

# DORSET COMBINED YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE



Version	Superseded Version(s)	Date	Author	Changes made
V0.2				

## Youth Justice Plan

# 2019/20

V0.1		24.05.19	David Webb	
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## **Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service Statement of Purpose**

Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service works with young people in the local youth justice system. Our purpose is to help those young people to make positive changes, to keep them safe, to keep other people safe, and to repair the harm caused to victims.

This means we can support the national Youth Justice Board Vision that:

‘Every child should live a safe and crime-free life and make a positive contribution to society’.

## **Who We Are and What We Do**

Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service (DCYOS) is a statutory partnership between Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Dorset Council, Dorset Police, National Probation Service Dorset and NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group.

We are a multi-disciplinary team which includes youth justice officers, restorative justice specialists, parenting workers, education and employment workers, police officers, probation officers, nurses, speech and language therapists and a psychologist.

More information about the YOS partnership and the members of the YOS team is provided later in this document.

The team works directly with young people who have committed criminal offences to help them make positive changes and to reduce the risks to them and to other people. We also work directly with parents and carers to help them support their children to make changes.

We make contact with all victims of crimes committed by the young people we work with. We offer those victims the chance to take part in restorative justice processes so we can help to repair the harm they have experienced.

The organisations in the YOS partnership also work together to improve the quality of our local youth justice system, and to ensure that young people who work with the YOS can access the specialist support they need for their care, health and education.

The combination of work to improve our local youth justice and children’s services systems, and direct work with young people, parents and victims, enables us to meet the Youth Justice Board’s ‘System Aims’:

- Reduce the number of children in the youth justice system
- Reduce reoffending by children in the youth justice system
- Improve the safety and well-being of children in the youth justice system
- Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

## Introduction

This document is the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service (YOS) for 2019/20. It sets out the key priorities and targets for the service for the next 12 months as required by the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. This Plan has been developed under the direction of the YOS Partnership Board after consultation with YOS staff and taking into account feedback from YOS service users.

The Youth Justice Strategic Plan:

- summarises the YOS structure, governance and partnership arrangements
- outlines the resources available to the YOS, the planned use of the Youth Justice Grant and the plan for ensuring value for money
- reviews achievements and developments during 2018/19
- identifies emerging issues and describes the partnership's priorities
- summarises the risks to achieving agreed youth justice outcomes
- sets out our priorities and actions for improving youth justice outcomes this year.

This document sets out the YOS's strategic plan. A delivery plan underpins this document.

## Service Targets

The Dorset Combined YOS target for 2019/20 is to outperform regional and national averages for the three national performance indicators for youth offending which are:

- The number of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time ('First Time Entrants')
- The rate of proven re-offending by young people in the youth justice system
- The use of custodial sentences for young people.

## Headline Strategic Priorities for 2019/20

- Develop an additional diversion scheme to reduce the number of young people entering the justice system
- Become a 'Trauma-Informed' Service to improve outcomes for children, young people and families
- Take a leading role in the local multi-agency response to child exploitation and knife crime

Actions to achieve these priorities can be found later in this document, on pages 24-25.

## Structure and Governance: The YOS Partnership Board

The work of the Dorset Combined YOS is managed strategically by a Partnership Board. The Partnership Board consists of senior representatives of the statutory partner organisations, together with other relevant local partners.

### Membership:

- Dorset Council (current chair)
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (current vice-chair)
- Dorset Police
- Dorset Local Delivery Unit Cluster, National Probation Service
- NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group
- Public Health Dorset
- Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust
- Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal service
- Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Ansbury (Connexions Provider)

The Partnership Board oversees the development of the Youth Justice Plan, ensuring its links with other local plans.

The YOS Manager reports quarterly to the Partnership Board on progress against agreed performance targets, leading to clear plans for performance improvement. The Board also requests information in response to specific developments and agendas, and monitors the YOS's compliance with data reporting requirements and grant conditions.

Representation by senior leaders from the key partners enables the YOS Manager to resolve any difficulties in multi-agency working at a senior level, and supports effective links at managerial and operational levels.

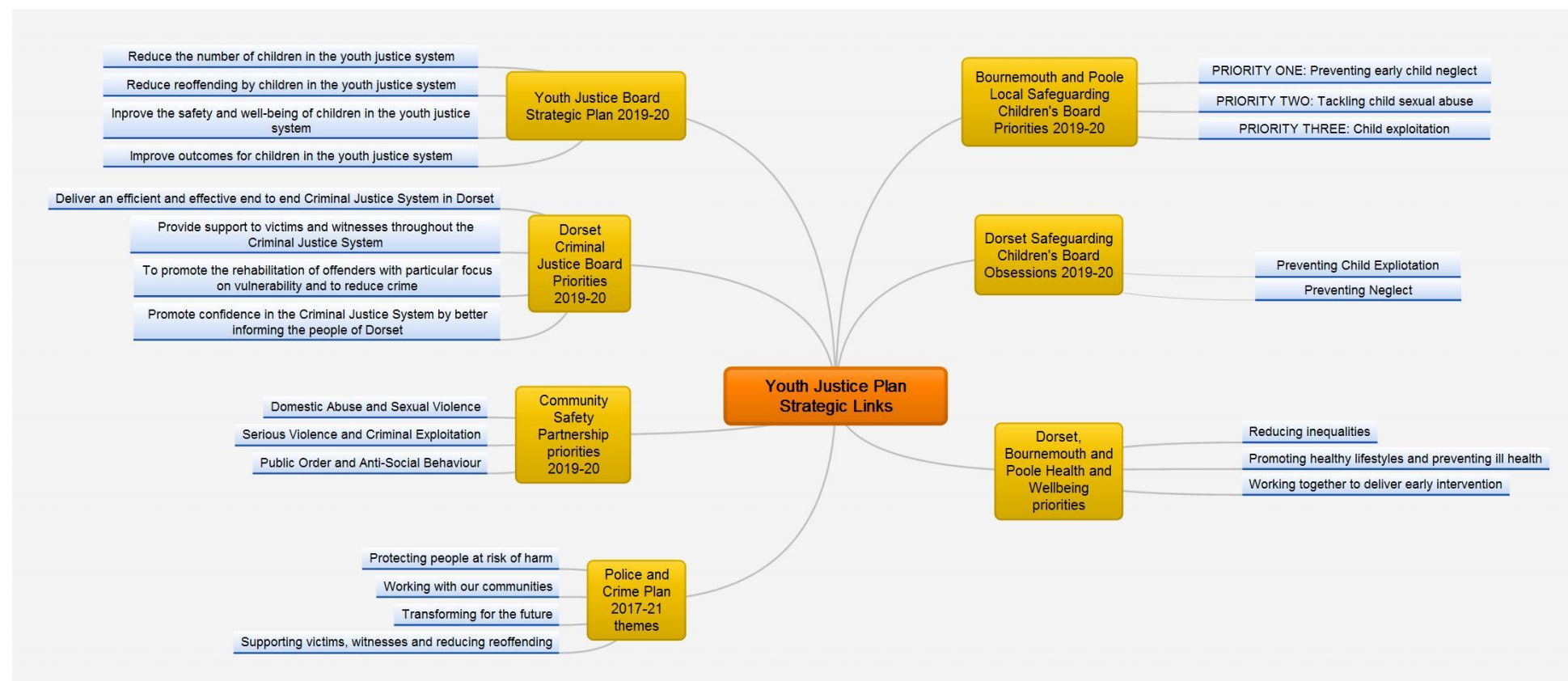
The YOS participates in local multi-agency agreements for information sharing, for safeguarding and for the escalation of concerns.

