

**County Durham Youth Justice Plan  
2016/2017**

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**Report of Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director Children and Adult Services**

**Report of Cllr Ossie Johnson, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The purpose of the report is to present County Durham Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 to Council for approval subject to agreement by Cabinet on 13 July, 2016.

The key priorities in the plan are:

- To reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system
- To reduce re-offending
- To reduce the use of custody (both sentences and remands)

- 2 The Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 was approved by County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) Management Board (9 May 2016) in line with YJB/MoJ requirements. It will be presented to Cabinet and full Council (July 2016) for approval before submission to the Youth Justice Board. 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.

**Background**

- 3 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory responsibility on the Local Authority to establish a youth offending team – CDYOS in Co. Durham – and ensure that it is adequately resourced to deliver the range of youth justice services outlined in section 38(4) of the Act. Police, National Probation Service (NPS) and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in the funding and operation of the YOS. CDYOS is a statutory partnership.
- 4 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (s.40) places a duty on every Local Authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual Youth Justice Plan which sets out:
  - How youth justice services in the area are to be provided and funded, and
  - How the Youth Offending Service will be composed and funded, and what statutory functions the service is to carry out.

- 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
- 6 As well as reviewing the progress made in youth justice over the previous 12 months, the plan sets out the key priorities and next steps for the partnership, in particular for County Durham Youth Offending Service.
- 7 To achieve the key priorities in the plan, a range of actions is being implemented. Examples include:
  - Improving how CDYOS communicates with young people and the interventions the service completes with them
  - Putting victims, including young victims, and restorative justice at the heart of everything CDYOS does
  - Targeting resources on those young people committing the most offences
  - Ensuring robust quality assurance and staff management processes are in place and a skilled management team to manage those processes
  - Ensuring CDYOS listens and responds to what young people and their families say
  - Ensuring volunteering, by both adults and young people, is a key component of the work undertaken with young people and victims
  - Ensuring case management systems and admin support provides highest quality support to staff and managers
- 8 The Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 also sets out the resource plan for the service, including staffing and finance. Cabinet will note that the Youth Justice Plan is resourced through partnership activity and finance. In respect of the budget for 2016/17 the coming year will, again, present a challenge to maintain quality in the face of reducing grants and contributions. For example, the YJB grant for 2016/17 has reduced by 12% on top of an in-year cut of 12% during 2015/16. CDYOS has worked closely with the Safe Durham Partnership and PCVC in agreeing priorities for 2016/17.
- 9 Key achievements are outlined in the Executive Summary. We are particularly proud that:
  - We achieved our lowest ever number of First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System
  - We achieved our lowest ever number of custodial sentences
  - We achieved our lowest ever number of remand bed nights
  - We continued to reduce the number of young people offending and re-offending and the number of offences they commit
  - Two of our staff (Sarah Caden – Practice Improvement Officer and Susan Stewart – Speech and Language Therapist) were awarded a joint Butler Trust Award for their innovative work in developing and delivering both resources

for staff and a strategy for CDYOS in working with young people's speech, language and communication needs

- We achieved the Restorative Justice Council, Restorative Service Quality Mark for our restorative justice work across the service
- We agreed funding with the PCC for a post of Victim Liaison Officer (Young People)
- We agreed arrangements for the continued secondment of our Speech and Language Therapist
- We agreed arrangements for the continued secondment of our CAMHS Band 7 Nurse
- We have successfully implemented Asset Plus across the Service. Asset Plus is the new Youth Justice Board Assessment tool used for assessing young people.
- We achieved a further Investing in Volunteers Quality Mark

### **Recommendations**

- 10 Council are recommended to approve the County Durham Youth Justice plan for 2016/17.

### **Background papers:**

County Durham Youth Justice Plan 2016/17

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** – The YJ Plan includes detail on the budget for CDYOS for 2016/17

**Staffing** – The YJ Plan includes detail on CDYOS staffing for 2016/17

**Risk** - None

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** - None

**Accommodation** - None

**Crime and Disorder** – The YJ Plan includes detail on CDYOS contribution to the management and reduction of crime and disorder.

**Human Rights** - None

**Consultation** - None

**Procurement** - None

**Disability Issues** - None

**Legal Implications** – None