



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
DATE:	Thursday, 8 August 2024

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Children, Young People and Education
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	Y

SUBJECT: Youth Justice Service Annual Plan

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Youth Justice Service (YJS), previously referred to as the Youth Offending Team (YOT), is a statutory service located within Children's Services. Its primary function is to prevent offending and reoffending amongst children and young people and it is structured in a way to support children who have committed offences and been through a Police and/or court process, and support those children identified as being at risk of offending. The service was inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in November 2022 and judged to be a 'good' service, within which there were a number of 'outstanding' features identified.

The YJS is required to develop and produce an annual plan for submission to the national Youth Justice Board (YJB). This should be informed by the multi-agency partnership that contribute to the YJS, to outline the performance of the service in the previous year, and its future delivery plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board recommend the Youth Justice Service Annual Plan set out at Appendix 1 for approval by Council Forum.

3. BACKGROUND

Guidance is provided by the YJB to inform the content of the plan, but in summary this should include; details of the resources available to the YJS, a context in which the YJS operates locally, performance against key performance indicators for the previous year, a service, workforce and board action plan for the forthcoming year and identification of any anticipated risks to the service.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

There is a requirement to align local needs and requirements with national priorities, outlined in the YJB's Annual Plan and those of HMIP. These typically centre around a 'child first, offender second' agenda, identification and response to disproportionality and over-representation of children from ethnic minority communities within the justice system and Looked After children, and children having access to appropriate education and health provision through their contact with the YJS. All of these

are applied locally through our own service values and priorities, and where practical are monitored through performance data.

Locally we have identified opportunities to develop and further enhance service delivery to young people in the borough by creating a designated Speech and Language resource. Funding for a post has been secured and the role is currently out to advert.

A gap in delivery is recognised in the absence of a PACE bed (foster care type placement to avoid the detention of children in Police custody overnight) and a Remand bed (again a foster care type placement, but longer term to prevent children being remanded or sentenced into the secure custodial estate). Efforts to recruit to this role are extensive and extend to collaborating with partners from the community and charitable sector, as well as with the new Fostering Hub. This will be an invaluable resource once secured, to actively avoid the detention of children in Police custody and the secure estate.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The YJS is measured against a new and revised set of key performance indicators (KPIs) designed to ensure that children open to the YJS have access to the right services in order to improve their circumstances and support them avoiding (re)offending. The content of our plan, reflected in the priorities set and actions outlined, is aligned with the KPIs to ensure a quality and effective service is delivered. Although the KPIs are new and still being embedded, these will be captured and reflected in the YJS' data that is reported to the YJB each quarter for their oversight. The same data will be fed back into the YJS Management Board for local strategic oversight.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Submission of the plan releases the annual grant received from the YJB. Alongside other contributions to the YJS budget, this is of sufficient levels to fulfil the requirements of service delivery, although our final funding allocation for 2024/25 has not yet been confirmed.

The annual remand grant of £68,983 has already been received and is used to resource the detention of any children remanded into the secure estate whilst awaiting trial or sentence; this is a cost that is passed to the local authority.

As referenced in the Annual Plan, the Turnaround grant funding will cease in March 2025 and this will present challenges in maintaining the offer to the same standards beyond this date. Initial considerations to mitigate this risk involve seeking additional external funding, improved collaboration with other services working in the prevention and diversionary field and/or the reshaping of existing roles within the YJS to support this cohort of children. These options will be further developed over the coming months and in advance of the grant funding ceasing.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Local authority partnerships have a statutory duty to submit a youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services (YJSs). Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth justice partnership's responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, in consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out how YJSs in their area are to be provided and funded, how they will operate, and what functions will be carried out. Therefore this report evidences compliance with this legal duty.

The Youth Justice Plan is included in the Council's Policy Framework and is, therefore, a matter for consideration and approval by Council Forum.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

As detailed above, the funds released are sufficient in terms of staffing and delivering the strategic plan priorities.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

In preparation for compiling the plan, a Development Day was held convening almost 50 colleagues including a wide range of stakeholders, statutory partners, board members and the YJS team. The purpose of the day was to review performance and data of the past year, identify potential future risks, agree ongoing service priorities and the service, workforce and board plan to be implemented for the forthcoming year.

A draft of the plan was compiled and shared with the YJS Management Board ahead of consultation with children and young people for their observations. Once feedback had been collated and implemented, this was submitted to the YJB in accordance with their timescales.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Alex Orwin
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DATE:	16 July 2024
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	
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