The Partnership Board oversees activities by partner agencies which contribute to the key youth justice outcomes, particularly in respect of the prevention of offending.

The YOS Partnership Board also provides oversight and governance for local multi-agency protocols in respect of the criminalisation of children in care and the detention of young people in police custody. The YOS Manager chairs multi-agency operational groups for each protocol and reports on progress to the YOS Partnership Board.

The YOS is a statutory partnership working with children and young people in the criminal justice system and the community safety arena. The map on the next page gives an overview of how the YOS fits with other strategic partnerships and plans.

## Linking the Youth Justice System to other Plans and Structures



The membership of the YOS Partnership Board enables the work of the Dorset Combined YOS to be integrated into strategic planning for Safeguarding, Public Protection, Criminal Justice, Community Safety and Health & Well-Being. The YOS Manager sits on the two local Safeguarding Children's Boards, the Dorset Criminal Justice Board, the two Community Safety Partnerships, the pan-Dorset Community Safety and Criminal Justice Board and on the local MAPPA Strategic Management Board.

## **Partnership Arrangements**

The previous section outlined the strategic links between the YOS and the other strategic groups and partnerships. Similar links exist at operational levels, enabling the YOS to integrate and coordinate its work with the work done by partners such as the two local children's social care services, Special Educational Needs services, other criminal justice agencies, and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services across Dorset.

## **Safeguarding and Public Protection**

As well as participating in Child Protection Conferences and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meetings in respect of specific individuals and families, YOS managers also attend MARAC meetings, local Community Safety Partnership operational meetings, local complex needs panel meetings and meetings in respect of early help and Troubled Families activities in the two local authorities.

## **Child Exploitation**

Young people known to the YOS can also be at risk of child exploitation. The YOS Manager co-chairs the multi-agency Children at Risk of or Linked to Exploitation (CAROLE) Tactical Group. A YOS Team Manager has lead responsibility for the team's operational work on child exploitation, supported by a designated Youth Justice Officer in our Dorchester office. The YOS participates in local multi-agency information sharing arrangements and meetings to identify and protect children at risk of exploitation. A seconded YOS Police Officer attends weekly meetings with the Police 'Impact' team to enable effective joint work for children at risk of exploitation.

## **Reducing Re-Offending**

The YOS Manager chairs the pan-Dorset Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group, reporting to the Dorset Community Safety and Criminal Justice Board. Although the group's main focus is on adult offenders, attention is also paid to the youth perspective, particularly for those young people about to transition to adult services, and for the children of adult offenders.

## **Risk Assessment Panels**

The YOS instigates a Risk Assessment Panel process for young people under YOS supervision who have been identified as being at high risk of causing serious harm to others, or of experiencing significant harm themselves. These meetings are attended by workers and managers from the other agencies who are working with the young person. The aim is to agree the risk assessment and devise, implement and review plans to reduce the risks posed by and to the young person.

## **Harmful Sexual Behaviour**

The YOS works with the two local authorities, and with the Police, to agree the best way to respond to young people who have committed harmful sexual behaviour. Some of these young people are also known to the local authority social care service so it is important that we coordinate our work and, where possible, take a joint approach. The YOS and the local authorities use recognised assessment and intervention approaches for young people who commit harmful sexual behaviour.



## **Preventing Violent Extremism**

All relevant YOS staff have received training in raising awareness of 'Prevent'. A YOS Team Manager has lead responsibility for this area of work and attends the pan-Dorset Prevent Group to ensure that our work is aligned with local initiatives. The YOS has sight of the local assessment of extremism risks. The seconded YOS police officers act as a link to local police processes for sharing intelligence in respect of possible violent extremism.

Young people convicted of extremism related offences will be managed robustly in line with the YOS Risk Policy, with appropriate referral to the local MAPPA process and clear risk management plans, including paired working arrangements and support from the seconded YOS police officers.

## **Safe Schools and Communities Team**

The Safe Schools and Communities Team (SSCT) is a partnership between Dorset Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Dorset Combined YOS. The SSCT plays an important role in preventing offending by young people across Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. The team provide education, awareness and advice to students, schools and parents. The work of the team is reported to the YOS Partnership Board as an important element of the YOS Partnership's work to prevent youth offending. The SSCT's School Incidents Policy is an important part of local work to reduce the number of youths entering the justice system, helping schools to manage incidents without the need for a criminal outcome.

