

County Council

22 July 2015

**County Durham Youth Offending Service
Youth Justice Plan 2015/2017**



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Councillor Ossie Johnson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children
and Young People's Services**

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of the report is to present the County Durham Youth Justice Plan 2015/17 to Council for approval, subject to agreement by Cabinet on 15 July 2015. The Youth Justice Plan 2015/17 was approved by County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) Management Board (1 June 2015) in line with YJB/MoJ requirements. It will be submitted to the Youth Justice Board after Council approval.

Background

2. Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) 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 – County Durham Youth Offending Service in Co. Durham - within their area. Police, National Probation Service (NPS) and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.
3. It is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement a statutory 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.
4. CDYOS is accountable to a multi-agency Management Board, chaired by the Head of Children's Services, DCC. Membership and governance are reviewed annually in line with '*Modern Youth Offending Partnerships – Guidance on Effective Youth Offending Team Governance in England*' (MoJ/YJB, November 2013) to ensure they remain robust in a complex, changing operating environment.

5. Legal and data 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 for Youth Justice and reporting requirements for Community Safeguarding and Public Protection incidents
 - Adhering to the relevant Youth Justice Board (YJB) data recording guidance
 - Approving the annual Youth Justice Plan

Youth Justice Plan 2015/17

6. A copy of the Youth Justice Plan is attached for information. The plan highlights key achievements for 2014/15, key priorities, the service improvement plan for 2015/16, and the partnership pooled budget. A light touch refresh will be produced for 2016/17.
7. As stated in paragraph 3, the Youth Justice Plan is statutory. Key requirements of the plan (namely: structure and governance; resourcing and value for money; partnership arrangements; risks to future delivery) are prescribed by the Youth Justice Board (*'Youth Justice Plans: YJB Practice Note for Youth Offending Partnerships'*, YJB, March 2015).
8. After submission to the YJB, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (lead for YOS inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons library for Ministers.
9. The Plan outlines how CDYOS 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
 - Targeting our resources on those young people committing the most offences
 - 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

Key Achievements 2014/15

10. Key achievements are outlined in the Executive Summary. We are particularly proud of:
- improving performance in two of the three national outcome measures (First Time Entrants and Use of Custody); reducing remands to youth detention accommodation (both number of young people and bed nights); and reducing the number of young people re-offending and offences committed
 - achieving our lowest ever number of first time entrants (FTEs): 193; a 82.9% reduction since 2007/08 (1129 FTEs)
 - having only 20 custodial sentences (20% less than 2013/14)
 - our work on resettlement: 100% of young people leaving custody in 2014/15 had appropriate accommodation available prior to release
 - our work to support victims of youth crime
 - embedding new roles for volunteers in service delivery and having 70 trained active volunteers
 - our work to become communication friendly, including our Speech, Language and Communication Needs Strategy and the development of a range of innovative resources to address young people's speech, language and communication needs
 - the development of ClearCut Communication resources – the income from which will be used to improve outcomes for young people who offend and young victims in Co. Durham
 - implementing new ways of working to ensure value for money – while still improving performance
 - being awarded County Durham Young Carers Charter for how we support young people who offend who are also young carers
 - our staff and volunteers' hard work and continued commitment to reduce first time entrants, re-offending and the use of custody; their work to improve outcomes for young people, families, victims and communities; and their willingness to adapt to new challenges

Recommendations and reasons

11. Council are recommended to:
- a) Approve the Youth Justice Plan 2015/17

Background papers:

County Durham Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan 2015/17

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The Youth Justice Plan contains CDYOS partnership pooled budget 2015/16.

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

Risk – Risks to future delivery have been considered and are included.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – Have been considered.

Accommodation – Not Applicable.

Crime and Disorder – The statutory function of CDYOS partnership is the prevention of offending by children and young people (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

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Human Rights – Not Applicable

Consultation – CDYOS Management Board and partners have been consulted

Procurement – Not Applicable

Disability Issues – Have been considered

Legal Implications – The Youth Justice Plan ensures Durham County Council and statutory partners meet their legal implications to the partnership.