

EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 13 th July 2023
Report Subject	Flintshire Youth Justice Service Youth Justice Plan 2023-2026
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture & Leisure
Report Author	Chief Officer, Education & Youth
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Flintshire Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a multiagency statutory partnership established in April 2000, further to the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The chief aim of the Flintshire YJS is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people aged 10-17 years in Flintshire. The Youth Justice Service has a statutory obligation under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop an annual Youth Justice Plan which outlines its priorities for the forthcoming year in addition to reporting on governance, resources accountability and performance.

This report outlines the Youth Justice Plan 2023-2026 which has been approved by the YJS Executive Management Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That members note the strategic and operational priorities in the Youth Justice Plan.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	THE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE
1.01	The Flintshire Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a multiagency statutory partnership established in April 2000, further to the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The chief aim of the Flintshire YJS is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people aged 10-17 years in Flintshire.
1.02	<p>Flintshire YJS works with young people across the youth justice spectrum (pre/out of court and post court). This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of offending (Prevent and Deter / Turnaround) and support for early intervention (e.g. by participating in the Early Help Hub) • Pre-conviction arena (Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984, bail and remand management) • Integrated pre/out of court system (Bureau) • Community sentences (Referral Order and Youth Rehabilitation) • Long term custodial sentences (DTO, S.90/91) • Resettlement and transitions in the community
1.03	The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s 39 (1) requires the co-operation of named statutory partners to form the YJS. These are the Local Authority, most particularly Education and Social Services, Health, Police and the National Probation Service. The Act places upon them a duty to co-operate and so secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. Each of the five agencies is expected to second staff and provide cash contributions which support the operation of the Youth Justice Service.
1.04	Governance and strategic oversight of the Youth Justice Service is provided by a multi-agency Executive Management Board which is chaired currently by the Local Authority Chief Executive. Representation includes Chief Officers (Education and Youth, Housing and Assets, Social Services), Elected Members (Education and Youth, Social Services) Senior Managers (Social Services for Children, Integrated Youth Provision, Community Safety) Senior Managers from external partners (North Wales Police, National Probation Service, Action for Children, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Coleg Cambria) and representatives from HM Courts and Tribunal Service and Head Teachers Federation. The Board considers the strategic and operational elements of the Youth Justice Service, monitors key themes which impact on the multi-agency service e.g. funding, recruitment, workload and is also focused on improving practice and reviewing performance.
1.05	The Youth Justice Service also works towards a shared Welsh Government and Youth Justice Board 'Child First' vision and within the last 12 months the service itself has embarked on an ambitious journey, with the support of Public Health Wales and Wrexham University, to work towards becoming a Trauma informed Service. This builds on previous training and involvement

	<p>in the Youth Justice Board’s Enhanced Case Management pilot schemes. The aim is to embed trauma informed approaches within youth justice. Whilst we are at the start of this work, we have already established a multi-agency working group and development plans to help us reach our objective. In addition, the service is committed to promoting the voice of children and young people within our service and have developed a Participation Strategy.</p>																																	
1.06	<p>Children and young people continue to report positive interactions with the service including understanding their involvement with the service, being an active participant in planning the interventions they will receive and feeling supported to reach future goals. As a service we also measure outcomes across a number of areas in a young person’s life - reporting tools used with young people clearly demonstrate the gains they make whilst they are open to the YJS.</p>																																	
1.07	<p>As part of our assessment and planning process we also ask children and young people about their aspirations and seek their views on areas of their life (relationships, accommodation, behaviour) and how positive these areas are for them currently. At the end of intervention, we revisit these to see if progress and improvements have been made, we call these ‘soft outcomes’. The higher the score the greater the positive change. Based on the self-reporting of 88 children and young people, following YJS intervention positive gains have been made in most areas of their lives.</p> <div data-bbox="331 1077 999 1644" data-label="Figure"> <p>Soft Outcomes 2022-2023</p> <p>Legend: Initial (light green line), Final (dark green line)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Initial Score</th> <th>Final Score</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Relationships And Family</td> <td>2.50</td> <td>3.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accommodation</td> <td>2.00</td> <td>2.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexual Health</td> <td>1.50</td> <td>2.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mental Health And Wellbeing</td> <td>1.00</td> <td>1.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Behaviour In the Community</td> <td>0.50</td> <td>1.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>School And Education</td> <td>0.50</td> <td>1.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Substance Misuse</td> <td>0.50</td> <td>1.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Motivation And Ambition</td> <td>0.50</td> <td>1.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Managing Emotion</td> <td>0.50</td> <td>1.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Offending Behaviour</td> <td>0.50</td> <td>1.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Category	Initial Score	Final Score	Relationships And Family	2.50	3.00	Accommodation	2.00	2.50	Sexual Health	1.50	2.00	Mental Health And Wellbeing	1.00	1.50	Behaviour In the Community	0.50	1.00	School And Education	0.50	1.00	Substance Misuse	0.50	1.00	Motivation And Ambition	0.50	1.00	Managing Emotion	0.50	1.00	Offending Behaviour	0.50	1.00
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1.08	<p>In 2022-2023 the Youth Justice Service worked with 147 children and young people across a range of out of court and court disposals, which represents a 16% decrease on the previous year.</p> <p>Despite reducing numbers it is evident that analysis of our cohort demonstrates that children, young people and families who enter into the criminal justice system have varying levels of support needs including (but not limited to) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s), previous involvement with services, emotional and mental health difficulties, additional learning needs and experienced disruption within education, training or employment.</p>																																	