## **Restorative Justice and Support for Victims**

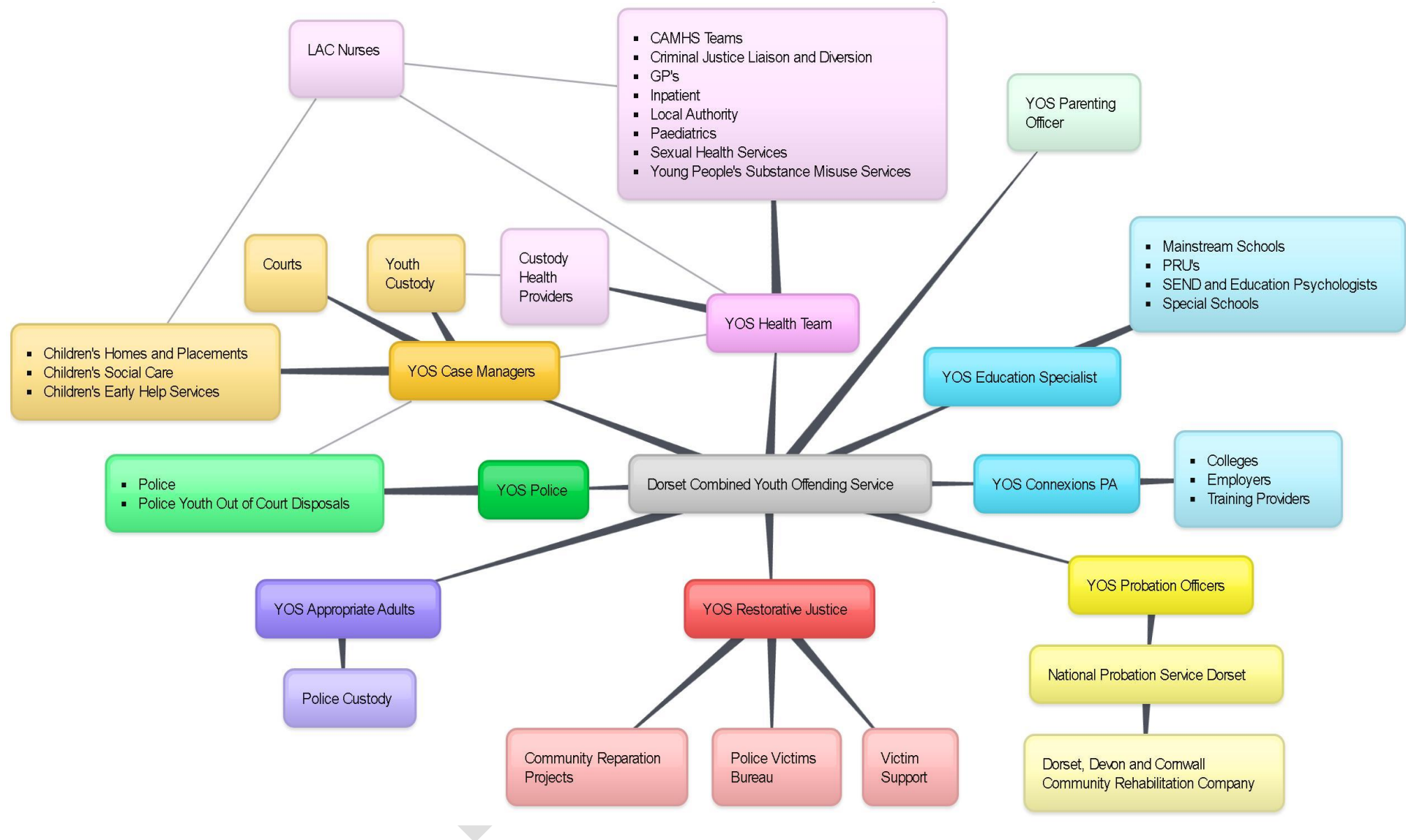
The YOS Restorative Justice Practitioners provide Restorative Justice activities and support for victims of offences committed by young people. The YOS also links with other agencies through the Victims and Witnesses Sub-Group of the Dorset Criminal Justice Board. The YOS plays an important part in delivering the Police and Crime Commissioner's Restorative Justice Strategy for Dorset, taking the lead on offences committed by young people and supporting the development of good practice with other Restorative Justice providers.

## **Reducing Youth Detentions in Police Custody**

The YOS Manager chairs a multi-agency group, reporting to the YOS Partnership Board, which works to ensure that as few young people as possible are detained in police custody and to limit the duration of youth custody detentions.

In addition to the team's involvement in these different partnership groups, there is ongoing daily interaction with other local services. These links are illustrated on the following page:

## Operational Links between YOS and Partner Agencies



## Resources and value for money

The YOS is funded by the statutory partners, by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and a grant from the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. Local authority staff are employed by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. Other staff are seconded from Dorset Police, the National Probation Service Dorset and Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust. Revenue contributions and the YJB Grant form a Partnership budget.

Like all public services, the YOS operates in a context of reducing resources. Ensuring value for money and making best use of resources is a high priority for the service.

Partner Agency	19/20 Revenue excluding recharges	Movement 14/15 to 19/20 – including disaggregation movements between DC and BCP Councils	Staff
Dorset Council	£492,800	-£39,100	
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	£577,700	£26,670	
Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset	£75,301	-£78,149	2.0 Police Officers. Funding reduction from 14/15 to 15/16 reflects funding of SSCT directly by the OPCC to the Police, no longer via the YOS
National Probation Service Dorset	£10,000	£6,826	1.5 Probation Officers (reduction from 2.6 up to March 2015, and from 2.0 up to March 2018, with adjusted funding contribution, after national review)
Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group	£22,487	£0	2.8 FTE Nurses
Youth Justice Board Good Practice Grant	£588,708	-£201,706	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,766,996</b>	<b>-£285,459</b>	

The YOS has also obtained funding from the NHS England Health and Justice funding stream to support the appointment of 1.0 Speech and Language Therapist, 0.2 Psychologist and 0.4 YOS Nurse. The funding for these posts is routed through the NHS Dorset CCG to Dorset HealthCare University Foundation Trust, which is the employer for these post holders.

NHS England funding has also been secured for 2019/20 to support DCYOS becoming a 'trauma-informed service'. This funding will be used to increase psychology and case-holder capacity during the implementation period.

## Use of the Annual Youth Justice Grant 2019/20

The annual Youth Justice Board grant to Youth Offending Teams is provided for 'the delivery of youth justice services'. A number of conditions are attached to the grant. The YOS Partnership Board receives quarterly finance reports from the senior accountant in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council who oversees the YOS budget. These reports enable the Board to be satisfied that YOS resources are being used for their intended purpose and achieving value for money. This reporting mechanism also enables the Board to be assured that the YOS complies with the YJB Conditions of Grant.

