
Cabinet
Council

3 October 2023
17 October 2023

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Councillor P Seaman

Director approving submission of the report:

Interim Director of Children's Services

Ward(s) affected:

All wards

Title:

Coventry Youth Justice Plan – 2023-25 Strategy

Is this a key decision?

No - although the proposals affect more than two electoral wards, the impact is not expected to be significant.

Executive summary:

This paper is being submitted as notification that the Coventry Youth Justice Service (CYJS) - Youth Justice Plan has been agreed and signed off by its Chair, the Interim Director of Children's Services, and to seek Council endorsement.

Youth Justice Services (known as Youth Offending Teams) were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 with the principal aim being to prevent offending behaviour by children. The Act imposed a duty on each local authority together with its statutory partners, Police, Health, and Probation, to ensure that adequate Youth Justice Services are available in their area.

The key tasks of the service are:

- Management and delivery of community sentences
- Assessing and delivery of Out of Court Disposal interventions
- Assessing and delivery of diversion² support to children at risk of entering the Youth Justice System.
- Management and delivery of secure estate sentences and resettlement
- Servicing the Youth Court and Crown Courts (in terms of provision of the court team, Bail & Health Assessments, provision of Pre-Sentence Reports and Stand-down Reports)
- Parenting services and management of Parenting Orders
- Victim services

The legislation also imposed a duty to complete and submit a Youth Justice Plan each year. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) provide a grant to the Service, outline delivery expectations and oversee performance for youth justice services; as part of their grant, the YJB have mandated a template for all youth justice plans and thus the plan has been presented in this format.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

- 1) Endorse acceptance of the Coventry Youth Justice Plan - 2023-25 Strategy and recommend that Council endorse it.

Council is requested to:

- 1) Endorse the Coventry Youth Justice Plan - 2023-25 Strategy.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 – Coventry Youth Justice Plan - 2023-25 Strategy

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

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

No

Will this report go to Council?

Yes – 17 October 2023

Report title: Coventry Youth Justice Plan - 2023-25 Strategy

1. Context (or background)

1.1. The plan demonstrates, in line with the Youth Justice Board (YJB) grant requirement, the continued delivery of services as set out in s38 Crime and Disorder Act 1998. CYJS has submitted the plan in line with the mandated YJB structure. The plan demonstrates the delivery of the Service’s functions and the methods for achieving this in line with the grant requirement. The plan presents an analysis of youth justice provision in Coventry, our performance, arrangements for delivery and resourcing, and emerging risks and challenges; this analysis has enabled the formation of a new vision, aligned priorities, and a new improvement and business plan for 2023-25.

1.2. Headlines 2022/23

1.2.1 Performance and outcomes for children, families, and communities¹

The last year has seen:

First Time Entrants

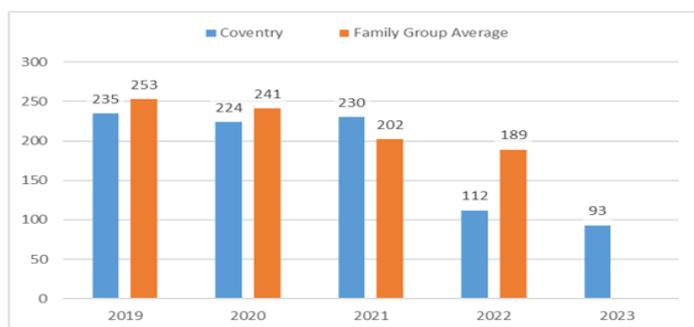


Table 1: FTEs per 100,000 of the 10–17-year-old population, Coventry YJS 2019-23

More children being supported by the Service through diversion offers, reducing the number of children with formal criminal records.

The family group are Coventry’s statistical neighbours as defined by the Youth Justice Board.

Reoffending

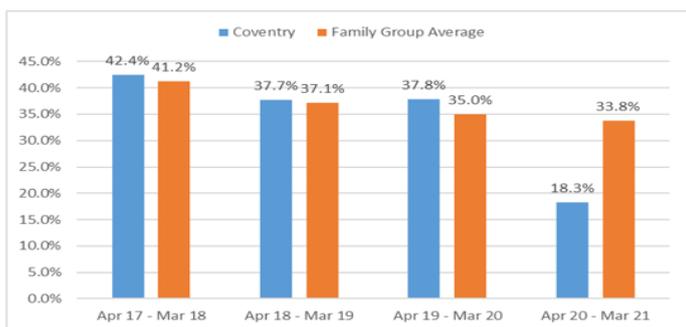


Table 2: Children/Young People reoffending within a year, Coventry YJS 2017-2021

The number of children who have reoffended reducing, though some caution is noted here due to the latent impact of Covid 19 pandemic on the adult justice system.

