

CABINET



Report subject	Approval of Youth Justice Plan 2019/20
Meeting date	12 July 2019
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To present the Youth Justice Plan for 2019/20. 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 2019/20, 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 and recommend the report for approval to the Full Council
Reason for recommendations	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. Indicative approval has been received from the Youth Justice Board. The draft Youth Justice Plan has been approved by the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service Partnership Board.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Sandra Moore, Portfolio Holder Children's Services
Corporate Director	Judith Ramsden, Corporate Director Children's Services
Contributors	David Webb, Manager, Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service
Wards	
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.
2. The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26 June 2019 considered the report, an extract of the minutes from this meeting are set out below:

Extract of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2019, Minute No. 8 refers

8. Approval of Youth Justice Plan 2019/20

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services introduced the item and the Manager of the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service (YOS) presented the Report.

The Committee was advised that the Report appended the Youth Justice Plan for 2019/2020. There was a statutory requirement to publish an Annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the provision of youth justice services.

The Committee was requested to endorse the Youth Justice Plan for 2019/2020 to Cabinet to recommend to full Council.

The Committee discussed the Youth Justice Plan and comments were made, including:

- *In response to a query regarding how the YOS was managing with reductions in funding, the Committee was advised that, to increase its resilience, the YOS merged pan Dorset in 2015. It was highlighted that the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 stipulated that the YOS must include certain staff posts, which the YOS met plus some additional posts however, overall a reduction in staff had been necessary*
- *The issue of an increase in first time offenders was discussed and the Committee was advised that this was a complex area as the YOS would not*

normally start working with offenders until they were in the system. The Service worked closely with the Police on individuals to improve outcomes, this included the need to sometimes use diversion tactics and the use of a restorative justice approach to enable fewer formal outcomes for low level offending.

- In response to a query about how BCP Council and its Councillors could help the Service, the Committee was advised by being actively involved within the local community, monitoring and reporting on problem and vulnerable children and being aware of issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation and County Lines. The importance of an integrated approach was highlighted.*
- With regards to CAMHS, the Committee was advised that the YOS had nurses seconded to its team, which meant that access to it could be brokered quicker than if being referred by another service*
- The Committee agreed that it would be beneficial to receive an update report on the three key performance indicators every six months to enable it to monitor YOS' progress*
- The work of the Speech and Language Therapist was highlighted, and it was noted how beneficial this addition to the team had been. Work was being undertaken with the local Justice system, how the Police and court settings communicate with youth offenders and to give understanding and insight into the possible reasons for the youth offenders behaviour in the different settings*
- In response to a query regarding the quarterly finance reports and providing value for money, the Committee was advised that the YOS' aim was to ensure it uses its budget effectively to ensure improvements were being seen in the young people it dealt with as opposed to achieving a balanced budget*
- It was noted that a few issues had been identified within the report writing which could be rectified to make it easier to understand.*

The Corporate Director for Children's Services concluded by thanking the Committee for its helpful feedback. The Committee was advised that this would be fed back to the Youth Justice Board and it was noted that an update Report would be brought back to this Committee in six months regarding the key performance indicators.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorsed the Youth Justice Plan for 2019/2020 so that Cabinet can recommend its approval to full Council.

Voting: For - Unanimous

Summary of Contents

3. 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 2019/20, identifies risks to the delivery of youth justice outcomes and sets our priorities for this year.
4. There are three national '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 has declined, with young people in

Dorset now more likely to enter the justice system than young people in other areas. Plans to develop alternative 'diversion' options are being taken forward with Dorset Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

5. Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service is performing well against the other two national indicators, for reducing reoffending and for minimising the use of custodial sentences.

Summary of financial implications

6. The Youth Justice Plan reports on the resourcing of the Youth Offending Service (YOS). Local authority and other partner contributions had remained static since 2014/15. A cost of living increase to local authority contributions was agreed for 2018/19, along with a redistribution of the funding proportions to reflect Local Government Reorganisation. The annual Youth Justice Grant has reduced from £790,000 in 2014/15 to £588,708 in 2018/19.
7. 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.

Summary of legal implications

8. 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 and funded; and 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 2019-20 meets these legal obligations

Summary of human resources implications

9. 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

Summary of environmental impact

10. No adverse environmental impact has been identified.

Summary of public health implications

11. 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

12. The Youth Justice Plan contains information about the gender and ethnic composition of the YOS staff and volunteer groups. The Plan does not identify any adverse impact on staff or volunteers with protected characteristics. The Plan does show that the YOS staff and volunteer group does not fully reflect the diversity of its service user group. A YOS Staffing Plan has now been completed with actions identified to address this issue.
13. 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. Actions have been identified in the Youth Justice Plan to address these issues.

Summary of risk assessment

14. Risks that have been identified to the achievement of youth justice outcomes include limited access to suitable education provision for young people known to the YOS; lack of suitable local care placements for children with complex risks and needs; increased incidence of child exploitation and associated increased risks of violent behaviour; pressure on resources and uncertainty and delay on Youth Justice Board.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan 2019/20.