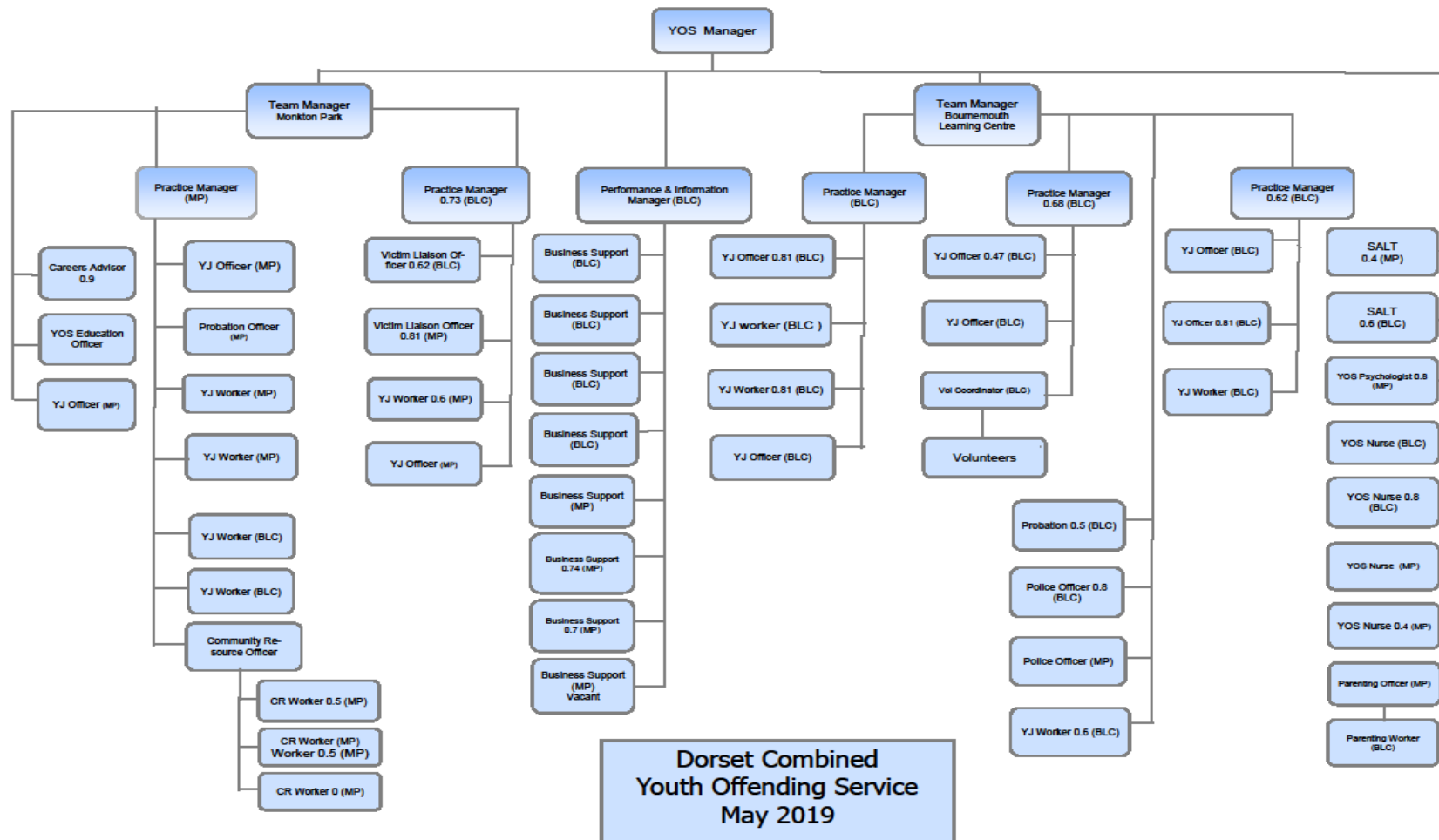
The following table sets out how the YOS uses the Youth Justice Board grant for the delivery of youth justice services:

Activity	Cost
Staff training	£10,200
Appropriate Adult provision and Referral Order panel members	£40,000
ICT licences and maintenance	£26,500
Interpreter Fees	£2,000
Restorative Justice activities	£106,152
Performance and Information Management	£65,000
Court work, Pre-Sentence Reports and Supervision of statutory youth justice outcomes	£263,856
Intensive Surveillance and Supervision	£75,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£588,708</b>

## Staffing information

This chart shows the YOS structure in May 2019. DCYOS meets the minimum staffing requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service - YOS Structure



The table below shows the number of staff and volunteers in the service, by gender and ethnicity.

**YOS Staff**

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>White British</b>	12	42
<b>White Irish</b>	1	0
<b>White Other</b>	0	1
	13	43

**YOS Volunteers**

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>White British</b>	7	20
<b>Black</b>	0	1
	7	21

DCYOS has a stable workforce with high levels of staff retention despite the challenging nature of our work. The stability of our workforce enables the team to develop valuable skills, knowledge and experience.

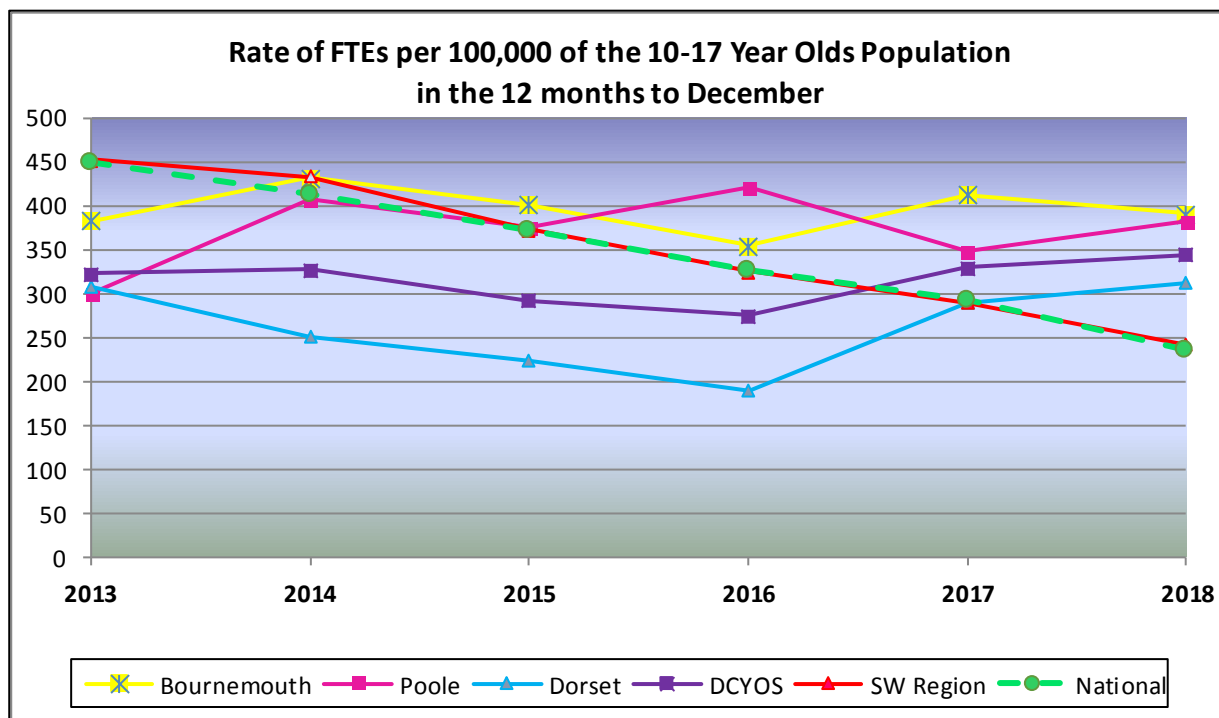
The YOS has had to undertake relatively little recruitment activity, giving few opportunities to change the diversity characteristics of our team, which we recognise is predominantly white and female. When permanent vacancies do arise, external recruitment will be prioritised.

