

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 25 JUNE 2024**

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING AND MAUREEN ATTEWELL, DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

LEAD OFFICER: JACKIE CLEMENTSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR EARLY HELP AND ADOLESCENTS

SUBJECT: YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA: NO ONE LEFT BEHIND/HIGH PERFORMING COUNCIL

Purpose of the Report:

This paper sets out the proposed 2024/25 Youth Justice Plan, for Cabinet's approval and recommendation to Council.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth justice partnership's¹ responsibilities in producing a plan. It is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded, how they will operate, and what functions will be carried out. The plan addresses the functions assigned to a youth justice service, including how services will prevent offending behaviour and reduce reoffending.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. approves the 2024/25 Youth Justice Plan for consideration by Full Council at its meeting on 9 July 2024.

Reason for Recommendations:

An annual youth justice plan is a statutory requirement for local authorities. This plan has been prepared following national guidance from the Youth Justice Board.

¹ The partnership is made up of representatives from the Police, the Probation Service, Social Services, Education and the Health Service.

Annual youth justice plans are an opportunity to review performance and developments over the last twelve months and plan for the next year. This allows services to be able to respond to any changes that have taken place in the previous year, including new legislation, demographic changes, delivery of key performance indicators, and developments in service delivery. The planning and production of a youth justice plan is beneficial to partnership working and service delivery to ensure the best outcomes for children.

The overarching vision for Surrey County Council's Children, Families and Lifelong Learning directorate is 'to support families and enable children and young people to be and feel safe, healthy and make good choices about their wellbeing'. We aim to ensure that Surrey's children and families have access to a range of services that tackle inequalities, support independence and enhance lives. This ethos is the foundation for the youth justice plan, which also supports the Council's 'No One Left Behind' commitment to Surrey residents, the wider 'The Surrey Way' objectives, and the Council's strategy for children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Executive Summary:

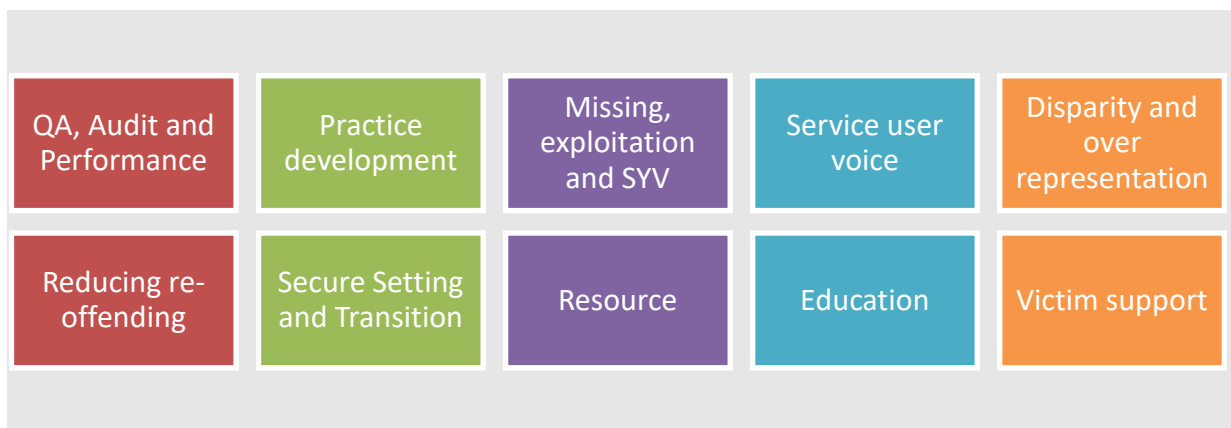
1. Annual youth justice plans are an opportunity to review performance and developments over the last twelve months and plan for the next year. This allows services to be able to respond to any relevant developments, including new legislation, demographic changes, delivery of key performance indicators, and developments in service delivery.
2. The Youth Justice Plan 2024/25, enclosed at Annex A, has been developed and endorsed by members of the Surrey Youth Justice Board. It contains a range of positive reflections on the last twelve months of performance, including a continued reduction in first time entrants to the criminal justice system and re-offending rates that remain lower than statistical neighbours and national averages. Custody rates also remain low and comparable with the general trend across Southeast and England.
3. The plan then outlines the direction of travel for 2024/25, building on last year's objectives and setting out how the service will develop in the year ahead.
4. The Surrey Youth Justice Service is an ambitious and outcomes-focused service, demonstrating passion and purpose in its approach to reducing offending, supporting children, families and victims in the context of our work and creating a safer environment for Surrey's residents in the process. The 2024/25 Plan emphasises working collaboratively with a range of partners, sharing analysis of performance and operating within a robust oversight framework. Together these will help the service to continue to demonstrate accountability for delivering positive results whilst striving to continually improve and building on the strong practice foundations currently in place.
5. It aims to promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion, and minimal intervention wherever possible.