1.09	<p>In parallel to reducing numbers, the total number of offences committed by children and young people has declined by 7% and whilst we have seen a minor increase in our first-time entrants, more children and young people received more Community Resolutions, a disposal intended to provide children and young people with formal support for lower-level offending, whilst diverting them away from the formal criminal justice system. Whilst YJB re-offending data monitors a historic cohort and tracks their offending forward, local re-offending data over the past 12 months is encouraging for the majority of our cohort. Whilst YJB data will track back a retrospective cohort, our live cohort data based on children and young people offending within the current year is currently suggestive of a 12% re-offending rate. However, it is also accepted that re-offending data is also context and time specific and subject to the monitoring period chosen and therefore some children and young people open within the period will have been engaged with the service for a shorter period than others. However, our live data provides the ability to review initial patterns linked to offending and outcomes.</p>
1.10	<p>The YJS has seen variances within the type of offences committed within the past 12 months. Specific offences linked to theft and public order may have been impacted by Covid 19 and subsequent nationwide lockdowns.</p> <p>In addition, whilst the amount of violence against the person offences has declined, serious violence and serious offences, whilst rare, have increased linked to a small number of children and young people. Over the last 12 months the Youth Justice Service has been working with its partners to develop a Youth Violence Action Plan which will also dovetail with current work being undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioners Office under statutory Serious Violence Duty.</p>
1.11	<p>The use of remand and custody for children and young people always remains the last resort, and typically rates within Flintshire have remained low. However within the last 12 months we have had 2 incidents of remand into custody and 4 custodial sentences involving 3 young people. Under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) the Local Authority is responsible for the costs associated with remand placement but not custodial sentences.</p> <p>Several factors have impacted on this increase including the seriousness of offending, non-engagement in community sentences and difficulties in securing placements for children and young people that will meet their needs and provide the support and supervision required. In some cases, wider challenges linked to social care and placement provision have impacted on the recommendations of community alternatives.</p> <p>The YJS Executive Management Board have approved an Action Plan to reduce the use of custody where appropriate. This includes the YJS reviewing its alternative to custody offer and becoming closer aligned to the Social Services Placement Strategy and placement provision.</p>
1.12	<p>The service remains committed to continuous improvement. In April 2023 Keith Frazer, Chair of the Youth Justice Board visited Flintshire and commended the service in demonstrating senior colleague commitment to the service and how the service focused on building trusting relationships</p>

	with children, young people and families and was committed to 'not give up' in order to support better outcomes. Correspondence received following the visit has been attached.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The YJS budget is made up of financial and in-kind contributions from a number of statutory partners and grants made available through the YJB / MOJ, Welsh Government and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Many partners report ongoing efficiencies, some of which have impacts on our budget. Moreover, the YJB / MOJ are yet to confirm their 2023-24 grant allocations to the Youth Justice Service which not only hampers timely financial planning but impacts on the service's ability to innovate and develop creative solutions for a number of our priorities. These issues have been raised to the YJB Chair directly by the Chief Executive and Chief Officer for Education and Youth when he visited Flintshire in April 2023.
2.02	<p>Uncertainty in our budget and challenges within the recruitment market impacted on the service during 2022-23. It was increasingly evident that potential candidates for vacant positions were less likely to take the risk on fixed term positions, resulting in increased time spent by managers in undertaking recruitment activities to address unfilled posts. In addition, fixed term positions remained unattractive to qualified and experienced candidates.</p> <p>As a result, the Executive Management Board and Chief Officers Team agreed to make a number of our vacancies permanent in order to attract the right candidates and reduce disruption to statutory service functions.</p>
2.03	The YJS Management Board also agreed a Workforce Development and Succession Strategy which would help us address our longer-term challenges. The service has a highly motivated, trained and dedicated workforce and recent staff assessments provide favourable views on the current direction and operation of the service. We have committed to continuing to support the welfare of our workforce and have introduced reflective sessions and are reviewing areas to reduce administrative functions, whilst adhering to our National Standards and Case Management Guidance. We are also continuing to develop a framework to better monitor workload and capacity.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The Youth Justice Service is overseen by a multi-agency Executive Management Board which is chaired by the Chief Executive of Flintshire County Council. All agencies have senior representation including Cabinet leads in Education and Youth and Social Services. The Board will monitor the operational and strategic progress of the YJS and is also responsible for developing and agreeing our annual youth justice plan.