## Key Performance Information

Youth Offending Teams continue to be judged against 3 key performance indicators:

- Reducing First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System;
- Reducing Re-Offending by young people in the Youth Justice System;
- Appropriately Minimising the use of Custodial Sentences.

### First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System



Over the last two years there has been an increase in the local rate of young people entering the youth justice system. This has been particularly marked in the former Dorset County Council area, which had previously had very low rates of first time entrants. At the same time the national and regional averages for first time entrants have continued to decline.

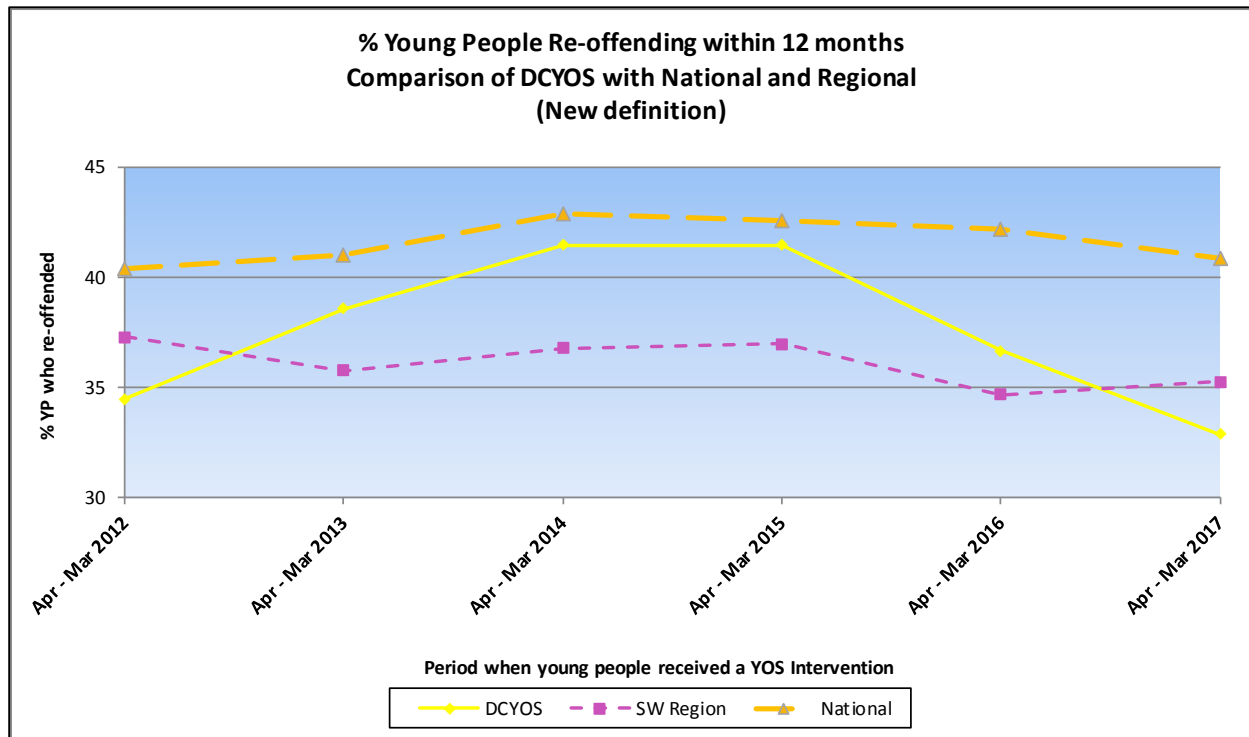
Although fluctuations in the stated rate per 100,000 young people can overstate the actual changes, in terms of numbers of individual young people, it remains a concern that children in Dorset now seem more likely to enter the justice system than children elsewhere.

When a young person commits an offence, Dorset Police work closely with Dorset Combined YOS to identify the best way to respond. Low level offending is assessed so that suitable cases can be dealt with through restorative justice approaches, avoiding the need for a formal outcome. More serious offences, or repeat offending, leads to a formal disposal and therefore to the young person entering the youth justice system.

Analysis of the local first time entrants in 2018/19 shows that 55% received a Youth Caution, which is the lowest level of formal justice outcome. 70% of those receiving a Youth Caution had not previously received a Youth Restorative Disposal. This suggests

that there is scope to increase our use of diversion options such as restorative disposals. DCYOS, Dorset Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner submitted an unsuccessful funding bid in 2018 to support a new diversion option. We are now looking at alternative funding options to ensure that a new diversion scheme can go ahead.

## Reducing Re-Offending



The information on re-offending relates to young people known to the YOS two years ago. This is because time needs to elapse to see whether young people go on to re-offend, after their contact with us, and for the new offending to be processed and recorded.

