

Cabinet  
Council

29 October 2019  
26 November 2019

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Councillor P Seaman

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (People)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All wards

**Title:**

**Youth Justice Plan**

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**Is this a key decision?**

No – Although the Plan covers all wards of the City, it is not anticipated that the impact will be significant

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**Executive Summary:**

This paper is being submitted as notification that The Coventry Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan has been agreed and signed off by its Statutory Partners, and to seek Council endorsement.

Youth Offending Teams were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The functions assigned to the Youth Offending Service include the duty upon the local authority under the Children Act 1989 to take all reasonable steps to encourage children not to commit offences. The Act imposed a duty on each Local Authority acting in cooperation with its Statutory Partners, (Police, Health and Probation) to ensure that all Youth Justice services are available in their area to such an extent as it appropriate for the area.

The key tasks of the service are:

- Assessing and delivering interventions to the out-of-court-disposal cohort
- Management and delivery of community sentences
- Management and delivery of secure estate sentences and resettlement
- Servicing the Youth Court and Crown Courts (in terms of provision of a court team, bail & health assessments, provision of pre-sentence reports and stand down reports)
- Victim services
- Parenting services and management of Parenting Orders

The Crime and Disorder Act legislation also imposed a duty to complete and submit a Youth Justice Plan each year.

The Plan provides an overview of Coventry Youth Offending Service achievements against key indicators, plans and targets, and identifies the key strategic actions for the next 12 months.

Statutory Partners (Police Health, Probation, and Local Authority, represented by The Director of Children Services) agreed and signed off on the Plan in July 2019.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet is requested to:

- 1) Recommend that the Council endorse the Youth Justice Plan.

Council is requested to:

- 1) Endorse the Youth Justice Plan.

**List of Appendices included:**

The Coventry Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan 2019-20

**Background papers:**

None

**Other useful documents**

None

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

Yes - 26 November 2019

Report title: **Youth Justice Plan**

## **1. Context (or background)**

1.1 The Youth Justice Plan (the Plan) is completed annually, agreed by Coventry Youth Offending Service Management Board members and submitted to The Youth Justice Board. The current Plan has secured Board sign off and Council's endorsement is being sought. If the plan is not submitted, it breaches legislative requirements and places Coventry Youth Offending Service in breach of its Youth Justice Board (YJB) conditions of Grant agreement.

1.2 Coventry Youth Offending Service is required to report against three national indicators:

- Reducing the number of young people entering the Youth Justice system as First Time Entrants (FTEs)
- Reducing re-offending
- Reducing the use of custody for young people

### **1.3 Headlines 2018/19**

1.3.1 A positive fall in the number of First Time Entrants, from 311 in 2017/18 down to 235 in 2018/19.

1.3.2 The binary re-offending rate of 39.6% compared well to its comparators outperforming both the old and new family group plus the England figure. Only the Combined West Midlands' performance was slightly better. The picture is also positive when considering the rate of re-offences, with Coventry's rate at 1.26 versus a family rate of 1.84, and an England rate of 1.58.

1.3.3 Recorded the lowest custody rate on record for Coventry. The 2018/19 rate for Coventry sits below its primary comparator groups (Coventry at 0.23 v England 0.31 and family at 0.43).

1.3.4 Service user and stakeholder feedback processes continued to improve to inform service developments. In 2018/19 Coventry Youth Offending Service received feedback from 38 victims who completed a ratings evaluation (1 lowest, 5 highest) across five areas of practice. The aggregated score was 4.82 out of 5. The aggregated Magistrates ratings for Presentence Reports and Enforcement Reports was 17 out of a maximum score of 20.

1.3.5 There has been a significant increase in the number of remand bed nights used, more than doubling at 1015 for 2018/19 compared to 453 in 2017/18. A factor is the level of serious youth violence and this results in more cases being heard by the Crown Court (longer timeframe, compared to youth court, for concluding cases). The number of remand episodes only increased by four based on the previous counting period (10 v 14). Most of the lengthy remands have translated in to lengthy custodial sentences. This is considered as an indicator that the remand threshold was appropriately applied.

