

## GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2025
<b>Report Subject</b>	Flintshire Youth Justice Service HMIP Inspection
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer, Education & Youth
<b>Type of Report</b>	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.

HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) is the independent inspector of youth justice and probation services in England and Wales. HMIP report on the effectiveness of probation and youth justice service work with adults and children. As part of their cycle of routine inspections, HMIP inspected Flintshire Youth Justice Service in March 2024. Their full report and findings were published in July 2024.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That members note the recommendations from the HMIP Inspection Report and progress being made against our Improvement Plan.
---	---

## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>THE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE</b>
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	HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) is the independent inspector of youth justice and probation services in England and Wales. HMIP report on the effectiveness of probation and youth justice service work with adults and children. As part of their cycle of routine inspections, HMIP inspected Flintshire Youth Justice Service in March 2024. Their full report and findings were published in July 2024.
1.03	<p>The Youth Justice Service was inspected under the following domains;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organisational delivery</li><li>• Court Disposals</li><li>• Out of Court Disposals</li><li>• Resettlement</li></ul> <p>The HMIP Inspection team were provided with evidence in advance by the Youth Justice Service prior to HMIP undertaking fieldwork. Fieldwork was undertaken from 11<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> March and consisted of a review of local policies and procedures, management board and partnership data, interviews with key stakeholders including partners, children and young people, Youth Justice Service staff and Management Board Members. The Inspectorate also reviewed the casework of 16 children and young people.</p>
1.04	Each domain has a number of components which are assessed. With respect to case related domains (Court Disposals, Out of Court Disposals and Resettlement) the methodology applied is that the rating for these standards are driven by the lowest score on each of the questions / components. Ratings are applied to each from Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate.
1.05	Our Inspection report was published on 11 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 and is available on the HMIP website. Based on their fieldwork Flintshire was awarded a 'Good' rating overall.
1.06	<p>HMIP made a number of recommendations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Healthcare partners to make sure that healthcare provision for YJS children meets their emotional health and wellbeing needs.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare partners to ensure that children supervised by the YJS are assessed for and have specific access to services that meet their speech, language and communication needs.</li> <li>• The Executive Management Board should continue to challenge the Probation Service to ensure that it meets its statutory duties and provides the appropriate secondment provision to the YJS.</li> <li>• The Executive Management Board should review the format and purpose of the Bureau, and ensure that it has the relevant input from staff who have met the child and the necessary agencies a in attendance, so that out-of-court disposals meet children’s needs.</li> <li>• Youth Justice Managers should improve the quality of planning in both post-court casework and out-of-court disposals to ensure consistently high-quality planning activity, tailored to each child and;</li> <li>• Youth Justice Managers should strengthen the quality and consistency of management oversight to ensure it drives improvements in the quality of practice.</li> </ul>
--	---

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	A number of the recommendations have been made against our strategic partners.
2.02	Whilst the service has been working with our CAMHS representatives to increase resourcing into the service, obtaining speech and language resources has proved increasingly difficult. In June 2023 the Senedd published a report that made recommendations for Speech and Language Therapy resources into Youth Justice Services. The Youth Justice Service has liaised with the previous Health Minister in Welsh Government to progress this resourcing, however, the Welsh Government have stated that the provision of such resources should be agreed at a local level by the Health Board. Since our inspection the Chief Executive of Flintshire County Council (Chair of the YJS Executive Management Board) has written on two occasions to the CEO of Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board to request a meeting to help us progress our HMIP recommendation, however, to date we have had no response.
2.03	Additional challenges also exist within our Probation partnership who have been unable to second a Probation Officer in line with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for the last 2 years. The difficulties in seconding staff is attributed to increase demand on Probation to support HMP Berwyn and vacancy rates within their community teams. In lieu of a seconded Probation Officer, the YJS have been provided with additional financial contributions to support our Youth to Adult transition work, however, such arrangements were in place at the time of our Inspection and were deemed insufficient. We do not currently have an agreed date from Probation that confirms when they will be able to second into the YJS.
2.04	Progress is being made against our recommendations linked to our Out of Court Disposal process and are current arrangements with North Wales Police. Following the inspection we have commenced a regional review with North Wales Police and all North Wales Youth Justice Services with the support of the Centre for Justice and Innovation.

2.05	Finally, the Youth Justice Service Management Team have undertaken training with staff and revised operational arrangements linked to planning, quality assurance and management oversight.
------	---

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
-------------	---

3.01	Following the publication of our Inspection report, the findings have been presented at the Education and Youth Oversight and Scrutiny Meeting on 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024.
3.02	The YJS Executive Management Board have also developed an Improvement Plan which continues to be monitored at each Board meeting with our partners. Board meetings are held every quarter.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
-------------	------------------------

4.01	<p>There are a number of risks that may impact on progressing recommendations identified including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant resourcing challenges in partner agencies which may prevent the use of secondments or additional resources,</li> <li>• Lack of clarity around Youth Justice funding, much of the service is funded through year to year grants. In particular the service continues to experience annual delays in notification of our annual Youth Justice Board Grant.</li> <li>• Current workload pressures within YJS linked to staffing absences may delay some operational improvements.</li> </ul>
------	--

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
-------------	-------------------

5.01	N/A
------	-----

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
-------------	--

6.01	HMIP (2024) An inspection of Youth Justice Services in Flintshire <a href="https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/flintshire2024/">https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/flintshire2024/</a>
6.02	Welsh Parliament Equality and Social Justice Committee (2023) '60% Giving them a voice; Speech, language and communication needs in the youth justice system' <a href="https://senedd.wales/media/excbag12/cr-ld15786-e.pdf">https://senedd.wales/media/excbag12/cr-ld15786-e.pdf</a>

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

<b>8.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
8.01	<p><b>ACE's-</b> 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><b>AYM</b> – Association of YOT Managers, a body that represents Youth Justice Managers in England.</p> <p><b>Bureau</b> - 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><b>FTE</b> - First time entrants to the service</p> <p><b>HMIP-</b> His Majesty’s Inspectorate Probation</p> <p><b>KPI</b> – Key Performance Indicators – Statutory indicators required by the Youth Justice Board</p> <p><b>Outcome 22</b> – Police Out of Court disposal which allows a no further action to be recorded against a lower level offence where the child or young person has voluntarily engaged in intervention with the YJS.</p> <p><b>YJSIP</b> – Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership – Sector Professional Body in collaboration with Youth Justice Board and Association of YOT Managers.</p>