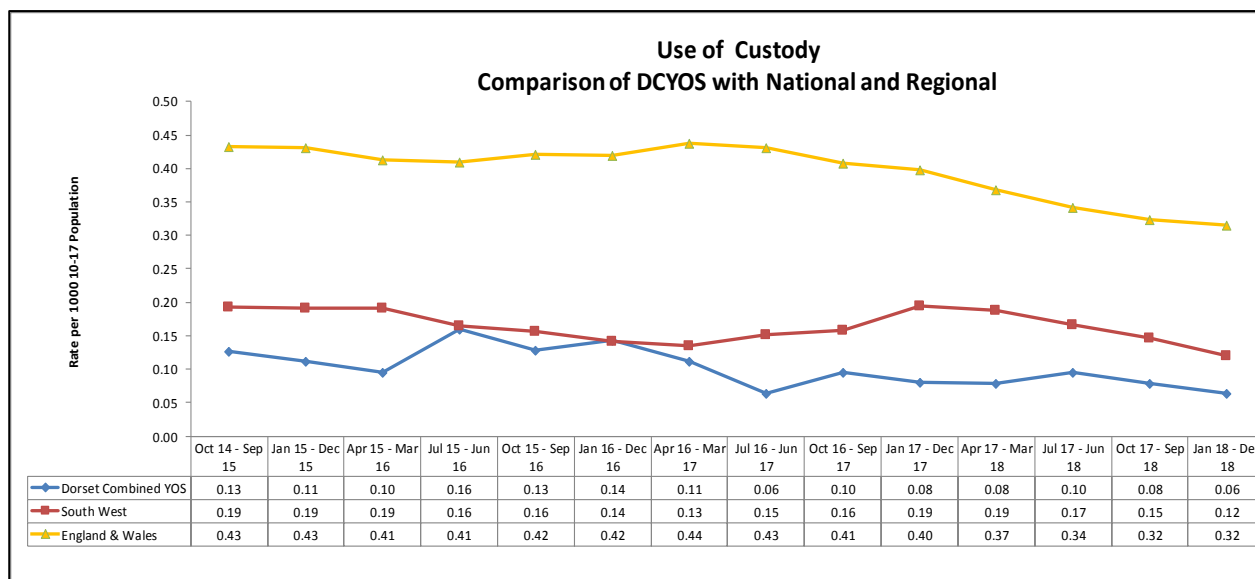
A change to the reporting arrangements for re-offending, tracking quarterly cohorts of young people instead of annual cohorts, has led to more fluctuation in the figures. It is encouraging that the overall performance of the Dorset Combined YOS areas is better than the national average. Our local reoffending rates at times exceeded the south-west regional performance, although the latest report showed DCYOS outperforming the regional average.

The national performance data provides a total figure for the whole YOS cohort from two years ago. During 2018/19 DCYOS has developed its ability to provide local reporting on reoffending, tracking more recent cohorts and differentiating the data by characteristics like age, gender and care status.

Our local data showed that 10-13 year olds were most likely to re-offend, followed by 15 year-olds. 27% of boys reoffended compared to 18% of girls; but the girls who did re-offend tended to commit a higher number of offences. Children who were in care currently or previously were more likely to re-offend than children who had never been in care.



## Custodial Sentences



DCYOS continues to see very low numbers of custodial sentences. Our performance exceeds both regional and national averages and has remained good for a number of years.

A review of the nine young people who received a custodial sentence over the last two years showed that five of them were children in care, three of them were Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) and two of them were female. National data shows that children in care and BAME children are more likely to enter custody than other children. Although the numbers are low, and each individual young person has their own specific history, the data suggests the need for further targeted work for these groups.

Like other youth justice services in the south-west, we face a problem with the distance to the secure establishments where young people are held in custody. Young people from our area have been detained this year at Parc, near Bridgend, at Feltham in north-west London, at Medway in Kent and at Oakhill, in Milton Keynes. The YOS assists family members to visit when possible, but the long distances present a challenge for family contacts, for YOS resources and for planning effective resettlement on release.

## Achievements and Developments during 2018/19:

Our Youth Justice Plan for 2018/19 set out our strategic priorities, which were designed to address the three main performance measures for youth justice, to respond to national initiatives and to align with other local strategic priorities.

### Preventing Offending

Children in Care: in January 2017 we implemented a new multi-agency protocol to reduce the criminalisation of children in care. The protocol continues to be monitored and developed. In the year before the protocol there were 121 police call outs to children's homes across our area. During the first year of the protocol, in 2017/18, there were 51 call-outs. During 2018/19 there were only 21 police call-outs to respond to behaviour in a local children's home, and most of those incidents did not lead to a justice outcome.

Diversion scheme: DCYOS, Dorset Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner joined together to make a bid to the Early Intervention Youth Fund to support a local diversion scheme, in late 2018. The bid was unsuccessful but plans continue to be developed and alternative funding is being sought. The need for this scheme is demonstrated by the increased rate of local young people entering the justice system for the first time.

Out of Court Disposals Protocol: a written protocol was agreed between DCYOS and Dorset Police in 2018 to set out the local arrangements for youth Out of Court Disposals. Practice changes have been made to establish weekly meetings between YOS Team Managers and the police sergeant from Dorset Police's Youth Out of Court Disposal team to ensure prompt decision-making and to improve case progression.

### **Improving the Quality and Impact of YOS practice**

Speech and Language: in March 2018 a new post of YOS Speech and Language Therapist commenced, using funding from NHS England. Work has been done during 2018/19 to train team members in speech, language and communication needs for YOS young people and to overhaul all written communications from the YOS to young people. The job share Speech and Language Therapists have also undertaken assessments of children with the most complex communication needs, provided consultation to other team members, and strengthened links with community speech and language services. In February 2019 a pilot scheme was launched for the Speech and Language Therapists to screen all new YOS cases so that needs can be identified and met, and YOS work can be adapted to the child's communication needs. Early results indicate that 80% of young people known to DCYOS have speech, language or communication needs (compared to 10% in the general population).

Education, Training and Employment: the arrival of a YOS Speech and Language Therapist has also strengthened the YOS Education Officer's requests for more flexible or targeted education provision. The Education Officer has developed links with local authority colleagues in 2018/19, particularly in Poole, to support and integrate work to improve provision for and attendance by young people in education.

Building on strengths: team members have been encouraged to prioritise the young person's strengths, making links with positive activities in the community. Some progress has been made in this area but more work is still required.

Child Exploitation: team members have attended training and shared their knowledge to improve our understanding and response to child criminal exploitation, building on previous work with child sexual exploitation. Young people known to the YOS have been identified as being at risk of exploitation, and the YOS has also provided Appropriate Adults for children from other areas who have been arrested in Dorset for 'County Lines' offences. A YOS Police Officer meets weekly with the specialist police team for children at risk of exploitation and the YOS Education Officer is part of the new Children Missing Education group in Dorset.

Parenting support: our parenting workers have increased the engagement of absent parents by allocating a separate worker to each parent. They have also started attending the youth court to support parents and to use the court appearance as an opportunity to build relationships with parents.

YOS Health Team: the YOS Health team now reviews all new YOS allocations to identify young people who have previously been known to the YOS to consider the need for a

health assessment. New liaison processes have been established with the Looked After Children health team to improve joint work for the health of children in care. YOS Nurses have also built stronger links with the four local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service teams.