1.3.6 Two primary research informed models of practice and delivery to support young people at risk of exploitation, with a strong focus on gang exploitation, were secured. Coventry Youth Offending Service worked with Coventry's Police and Crime Board to submit a successful bid through the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to The Early Intervention fund which will develop a community mentoring asset and specialist mentoring for low to high risk young people. A teachable moment's service was also secured as part of that bid which is being delivered by St Giles. They are seeking to

engage young people who have been admitted to hospital because of violence offering support and mentoring.

- 1.3.7 Coventry Youth Offending Service led on a partnership bid securing funding from the Troubled Families Programme: Supporting Families against Youth Crime Fund (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government). This provides training for front line staff to support their responses to criminal exploitation and youth violence and provides mentoring for young people. The mentoring offer also includes an intensive whole family service for those where risk is greatest which is delivered by Catch 22.
- 1.3.8 Coventry Youth Offending Service continued to invest in training staff to deliver Restorative Justice (RJ) and the service holds The Restorative Justice Councils Quality Assurance Mark. In 2018/19 three Coventry Youth Offending Service Support Officers completed the BTEC Level 3 Advanced Award in Principles of Restorative Justice. Last year the impact of this ongoing investment translated in to 21 victims and offenders participating in a face to face restorative process. This secured a binary re-offending rate considerably below that of main Coventry Youth Offending Service cohort (11% versus 39.6%). In addition to this a secondary victim contact rate of 95% was again achieved.
- 1.3.9 Last year there was an increase in reported youth violence. Coventry, like many large cities, has experienced very serious youth violence, a 25% increase locally (Coventry Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2019) and this presents a significant challenge for local partnerships. The priorities for this year's Youth Justice Plan heavily reflect this agenda.

#### 1.4 **Our priorities for 2019/20 include**

- 1.4.1 Review prevention (Early Help, point of arrest diversion) and Out of Court Disposal activity. Coventry Youth Offending Service and Early Help will undertake a self-assessment against the YJB National Standard 1, retaining a focus on Her Majesty Probation Inspectorate quality indicators for Domain 3 and the Her Majesty Probation Inspectorate Out of Court Disposal thematic report to inform planning to strengthen this area of practice.
- 1.4.2 Improve the response to criminal exploitation. This activity includes:
- Supporting the development of a public health approach in Coventry
  - Supporting the delivery of the Early Help Youth Fund and Supporting Families Youth Crime activities
  - Enhancing the communication channels, intelligence sharing across partners
  - Membership of strategic groups such as the new Coventry Youth Violence Partnership Board
  - Developing successful bids which has enabled partners to offer a range of interventions from developing resilience in the primary population through to teachable moments activities in hospitals. It is anticipated that this can be extended to police custody also through a separate funding stream
  - Training for professionals, parents and communities
  - Targeted offender management activity using both criminal and civil controls
  - Supporting the development of the "exploitation team" (previously specific to Child Sexual Exploitation) within Children's Services Early Help and Protection area. This includes developing process, assessment and matching young people to appropriate support. This team is co-located in Coventry Youth Offending Service Mentoring offer through Catch 22 for young people who are in the criminal justice system and engaged or believed to be engaged in urban street gang activity

- Mentors who have experienced some of the same challenges as the young people they are seeking to mentor (provided by St Giles)
- 1.4.3 Ensure that victims receive a high-quality service that supports their recovery. Coventry Youth Offending Service continues to offer a restorative justice service to all victims who provide consent. This year consideration will be given to how an increase in feedback levels can be secured to ensure a representative picture of experience is available to inform service developments.
- 1.4.4 Coventry Youth Offending Service is also offering an ongoing training programme to partners to support the use of restorative conversations through to conference in several settings. The primary focus remains on training accommodation providers both Local Authority and private sector. This also supports the priority of reducing the unnecessary criminalisation of the Looked After Children (LAC) population.
- 1.4.5 Work with West Midlands Youth Offending teams, partners and secure providers to seek to standardise the core quality indicators/evidence to inform self-assessment against the new Youth Justice Board Standards. Coventry Youth Offending Service is leading a regional exercise, completing in the autumn to work with key partners, including the local secure estate to agree a set of core quality indicators. This does not prevent areas from having an additional set of local indicators, which will reflect local delivery models. The initial standard the approach will be applied to is Standard 4 Secure Settings as it is anticipated the commonality would be greatest in this area. The outcome of the exercise will be reported back to the West Midlands Heads of Service group who have all committed to testing this approach and a decision will be made as to whether this approach is rolled out across all standards. The Quality Indicators framework can then be utilised by Coventry Youth Offending Service Management Board leads to complete the self-assessment with their working groups.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 Completion and submission of this plan is compulsory under Crime and Disorder Act legislation. It is requested that Cabinet recommend that the Council endorse the Youth Justice Plan.

