC Cabinet and full Council. Whilst this report

highlights good and improving performance, the service remains committed to continuing to drive-up performance both in terms of quality of work and outcomes achieved for young people.

## **Background papers**

- Youth Justice Plan 2019 - 2021

---

**Contact:** Martyn Stenton

Tel: 03000 268067

---

---

## **Appendix 1: Implications**

---

### **Legal Implications**

The Youth Justice Plan ensures Durham County Council and statutory partners meet their legal implications to the partnership. Statutory requirements placed on the YOS and the Management Board include: Complying with the statutory requirements laid out in s.38 to 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and other relevant sections of the Act; Complying with National Standards (NS) for Youth Justice (including returning the annual National Standards audit); Submitting required data to the YJB in adherence with the relevant YJB data recording guidance; Approving the annual Youth Justice Plan.

### **Finance**

The Youth Justice Plan contains CDYOS partnership pooled budget and staff secondment arrangements for 2019/20. CDYOS budget comprises partnership funding, YJB funding and specific grant funding. The budget allocation is reviewed annually by CDYOS Management Board and all partners (Police, Probation, Health (CCGs) and Local Authority) agree funding contributions for the following year. Under the terms of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998; DCC, Durham Constabulary, National Probation Service and CCGs are required to both contribute staff and provide funding for a pooled budget for operating costs. The total budget for CDYOS for 2019/20 is £2,657,036. The total budget for CDYOS includes the cost of staff seconded to CDYOS from partners.

### **Consultation**

CDYOS Management Board and partners have been consulted. There is no requirement for public consultation.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken in February 2018 as part of the preparations for the restructure of CDYOS. This ensured that development of the new structure and the development of that structure for CDYOS met all requirements and was conducted in a way that ensured equality and considered diversity. In addition, CDYOS is committed to meeting the needs of the young people, families and victims with whom we work. All staff have undertaken specialist diversity training for youth offending, SLCN training and, in addition, case managers have undertaken specialist diversity training for assessments. Diversity issues are a specific category on the checklist used by managers to countersign assessments and intervention plans.

## **Human Rights**

Not applicable

## **Climate Change**

None

## **Crime and Disorder**

The statutory function of CDYOS partnership is the prevention of offending by children and young people (Crime and Disorder Act 1998). The Youth Justice Plan provides detail on how the partnership will undertake those functions. See paragraph 12, above, for details of how this will be achieved.

## **Staffing**

Staff establishment is included in the plan, in line with YJB requirements.

## **Accommodation**

All managers and staff in CDYOS have been based at DCC, Crook from 26.4.18. The service also uses 'satellite bases', for meetings, interviews etc under agreements with partner agencies.

## **Risk**

Risks to future delivery have been considered and are included in the plan.

## **Procurement**

Not applicable