### **Work with police, courts and other services to improve our local youth justice system**

Timeliness in local youth justice: the YOS has worked actively with local partners, through the Dorset Criminal Justice Board, to speed up our local youth justice system. Dorset Police reviewed their processes and took actions to reduce delays in case progression, and Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service scheduled additional youth courts. DCYOS worked with the Police Youth Out of Court Disposal Team to speed up decision-making and delivery of youth Out of Court Disposals. Dorset Police created a new performance report, in conjunction with DCYOS, to show timeliness at each stage of the youth Out of Court Disposal process so that delays can be better identified and addressed.

Youth detentions in police custody: the number of youths detained overnight in police custody remained similar to the previous year but there was a significant reduction in the numbers remanded (ie charged with an offence, refused bail and detained until the next court sitting). The new remand foster scheme provided an alternative accommodation option for those young people who were remanded.

Speech and Language: the YOS Speech and Language Therapists briefed magistrates on how young people's speech and language needs can affect their behaviour and understanding in court. Speech and language assessments have also helped the YOS to provide advice to courts and police when making decisions about individual young people.

Service User Feedback: a new cross-grade YOS group has worked on improving service user participation, seeking the views of young people, parents and victims to help us improve our service.

### **Making best use of resources**

Assessments: a decision was taken to use our local assessment tool, the DCYOS Brief Assessment, for Out of Court Disposal cases. AssetPlus remains the assessment we use for court orders, and for Out of Court Disposals where there are notable risk indications, such as for sexual offences. The DCYOS Brief Assessment is based on the AssetPlus tool and is proportionate to the short duration interventions which are undertaken for Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions (usually 12 weeks).

Staffing Plan: a staffing plan has been completed which shows current staffing patterns and identifies likely changes and challenges for our service. The plan shows that we have a stable workforce, with good levels of staff retention, but the age profile of the YOS workforce suggests some turnover is likely in the next few years. Succession planning is therefore being developed.

Information reporting: we have developed information reports from our case management system to enable us to identify patterns of reoffending so that we can target our work as effectively as possible.

Out of Court Disposals: a YOS Team Manager led a review of our internal processes for managing Out of Court Disposals to ensure that our work is streamlined and makes best use of our resources.

Learning Review process: in May 2018 the Youth Justice Board withdrew their previous serious incidents reporting and review procedures. DCYOS has developed its own local procedures for serious incident reviews. The new procedures focus on learning for the YOS, with a briefer reporting requirement and a practitioners review meeting to identify learning. Where a multi-agency review is required the YOS Manager will request this via the Local Safeguarding Children's Board or other relevant body.

## **Inspection reports and learning reviews in 2017/18**

HMI Probation implemented a new inspection framework for youth offending teams in June 2018. DCYOS has not yet been inspected in the new framework but we have completed a self-assessment which identified some areas for improvement, as well as applying a new quality assurance procedure for our casework using the new inspection criteria. Actions arising from our self-assessment and from our quality assurance exercises have been added to the YOS team action plan and have informed planning for this coming year.

HMI Probation did not publish any thematic inspection reports relating to youth justice during the last year.

## **Joint Targeted Area Inspection**

In May 2018 there was a Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation, children associated with gangs and at risk of exploitation and children missing from home, care or education in Dorset. The findings from this inspection were published in July 2018, raising concerns about the effectiveness of multi-agency working to identify and safeguard children at risk of exploitation.

The inspectors identified the work of the YOS as one of the 'strengths' of the local multi-agency system, with good systems in place at the point of referral, a good understanding of child protection procedures, well trained staff and effective management oversight. The inspectors commented that 'young people known to the YOS experience good engagement and positive relationships with the YOS staff'.

DCYOS has been actively involved in the development of new local multi-arrangements for Children at Risk or Linked to Exploitation (CAROLE). The YOS Manager co-chairs the 'Tactical Group' which identifies and responds to local issues related to child exploitation.

## **Learning Reviews**

The YOS has participated in two local multi-agency Serious Case Reviews and a multi-agency case audit during 2018/19. Adolescent risk was a common theme in these three cases, involving teenage males who put their own safety and other people's safety at risk. These case reviews showed missed opportunities for intervention before the child reached adolescence; problems with coordination of multi-agency activity and the effectiveness of the lead professional role; and a lack of strategic reviews of the plan for each young person. Learning from these reviews informs the DCYOS priorities for 2019/20, particularly in relation to trauma-informed responses to adolescent risk and more effective multi-agency working.

## Service User Feedback

Feedback from the young people working with DCYOS has been positive. 27 young people have completed the feedback questionnaire. All 27 said they felt listened to, and they understood what was required of them for their Out of Court Disposals or Court Orders.

100% answered Yes to the question about being helped to realise that they could make changes in their lives.

22 of the respondents rated the YOS service as 'Good', with the other 5 rating it as 'OK'.

Some of the young people wrote comments about their contact with their YOS workers, such as "gives me advice and helps", "being honest and talking to me", "getting me to explain myself and try to encourage me to not do it again".

The young people were also asked about the aspects of the YOS work which they did or did not like. There was a mixed response to the use of worksheets, with young people tending to prefer talking or watching clips to writing, and some preferences for activities such as cooking or woodwork. These responses help us to design and target our work more effectively.

DCYOS also seeks feedback for our work with victims and our direct work with parents. The response levels have been relatively low, making it harder to draw firm conclusions, though the tone of the responses has been positive.

During 2018/19 we set up a mixed group of YOS staff to review the way we seek service user feedback, using advice from our new speech and language therapist. As well as re-designed feedback procedures we are also piloting focus groups to seek feedback on specific issues.

## Emerging issues, and risks to achievement of YOS priorities in 2019-20

### National Context

The Youth Justice Board published a new set of national standards for youth justice which took effect in April 2019. The emphasis of the new document, 'Standards for Children in Youth Justice 2019', is on services responding to the young person as a 'child first, offender second'. The new standards were subject to consultation during 2018. There is a greater emphasis on outcomes, with more scope for local flexibility and less prescription about procedural requirements. The standards are accompanied by revised 'Case Management Guidance' documents which do provide more detail and direction.

The Youth Justice Board has also announced a plan for monitoring implementation of the new standards. Youth offending services are required to undertake a self-assessment during 2019/20 to show their compliance with the new standards, and to develop plans next year to address any areas of non-compliance.