	From April 2023 the Youth Justice Board has increased its oversight function of all Youth Justice Services in England and Wales which includes attendance at Management Boards, regular meetings with senior leads to review performance and innovation and has introduced a number of new Key Performance Indicators (KPI's).
3.02	The YJS Executive Management Board has also requested a Peer Review from the Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership (YJSIP) to provide a critical friend approach to Governance and Leadership for the service. The Review is due to commence in October 2023.
3.03	Finally, all Youth Justice Services are inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The Service was last inspected in 2016 and will be due a further inspection prior to March 2024. The Inspectorate will review the following areas; Leadership and Governance, Court Disposals, Out of Court Disposals and Resettlement.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	<p>The Youth Justice Service has a Risk Register which is reviewed by the YJS Senior Manager and Chief Officer for Education and Youth on a monthly basis and is also reviewed quarterly at every Executive Management Board Meetings. Across our risk register there are number of mechanisms to mitigate potential risks;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Executive Management Boards to undertake strategic planning, scrutiny and challenge of Youth Justice Services and its partners, • Executive Management Board Risk Register and Improvement Plan, • Annual Executive Management Board Development Days, • Quarterly Executive Delivery Groups to monitor progress against the Youth Justice Plan, • Established links with partners and regular 1:1 meetings with the Senior Manager with a number of statutory partners, • Escalation frameworks with all of our partners, • Operational Improvement Plan, • Performance Management at operational and strategic levels, • Practitioner and Manager forums to review practice, • Operational Risk Management Procedures, • Operational Practice Notes, • Safeguarding and Public Protection Critical Learning Procedures.
4.02	<p>In addition, in order to support emerging issues and cohort complexity the Youth Justice Service have also worked with partners to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an Operational Missing, Exploited and Trafficked (MET) Panel and train its staff to respond in Modern Day Slavery, • Developed strategies linked to reducing custody, serious violence and disproportionality, • Increase oversight of our Children Looked After cohort, • Established a scrutiny panel for our Out of Court Disposals with the Chief Inspector for North Wales Police (Flintshire) and Chair of the Youth Bench (HMCTS- Eastern)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an ASB Officer and work with Flintshire Sorted to support their Drug and Alcohol Community Support • Work with the Police and Crime Commissioners Office as part of a multi-agency task and finish group to respond to the Serious Violence Duty • Continue to develop trauma informed practice, • Establish a Health Working Group to review the health needs and resources for Youth Justice.
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5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	 <p>20230525 Letter Keith Fraser to Jame</p> <p><u>Appendix 1 - Letter from Keith Fraser, YJB Chair to Flintshire YJS (May 2023)</u></p> <p>Appendix 2 – Flintshire JYB Plan</p>

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Cordis Bright (2017) <i>Evaluation of the Enhanced Case Management approach; final report.</i> https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-07/170328-evaluation-enhanced-case-management-approach-en.pdf</p> <p>Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) Inspection Standards for Youth Justice Service's https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/04/Youth-offending-standards-March-18-final.pdf</p> <p>Youth Justice Board / Ministry of Justice (2019) <i>Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019.</i> https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-for-youth-justice-services</p>

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: James Warr, Senior Manager, Flintshire Youth Justice Service & Flintshire Sorted Telephone: 01352 701125 E-mail: james.warr@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>ACE's- Adverse Childhood Experiences are traumatic events that affect children while growing up, such as suffering child maltreatment or living in a household affected by domestic violence, substance misuse or mental illness.</p> <p>Bureau - Framework for diverting young people out of formal Youth Justice processes by tackling underlying causes of youth crime through mechanisms that promote pro-social behaviours, children's rights, youth and parent/carer participation and delivered by universal services.</p> <p>CSPPI - Community Safeguarding and Public Protection Incident</p> <p>DTO – Detention and Training Order, a custodial sentence up to 2 years</p> <p>ECM- Enhanced Case Management- community and psychological based intervention framework which is informed by the Trauma Recovery Model.</p> <p>FTE - First time entrants to the service</p> <p>HMIP- His Majesty's Inspectorate Probation</p> <p>MET- Missing, Exploited (criminal, sexual, forced labour) and Trafficked.</p> <p>S.90/91 – Longer term custodial sentences.</p>