Use of Custody

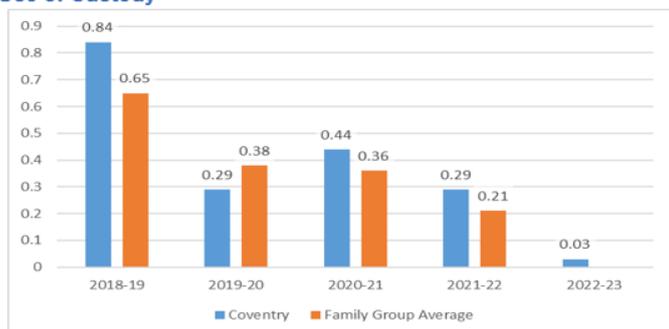
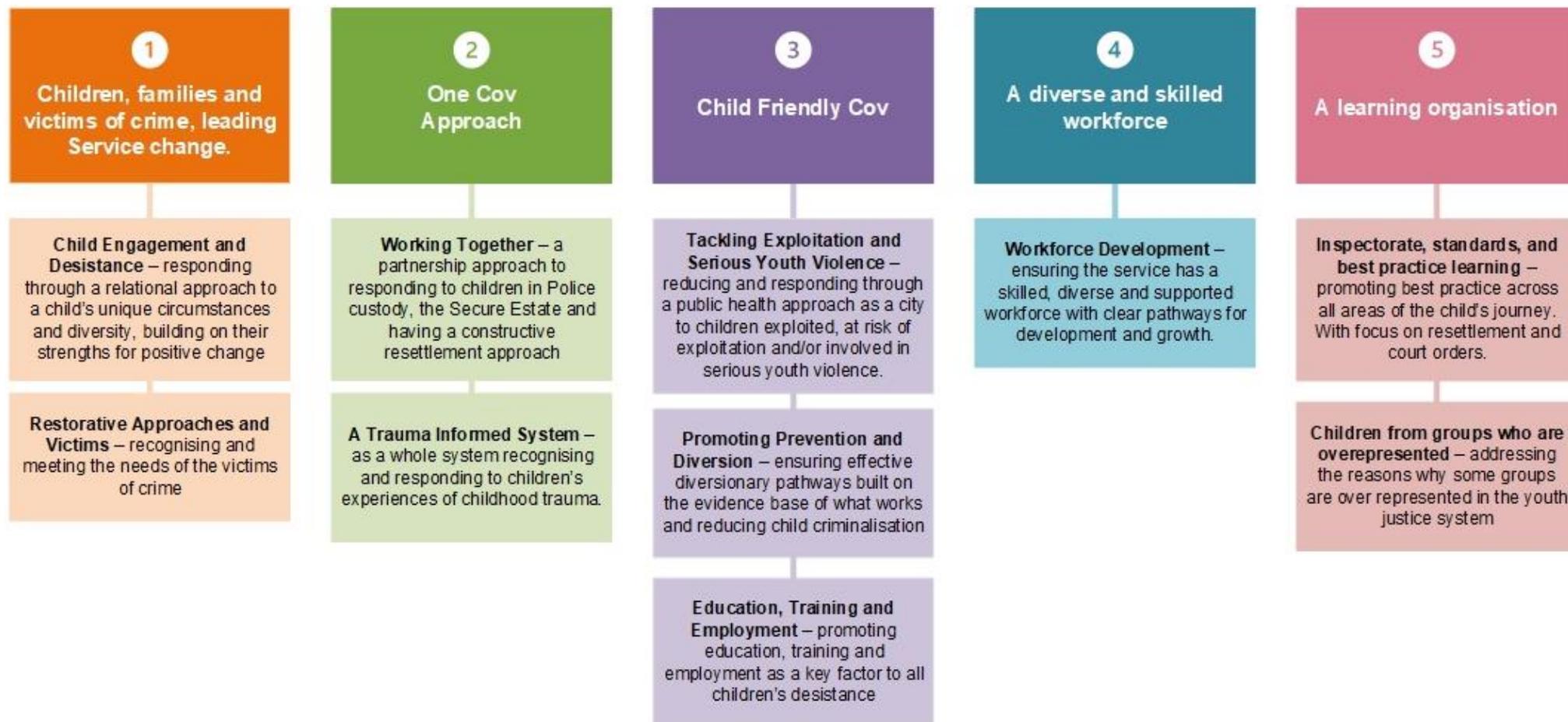


Table 3: Custodial sentences as a rate per 1,000 of the 10–17-year-old population, Coventry YJS 2018-2023

A significant reduction in the use of custodial sentences; only 1 concurrent custodial sentence for a child serving an existing custodial sentence.