The views of children and parents regarding the support they have been offered by Surrey Youth Justice Service are featured within. It reflects 'child first' thinking, aligning with Surrey's Child Centred Policing strategy, with ambitions to improve the life chances of children and young people in all our communities through an integrated and effective partnership approach.

- The planning and production of a youth justice plan is beneficial to partnership working and service delivery to ensure the best outcomes for children. It addresses the functions assigned to Surrey's Youth Justice Service including how the multi-agency partnership will prevent offending behaviour and reduce reoffending.

* SYV – Serious Youth Violence. QA – Quality Assurance

Figure 1: Key priorities set out in 2023/24 Youth Justice Plan



Consultation:

- Internal consultation – The plan has been co-produced by colleagues in Children's Social Care, Education, Finance and Business, Surrey's Youth Justice Board and CFLL cabinet members.
- External consultation – Surrey's Youth Justice Board have been consulted on the plan's development and will have given final sign off on 04.06.24. The Board's membership includes external partners from the Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Probation and Health. The National Youth Justice Board provide governance and oversight of Youth Justice Services across England and Wales and the grant funding for our service is determinate on a number of conditions being met, including the submission of the Surrey Youth Justice plan. Children and families have also been consulted on their experience of the Youth Justice Service and their feedback taken into account when shaping service delivery.

Risk Management and Implications:

- The Youth Justice Service operates within a statutory framework with robust systems to support internal and external oversight of performance. Any

identified risks and plan to mitigate will be agreed and monitored with the partnership via Surrey Youth Justice Board and national Youth Justice Board governance and oversight framework.

Financial and Value for Money Implications:

10. Planned expenditure for 2024-25 on the Youth Justice Plan is shown below and affordable within budget plus anticipated grant allocation for 2024-25:

Financial Resources

Agency	Staffing costs	Payments in Kind	Other Delegated Funds	Total
Youth Justice Board	810,693			810,693
Local Authority	1,317,350			1,317,350
Police	266,299			266,299
Police & Crime Commissioner	15,000			15,000
Probation	44,142	5,000		49,142
Health	165,513			165,513
TOTAL				2,623,997

11. The Youth Justice Board grant is dependent on the Board's receipt of the plan. The Surrey Youth Justice Management Board commits to every member being held to account, to ensure this Plan is delivered.
12. The expected outcomes include continued reduction in first time entrants to the criminal justice system and stable re-offending rates, avoiding remand placement costs of up to £5,655 per week for placements lasting from weeks to several months or more. The total spend on Secure Remand placements in 2023-24 was £291,694 funded in part by Remand grant of £141,063, leaving a net cost to Surrey CC of £150,631.
13. Ultimately the Plan will benefit wider public services in Surrey by helping to reduce pressures on the police, probation service, prison service, health system and social care services.
14. Surrey's continued investment in youth justice has demonstrated good value for money to date. The Youth Justice Board published statistics comparing the number of first-time entrants to the youth justice system shows Surrey County Council to be the best performing Local Authority in the South-East with a 13% decrease from 2020-21 to 2021-22. South East Sector Led improvement group also publish benchmarking statics which show that Surrey County Council is the best performing authority in the South East for numbers per 10K of first time entrants. We would continue to monitor our performance against these benchmarks and others to maintain value for money.

Section 151 Officer Commentary:

15. Significant progress has been made in recent years to improve the Council's financial resilience and the financial management capabilities across the organisation. Whilst this has built a stronger financial base from which to deliver our services, the increased cost of living, global financial uncertainty, high inflation and government policy changes mean we continue to face challenges to our financial position. This requires an increased focus on financial management to protect service delivery, a continuation of the need to be forward looking in the medium term, as well as the delivery of the efficiencies to achieve a balanced budget position each year.
16. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2023/24 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority, in order to ensure the stable provision of services in the medium term.
17. As such, the Section 151 Officer supports the approval of the plan, noting the plan falls within the budget set as part of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer:

18. Local authorities have a statutory duty after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual Youth Justice Plan, setting out how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded, how they will operate, and what functions will be carried out. In accordance with the 'Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000' the plan must be approved by full Council. Cabinet is asked to endorse the 2024/25 plan for consideration by full Council at its meeting in June 2024.