## **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 All statutory Partners are consulted under a statutory duty imposed by Crime and Disorder Act. All Management Board members are consulted and contribute, although only statutory partner's cooperation is required. Young Service users were consulted with to inform the setting of priorities.

### **3.2 Statutory Members are represented by:**

- Director of Children's Services
- Strategic Lead Children's Services
- Chief Inspector, Coventry, West Midlands Police
- Head of National Probation Service, Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire
- Joint Commissioning Manager Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group & Coventry City Council
- Head of Specialist Health Services for Children and Young People

### 3.3 Other members include:

- Head of Environmental Services Street Scene and Regulatory Services
- Manager – Prospects
- Chair and Deputy Chair of The Magistrates Youth Panel
- Head Teacher, Coventry Virtual School

All the above agreed the Plan.

## 4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 YJB grant conditions state that receipt of grant is conditional on submission of a strategic plan. The YJB recognise that local political processes do not necessarily tie in with submission dates and therefore they accept a draft plan, which had to be submitted by the 5 August 2019. The plan was submitted in line with the deadline.

## 5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

### 5.1 Financial implications

Grant funding from YJB may be withheld/withdrawn if the plan is not submitted in line with Crime and Disorder Act legislation requirements.

The table below shows the Annual Budget contributions from the Partner Agencies for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The increases in contributions from Police, Health and Local Authority are linked to staffing cost increases (including additional post to meet increased demand).

| Agency                        | Annual Budget    |                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                               | 2018-19          | 2019-20          |
| Local Authority               | 743,084          | 766,382          |
| Police                        | 73,014           | 76,252           |
| Police and Crime Commissioner | 85,000           | 85,000           |
| Probation                     | 55,177           | 53,066           |
| Health                        | 93,267           | 103,959          |
| YJB                           | 526,139          | 520,878          |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>1,575,681</b> | <b>1,605,537</b> |

There has also been funding received in 18/19 and 19/20 of £477K as part of the grant bid referenced at para 1.3.7.

### 5.2 Legal implications

Section 40 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority, after consultation with the relevant bodies, to formulate and implement for each year a Youth Justice Plan setting out how Youth Justice Services in the area are to be provided and funded and how the Youth Offending Service teams established are to be composed and funded, how they will operate and what functions they are to carry out.

## 6. Other implications

- 6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan [www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)

**Primarily activities support;**

- Protecting our most vulnerable people
- Improve health and well being
- Make communities safer
- Improving educational outcomes
- Reducing the impact of poverty

**Activity within The Youth Justice Plan is aligned locally to plans that include;**

- Local Police and Crime Board
- Local Policing Plan
- Coventry Sustainable Communities Strategy

**6.2 How is risk being managed?**

Risk to YJB grant, has been managed by consulting with partners in a timely manner to facilitate sign off and submission of the draft plan (grant requirement). The report is also submitted now for endorsement in line with statutory duties and good practice requirements.

**6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The plan presents a balanced budget and no immediate implications for other groups. The Plan details the risks going forward in to 2020/21.

**6.4 Equalities/Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)**

Legislative changes, such as pre court disposal options have been subject to substantial Equalities/Equality Impact Assessments activity under Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board. No adverse impact has been identified

This is not a new activity.

**6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

None

**6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

Partners have all participated in agreement and sign off the Plan and there are no implication arising post sign off.

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