

**County Council**

**20 July 2022**

**County Durham Youth Justice Service,  
Youth Justice Plan 2022 – 2023**



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## **Report of Corporate Management Team**

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

**Councillor Ted Henderson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children & Young People's Services**

### **Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

### **Purpose of the Report**

- 1 This report presents the Youth Justice Plan 2022/23 for information and comment and highlights some of the key achievements in reducing re-offending during 2021/22 along with areas for improvement which the Service will focus on during the current year.

### **Executive summary**

- 2 Production of a Youth Justice Plan is a statutory requirement of the Local Authority under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and is one of the requirements of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) grant we receive. The plan must be submitted to the YJB by 30 June 2022 and will then undergo an approval process (with feedback) before finally being distributed to relevant bodies. The YJB has provided detailed guidance on the headings within the plan and the areas to be covered within each heading. Unlike previous years, the YJB requires the report to be submitted in the attached format, using the attached template.
- 3 At the time of producing this report, we are still awaiting notification from the YJB of the amount of YJB core grant for 2022-23. In addition, we are also still awaiting notification from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) of the amount of Remand Grant for 2022-23. We have, however, been informed that there will be a 'significant' uplift in the YJB grant this year. In addition, the Minister has written to all Youth Justice Services informing us of significant additional funding (total national funding will be £300 million over three years). This additional funding will be from

both the YJB and the MoJ in the form of grants for each Youth Justice Service, along with additional requirements in respect of programme developments and Key Performance Indicators. No further detail has been provided at this stage.

- 4 The attached plan, particularly the service improvement plan, has been developed prior to the announcement of the additional funding and new requirements. Therefore, the plan will be amended during the year as more information becomes available.

## **Key Achievements 2021/22**

### *Performance against National Outcome Measures 2021/22*

- 5 Data for the national outcome measures, produced by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and for both First Time Entrants (FTEs) and Re-offending, are based on data taken from the Police National Computer.

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

- (a) Between October 2015-September 2016 and October 2020-September 2021, we have achieved a **64.2% reduction** in first time entrants to the youth justice system, from a rate of **410** per 100,000 10-17 year olds to **147**;

#### Re-offending

- (b) Ministry of Justice (MoJ) data (April 2019 – March 2020 cohort) shows a re-offending rate of **33.5%** which is an **11.4% reduction** compared to the previous year. This is lower than the average England rate of 34.2%;

#### Use of Custody

- (c) Custodial Sentences:

Between 2013 and 2021 we have reduced the rate of custodial sentences from **0.73** to **0.13** per 1,000 10–17-year-olds;

- (d) The CDYJS rate per 1,000 10-17 population of 0.13 is higher than both the England and North East average rates of 0.10 and 0.06 respectively. This, therefore, remains a challenge for the Service to reduce, where appropriate, the use of custodial sentences. Each time a young person receives a custodial sentence, the role of CDYJS is reviewed to ensure that we have undertaken all appropriate tasks to ensure that custody is used as a last resort;

- (e) The most recent locally sourced information (April 2021-March 2022) shows **5 custodial sentences** which is a reduction of 5 from the previous year;

Remand Bed Nights: 5

- (f) The total bed nights for 2021/22 was **5 nights**. This is a **95% decrease** on the previous year. Each case where a young person is remanded to youth detention is reviewed and in all cases during the year, the remand to youth detention was considered appropriate due, mostly, to the seriousness of the offences but also due to the offending history of the young people.

*Work with Victims, including Young Victims*

- 6 Our work with victims of youth crime in 2021/22 has engaged a further 142 victims (both adults and young people) in restorative approaches. Our work with young people who are the victims of youth crime has provided dedicated support and an opportunity to re-build 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 around 35 young people at any one time throughout the year. Young people who offend have also engaged in 1,247 hours of unpaid work in and across communities in County Durham as a means of reparation.

*Targeting those young people committing the most offences*

- 7 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 YJS Manager. Monitoring of this work has continued to show that whilst significant reductions in offending are sometimes difficult to achieve, it is possible to have a meaningful impact in reducing both the frequency and seriousness of offending.