Equalities and Diversity:

19. The plan contains analysis on diversity, including over-representation of certain demographics in the criminal justice system generally and in Surrey. Key points include the following:
- a. Children whose ethnicity is recorded as black and mixed heritage are overrepresented when measuring the offending figures against local population and this is therefore an area of concern.
 - b. 70% of children with youth justice interventions had or currently have an EHCP or SEN Support, with varying prevalence rates across ethnicities and genders.
 - c. 76% of children engaged with Surrey Youth Justice Services had previously been allocated a social worker. 28% had an early intervention plan, and 20% were referred to early help services.

20. Priorities for addressing equality and diversity as part of the youth justice plan are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Equality and diversity priorities as part of the 2024/25 Youth Justice Plan

Disparity and Over-representation		
Surrey YJS to address over representation within our cohort, promote anti racist practice (as per HMIP's effective practice guide), demonstrate cultural competence and reduce the risk of discrimination impacting on a child's journey through the criminal justice system	2024/25	<p>Overarching objectives and comprehensive plan is captured in the Disparity Working Group (DWG) Term of Reference and DWG action plan and acts to address the issues pertaining to disparity and over representation identified throughout this YJ plan. Next steps include the following:</p> <p>Disproportionality training has been funded for all staff involved in Surrey's YJS delivery.</p> <p>Convene regular DWG meetings involving key partners to progress the action plan addressing concerns pertaining to children overrepresented in Surrey YJS. Strategic and operational responses will be considered in this space.</p> <p>Data and Performance team to continue provide YJB disparity tool kit data sets to inform analysis and priorities moving forward.</p> <p>Analyse data from non-admissions scheme to measure effectiveness and impact. Terms of Reference has been drafted by Police colleagues and ready for progression.</p> <p>Consult children to understanding their lived experience of the criminal justice system, ensuring there is shared recognition, understanding and response to over representation amongst our cohort.</p> <p>The DWG are considering how best to mobilise a sub- group made up of Team Managers and front-line staff to feed into analysis through use of qualitative data, considering localised response given large geographical area covered in Surrey.</p> <p>Ensure to continually disseminate learning from the DWG and sub-group (once live) with the wider YJ service, relevant partners and Surrey Youth Justice Board for governance and oversight.</p>

<p>To work with our Magistrates and colleagues in Court to support learning and development opportunities pertaining to disproportionality and over representation.</p>	<p>2024/25</p>	<p>YJ central team to progress discussion with Magistrates as part of quarterly review meetings. YJ Service Manager to pursue wider input and participation from judiciary via the DWG.</p> <p>Continue to promote best practice and child first language in PSR reports to guard against issues such as adultification, ensuring children as seen as children.</p>
<p>Continue in our attempt to recruit and diversify the pool of Referral Order panel volunteers and reflect the demographic in Surrey’s local community.</p>		<p>A new group of volunteers are being trained currently but the level of diversity still needs attention and recruitment will remain ‘cyclical’ with regular review. YJ central team to continue to work in partnership with Equality and Diversity lead and liaise with Surreys Minority Ethnic Forum and Surrey Gypsy Traveller Communities Forum.</p>

Other Implications:

21. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
<p>Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children</p>	<p>Care experienced children are consistently overrepresented in the criminal justice system and Surrey are no exception. This overrepresented cohort of children are being actively supported not only by the YJS but also the wider partnership via the Disparity Working Group.</p>
<p>Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults</p>	<p>As with care experienced children referenced above, the high levels of children open to the YJS who have had/are subject to social care involvement and/or have SEND are also being actively supported via the Disparity Working Group and more broadly as detailed in the YJ plan.</p>
<p>Environmental sustainability</p>	<p>Not applicable in this instance.</p>
<p>Compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience</p>	<p>Not applicable in this instance.</p>
<p>Public Health</p>	<p>Not applicable in this instance.</p>

What Happens Next:

22. The Youth Justice Plan will be considered by Full Council in July.

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Annexes:

Annex A – The Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

Sources/background papers:

The Youth Justice Board guidance for plan completion:

[Youth justice plans: guidance for youth justice services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/youth-justice-plans-guidance-for-youth-justice-services)