1.3 Our priorities and areas for improvement for 2021/23

The Plan builds on the success of the HMIP Inspection published in February 2023, that saw the Service rated as ‘outstanding’ and outline how the partnership is responding to the outlined recommendations. Children in the YJS are overrepresented in having learning needs, more likely to have been permanently excluded and/or have had a disrupted education, likely to have been a victim of exploitation, and we continue to see an overrepresentation of mixed heritage boys particularly. To appropriately tackle these issues, we need: children leading steps for change, we need a focus on the ‘family’ given we know children are highly likely to have experienced significant childhood trauma, a diverse and skilled workforce, and a city approach to delivering a trauma informed system and priority to preventative activity. Additionally, the last year has seen an increase in violent offences and weapon possession for children. The improvement and development plan outlines, against the new ten priorities, how we seek to address these trends and findings.



2. Options considered and recommended proposal.

- 2.1. Completion and submission of this plan is a statutory duty under s40 Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is requested Cabinet recommends that the Council endorse the Plan.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1. All statutory partners are consulted under a statutory duty imposed by the Act. All Management Board members are consulted and contribute, although only statutory partner's cooperation is required. Additionally, the following methodology has been undertaken to formulate the plan: child/parent consultation on their experience and improvement areas; team consultation on how we achieve desistance for children; data analysis review of the Service and children in the youth justice system; a review of the best practice evidence base; a wider strategic partnership review; and, sharing with partners for feedback and amendments.

3.2. Statutory Members are represented by:

- Director of Children's Services
- Strategic Lead for Help Protection, Children's Services
- Chief Inspector, Coventry, West Midlands Police
- Head of Coventry Delivery Unit, Probation
- Head of Transformation, Coventry, and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board
- Associate Director of Operations, Mental Health Services for Children and Young People

3.3. Other members include:

- Head of Safer Housing and Communities, Regulatory Services
- Operations Manager, Coventry and Warwickshire, Prospects Services
- Chair of The Magistrates Youth Panel
- Head of Service, Education Improvement and Standards
- Head of Service, SEND and Specialist Services
- Violence Prevention - Programme Manager, Public Health Team
- Early Help Manager, Children's Services
- Service Manager, Positive Choices
- Head of Oversight, Midlands, Youth Justice Board

4. Timetable for implementing this decision.

- 4.1. YJB grant conditions state that receipt of grant is conditional on the submission of a strategic plan and that Council endorsement is to be sought. 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 end of June 2023.

5. Comments from Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer

5.1. Financial Implications

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

Youth Justice Service Pooled Budget Changes

	Annual Budget	
Agency	2022-23	2023-24
Local Authority	£745,051	£800,495
Youth Justice Board	£641,103	£669,953
Police and Crime Commissioner	£105,064	£105,064
Health Service	£129,835	£123,175
Police Service	£59,507	£61,664
National Probation Service	£55,496	£55,408
Budget	£1,736,056	£1,815,759

The change to the Local Authority contribution since financial year 2022/23 and completion of the plan in June 2023 is because of increased costs due to staffing inflation. The Health, Police and Probation figures predominantly reflect 'payments in kind' through seconded roles and other delegated funds; the health contribution has now been confirmed at 2 full-time secondees rather than 1.75 reflected within the plan. The overall change to the YJB budget is reflective of an uplift to maintain delivery from last year and in recognition of inflationary pressures.

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 a yearly Youth Justice Plan. The plan was written prior to the YJB grant announcement and written based on funding being matched to the core grant allocation in 2022-23, as per the advice of the YJB. The grant has now been announced, with an additional one-year uplift for 2023-34 and the table above reflects this. The additional grant awarded will be used to support the upcoming pay award and sustainment of Speech and Language Therapy in the Service.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan? (<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/one-coventry-plan>)

The plan's vision is underpinned by the One Coventry Plan. The improvement and business plan (Appendix 1: Section 14-Service Development Plan) details the steps over the next 12 months to realise the plan's vision, and in turn the Council's. The activity within the plan is aligned locally to plans that include Early Help Strategy, Local Police and Crime Board Plan, Safeguarding Partnership Strategy, Coventry Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Children and Young People's Plan, Local Policing Plan, and Coventry Sustainable Communities Strategy.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

Risk to the 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 2023/25.

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

While this is not a new activity, an EIA has been completed and this identified a positive impact for one or more protected groups – Appendix 2 to the report refers.

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

None

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

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

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