**Recommendation(s)**

- 8 Council is recommended to:
- (a) note the contents of this report;
  - (b) receive the Youth Justice Plan 2022/23.

## Background

- 9 Youth Offending Teams (referred to in County Durham as '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, the Probation Service (NPS) and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.
- 10 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 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:
  - (a) how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded;
  - (b) how the Youth Justice Service will be composed and funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.
- 11 This current plan covers performance for the period 2021/22 and provides service budgets, operational and strategic developments within the Service and partnership, service structure and the Service Improvement Plan for 2022 – 2023.
- 12 In accordance with statutory requirements, the plan was approved by CDYJS Management Board on 13 June 2022
- 13 The 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 this year was 30 June 2022. After submission to the YJB, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP - lead inspectorate for YJS inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons library.
- 14 A copy of the updated Youth Justice Plan is attached as Appendix 2.
- 15 The Plan outlines how CDYJS will:
  - (a) reduce First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System;
  - (b) reduce re-offending by young people;

- (c) reduce the use of custody for both sentenced and remanded young people.

16 We are seeking to do this through:

- (a) improving the interventions we complete with young people;
- (b) improving the quality of our assessments and plans;
- (c) targeting our resources on those young people committing the most offences;
- (d) ensuring that we listen and respond to what young people and their families are telling us;
- (e) continuing to improve our work with victims – both adults and young people;
- (f) ensuring that volunteering, by both adults and young people, is a key component of the work we do with young people and victims;
- (g) ensuring that case management systems and administration support provides the highest quality support to staff and managers in the delivery of services to courts, communities, victims, families and young people.

17 Alongside the formal plan which follows the specific template provided by the YJB, work is now taking place on a more accessible and shorter plan which will be shared with stakeholders when available.

18 HMI Probation is currently four years into a six-year inspection cycle. CDYJS and partnership are yet to be inspected under the current cycle. An Inspection Framework for Youth Offending Services was published in June 2020, which sets clear standards expected of the Youth Justice Service, to ensure 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 is fully aware of the areas where practice needs to change, and performance improve. We are also mindful of the lingering impact of COVID on our services, partner agencies, young people and families. We have completed a robust, detailed self-assessment against the published inspection standards. This work has informed our ongoing quality improvement plans and the Service Improvement Plan for 2022/23.

## **Background papers**

19 Youth Justice Plan 2022 – 2023 (Appendix 2)

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **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 Youth Justice Service and the Management Board include: Complying with the statutory requirements laid out in section 38 to 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and other relevant sections of the Act; Complying with National Standards for Youth Justice (including returning the annual National Standards audit); Submitting required data to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) in adherence with the relevant YJB data recording guidance; Approving the annual Youth Justice Plan.

### **Finance**

The Youth Justice Plan contains CDYJS partnership pooled budget and staff secondment/deployment arrangements for 2022/23. CDYJS budget comprises partnership funding, YJB funding and specific grant funding. The budget allocation is reviewed annually by CDYJS Management Board and all partners (Police, Probation, Health (ICB) and Local Authority) agree funding contributions for the following year. Under the terms of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998; DCC, Durham Constabulary, Probation Service and ICB are required to both contribute staff and provide funding for a pooled budget for operating costs. The total budget for CDYJS for 2022/23 is to be confirmed. The total budget for CDYJS includes the cost of staff seconded to CDYJS from partners.

### **Consultation**

CDYJS Management Board, partners, staff, young people, parents/carers have been consulted in updating the Youth Justice Plan. The portfolio holder for CYPS is briefed on it and the related inspection requirements for this service area.

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

CDYJS 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, speech language and communication needs 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. Over representation of any groups within the youth justice system is specifically covered in the plan.

## **Climate Change**

Not applicable.

## **Human Rights**

Not applicable.

## **Crime and Disorder**

The statutory function of CDYJS 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.

## **Staffing**

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

## **Accommodation**

All managers and staff in CDYJS have their main base in DCC, Crook.

## **Risk**

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

## **Procurement**

Not applicable.

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## **Appendix 2: County Durham Youth Justice Plan 2022 - 2023**

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See attached document.