### Local Context

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was completed in April 2019. Our three previous 'top-tier' local authorities were replaced by two new unitary authorities – Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council. DCYOS was established as a 'pan-Dorset' service in 2015 and continues to operate across both new local authority areas.

LGR means that changes are underway in the structures for children's services in the new local authorities, giving a new context for the work of the YOS. All local authority staff in the YOS were previously employed by Bournemouth Borough Council, which ceased to exist at the end of March 2019, leading to a 'TUPE' transfer of YOS and other local authority staff to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

The current context for youth justice work across Dorset includes an increase in young people entering the justice system, pressure on YOS resources and pressure on other public services. In recent years the young people in the justice system appear to have increasing levels of risk and need which require skilled and intensive responses.

Concerns were identified last year about delays in our local youth justice system. Some progress has been made, working with police and court service colleagues, with process changes agreed and some additional courts scheduled. More work is still needed to achieve a timely youth justice system which sees young people's behaviour receiving a prompt response with a better chance of engaging victims in restorative activities.

We are increasingly aware of the harm caused locally by child exploitation. This takes the form both of local interactions between adults and children, and of children being sent into this area by adults in metropolitan areas to commit offences such as the supply of drugs. When young people from other areas are arrested for 'county lines' offences in Dorset there are significant concerns for the young person's safety when they return to their home area. Colleagues in Dorset Police and our local children's social care services work hard to safeguard these children but are hindered by the lack of a nationally mandated approach to this issue.

Concerns about anti-social behaviour by young people, particularly in groups, have continued at specific locations across our area. These young people often have needs relating to social care, education, emotional health and substance use, which mean they

are also vulnerable to exploitation. Local authority work to safeguard these children and local authority work to control their anti-social behaviour can sometimes lack coordination.

Taking into account the national and local context, and issues identified by team members and partner agencies, the following risks to achieving YOS priorities have been identified:

- Limited access to suitable education provision and post-16 employment and training opportunities for young people working with the YOS
- Lack of suitable care placements for teenagers with significant needs and risks
- Increasing levels of child exploitation and associated violence and harm against young people in our area
- Possible lack of progress in work to speed up our local youth justice system
- Uncertainty over long-term resourcing of the YOS and late Youth Justice Grant allocation decisions which impair service planning
- Impact of the complexity and volume of work on the well-being of team members individually and as a group
- Disjointed local responses to children who are both vulnerable and cause harm or inconvenience to their local community



## Strategic Priorities for 2019-20

The strategic priorities for the Dorset Combined YOS align with:

- our three main performance indicators
- the strategic priorities of other local partnerships (such as the Safeguarding Children's Boards, Community Safety Partnerships and the Criminal Justice Board)
- relevant local initiatives to reduce offending, protect the public and safeguard young people
- areas identified for YOS improvement, including feedback from YOS staff and service users
- the emerging issues and risks summarised on the previous page.

The following priority areas will be supported by a more detailed action plan used by the YOS team.

### Service Development

- Agree and implement an additional youth justice diversion scheme to reduce the number of local young people entering the justice system for the first time
- Establish DCYOS as a trauma-informed service to improve our response to young people who are affected by their earlier childhood experiences
- Work with the court service and our local youth magistrates to implement a shared review process for young people sentenced to Youth Rehabilitation Orders
- Implement the new 'Standards for Children in Youth Justice 2019' and complete a self-assessment of how we meet these Standards
- Ensure the YOS Health Team is aligned with the new Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and with the Clinical Commissioning Group's Local Transformation Plan

### Work with police, courts and children's services to improve the way our local youth justice system works

- Enhance our local multi-agency work to reduce the number of young people detained in police custody and the duration of custody detentions by identifying and responding to patterns of young detainees and causes of delays in the custody processes
- Continue local work to improve the timeliness of the local youth justice system
- Work with children's services and criminal justice partners to improve the identification and response to children at risk of exploitation
- Develop pro-active responses to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children in our justice system to address the increased risk of custodial sentences



- Share the specialist expertise of the YOS Speech and Language Therapist to help ensure improved communications with young people throughout our local youth justice system
- Extend the remit of our local Protocol to Reduce the Criminalisation of Children in Care to include 16 and 17 year-olds living in supported housing projects
- Join with social care and CAMHS colleagues to clarify and implement assessment and intervention pathways for children who show harmful sexual behaviour

## Team Development

- Participate actively in changes following Local Government Reorganisation and changes to Local Safeguarding Children's Board arrangements to ensure best use of YOS expertise and resources in the new service structures
- Promote the use of restorative approaches within our organisation and with our service users to enhance team well-being and to increase the number of restorative justice conferences
- Implement actions identified in the YOS Staffing Plan, including measures to improve staff well-being and to strengthen succession planning
- Apply learning from DCYOS Quality Assurance exercises to improve our identification and response to young people's strengths, to prioritise the views of victims and to undertake more effective reviews of assessments and plans with young people on court orders
- Improve YOS Board's oversight of young people's education/training/employment status and of improvement actions taken when necessary
- Use information from the 'Reducing Reoffending Toolkit' to identify groups who are more likely to offend and target YOS resources accordingly
- Review the type of work done with young people to respond to their feedback and to reflect evidence of best practice
- Develop and use new methods of obtaining and responding to the views of service users and stakeholders
- Commission and complete whole service training in trauma-informed practice
- Train specialist YOS staff in the new 'AIM3' model of work with children who show harmful sexual behaviour
- Provide the new national Referral Order training for all current and new YOS case managers and volunteer panel members
- Support YOS managers to continue their learning and application of reflective supervision for team members



## Approval

Signatures of YOS Board Chair and YOS Manager

Sarah Parker (YOS Board Chair)

Executive Director People - Children

Dorset Council

Signed:

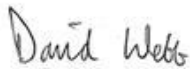
Date:

David Webb

Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service Manager

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council

Signed:

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David Webb". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Date:

## Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

AssetPlus	Nationally Accredited Assessment Tool
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
ETE	Education Training and Employment
FTE	First Time Entrant into the Youth Justice System
ISS	Intensive Supervision and Surveillance
IT	Information Technology
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
MAPPa	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
OoCD	Out Of Court Disposals
PCC	Police & Crime Commissioner
RJ	Restorative Justice
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SSCT	Safe Schools and Communities Team
VLO	Victim Liaison Officer
YJ	Youth Justice
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOS/YOT	Youth Offending Service/Team
YRD	Youth Restorative Disposal
YRO	Youth Rehabilitation Order