

CABINET



Report subject	Youth Justice Plan 2020-21
Meeting date	29 July 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To present the Youth Justice Plan for 2020/21. There is a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. This report summarises the Youth Justice Plan for 2020/21, with a copy of the Plan appended. The Youth Justice Plan needs to be approved by the full Council.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: Cabinet endorse the Youth Justice and recommend its approval to the Full Council
Reason for recommendations	<p>Youth Offending Teams are required to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which should be approved by the Local Authority for that Youth Offending Team and by the Youth Justice Board. Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service works across both Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council. Approval is therefore sought from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, as well as from Dorset Council.</p> <p>The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Youth Justice Plan at its meeting on 30 June 2020. The Committee supported the Plan and made comments to request an update on KPI performance in 6 months; to encourage the collection of mental health data for young people on the YOS caseload; to note the concerns about BAME over-representation and the need for further actions to address this issue.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Sandra Moore, Portfolio Holder Children's Services
Corporate Director	Judith Ramsden, Corporate Director Children's Services
Report Authors	David Webb, Manager, Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Youth Offending Teams are required to publish an annual youth justice plan. The Youth Justice Board provides guidance about what must be included in the plan and recommends a structure for the plan. The draft Youth Justice Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service is attached at Appendix One. A brief summary of the Youth Justice Plan is provided in this report. The production of the Youth Justice Plan this year has been delayed by the covid19 lockdown. Actions to support the priorities in the Plan are already underway.

Summary of Contents

2. The Youth Justice Plan provides information on the resourcing, structure, governance, partnership arrangements and performance of the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service. The Plan also describes the national and local youth justice context for 2020/21 and sets out our priorities for this year.
3. The Youth Justice Board continue to monitor three 'key performance indicators' for youth justice. The first indicator relates to the rate of young people entering the justice system for the first time. Local performance in this area had declined in the previous two years but improved during 2019/20. The latest data, relating to the 12 months to September 2019, shows a rate of 269 per 100,000 10-17 year olds entering the justice system for the first time. This compares with a figure of 357 per 100,000 10-17 year olds in the year to September 2018. The improvement is welcome and further steps are planned for 2020/21.
4. The other two national indicators relate to reducing reoffending and minimising the use of custodial sentences. The reoffending rate fluctuates, partly because of the current counting rules for this measure. Our local reoffending rate has for the most part remained below the national rate. Local analysis shows that young people who are more likely to reoffend are also more likely to have more complex speech, language and communication needs and to find it hard to access education or training. The Youth Justice Plan sets out some of the actions that have been taken and future plans to address these issues. These actions include close alignment with and participation in the development of adolescent services in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.
5. Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service has low rates of custodial sentences, below the regional and national averages. Young people who are sentenced to custody have often experienced significant trauma in their earlier life, affecting their

current behaviour. The Youth Offending Service is currently implementing a plan to become a trauma informed service, using the Youth Justice Board's 'Enhanced Case Management' model. This model of trauma-informed practice will contribute to local work with children at significant risk of child exploitation.

Options Appraisal

6. Councillors have the option of whether or not to endorse the Youth Justice Plan for 2020/21 before it is considered by Cabinet. Cabinet will then decide whether to recommend approval of the Youth Justice Plan to the full Council.

Summary of financial implications

7. The Youth Justice Plan reports on the resourcing of the Youth Offending Service (YOS). Local authority and other partner contributions remained static from 2014/15 to 2018/19 when a cost of living increase to local authority contributions was agreed, along with a redistribution of the funding proportions to reflect Local Government Reorganisation. There was no cost of living increase in the local authority contributions for 2020/21. The annual Youth Justice Grant has reduced from £790,000 in 2014/15 to £600,482 in 2020/21.
8. The creation of the pan-Dorset Youth Offending Service in 2015 increased the service's resilience and ability to adapt to reduced funding and increased costs. The management of vacancies, and the deletion of some posts, has enabled a balanced budget to be achieved. It is recognised that the local authority is now facing additional financial pressures which may affect funding available for the Youth Offending Service.

Summary of legal implications

9. Local authorities are legally required to form a youth offending team with the statutory partners named in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act also stipulates that youth offending partnerships must submit an annual youth justice plan setting out how youth justice services in their area will be provided, how the youth offending team will be composed and funded, how it will operate and what functions it will carry out. The Youth Justice Plan for 2020-21 meets these legal obligations

Summary of human resources implications

10. Local Authority YOS staff members who were previously employed by Poole and Dorset transferred to become employees of Bournemouth Borough Council in 2015. Local Government Reorganisation in April 2019 led to a further TUPE transfer of local authority employees to the new Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole council. The YOS also includes employees of the partner agencies who have been seconded to work in the team and who remain employed by the partner agency.
11. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 also contains statutory requirements for the staffing composition of youth offending services. The Youth Justice Plan shows how Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service meets these requirements.

Summary of sustainability impact

12. No adverse environmental impact has been identified. The Youth Justice Plan notes that the Covid-19 lockdown has led to changes in the working arrangements of the

Youth Offending Service. These changes include significant reductions in staff travel, both to and from work and to visit service users, with more activities being carried out remotely.

Summary of public health implications

13. Young people in contact with youth justice services are known to be more likely than other young people to have unmet or unidentified health needs. The Youth Offending Service includes seconded health workers who work directly with young people and who facilitate their engagement with community health services.

Summary of equality implications

14. It is recognised nationally that young people from minority ethnic groups, and young people in the care of the local authority, are over-represented in the youth justice system and in the youth custodial population. It is also recognised that young people known to the YOS may experience learning difficulties or disabilities, including in respect of speech, language and communication needs. YOS interventions to support young people with their speech, language and communication needs are shared with other local authority services and education providers in order to support transition for children entering adulthood with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Information from Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service records, summarised in the Youth Justice Plan, shows that these issues of over-representation also apply locally. Actions have been identified in the Youth Justice Plan to address these issues.

Summary of risk assessment

15. The Youth Justice Plan sets out local priorities and actions to prevent and reduce offending by young people. These priorities and actions have been developed in response to identified risks and concerns. The recommendation for councillors to endorse the Youth Justice Plan is intended to support the Youth Offending Service to reduce the risks associated with youth offending. No specific risks have been identified as arising from this recommendation.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan 2020-21.