
Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission.

**Title: Leicester City Youth Justice Plan
2024-25**

Lead Director: Damian Elcock

Head of Service: Karen Manville

Date of Scrutiny Meeting: 20 August 2024

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: 1

1. Purpose and Summary

Purpose

- a. To provide a summary of the annual Youth Justice Plan refresh highlighting progress to date and new emerging priorities. This will be received at Board level and across the partnership and proceed through due diligence processes onto Full Council.
- b. This executive summary addresses the review the statutory Youth Justice Plan for 2022-2025 refresh in 2024 and provides an opportunity to direct any comments to the Head of Service for Prevention Services.
- c. This is the final refresh of the plan with a new suggested 5-year plan being devised in late 2024 and early into 2025.
- d. It is recommended that the Commission consider, note and comment on the recommendations to the Executive set out in Paragraph 6.

2. Summary

- 2.1 It is the duty of each local authority after consultation with partners to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan setting out:
 - how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded; and
 - how the Children and Young Peoples Justice Service will be composed and funded; how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.
- 2.2 The purpose of this executive summary report is to present the plan for consideration and to seek agreement that it should proceed to Full Council for formal adoption.
- 2.3 The statutory youth justice plan is approved by the Leicester Youth Justice Management Board and must then be submitted to the national Youth Justice Board (YJB) by 30 June. It must then be annually reviewed once formal approval has been granted from Full Council. As the Youth Justice Board require a draft plan by the 30th of June there is agreement that a draft is submitted prior to being formally ratified through political processes. This has always been the case and is due to the YJ grant procedures. The Youth Justice Board will ordinarily provide feedback by the end of July as part of the process. This year, the YJB have provided some additional guidance and are running webinars looking at the format since new guidance was issued in 2023. These changes have meant a longer more detailed plan was created that is subsequently refreshed over a three-year period.
 - The document is the youth justice partnership's main statement of purpose and sets out its proposals to prevent offending by children and young people. The plan shows not only what the Children and Young People's Justice Service (CYPJS) will deliver as a service, but how strategic links with other supporting initiatives will be developed and maintained.
 - This plan supports a range of associated partnership strategies including the Leicester Early Help Strategy, Police and Crime Plan, Violence Reduction Strategy and strategic needs assessment, the Community Safety Partnership Plan and

delivery plans within the Social Care, Early Help and Education department. The Youth Justice Plan is supported by a detailed Partnership Plan and Operational Delivery Plan overseen by the Head of Service for Prevention Services, who reports progress to the Leicester Youth Justice Management Board

- As a statutory regulated service, youth offending services are normally inspected every three years by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The most recent single inspection took place in August 2019 and a thematic inspection on Education, Training and Employment was undertaken in January 2022. The service continues to strive for outstanding and to be inspection ready, with the view that an inspection may be called in 2025 within a new inspection framework. The current judgment held is GOOD.
- The service is also monitored by The Youth Justice Board which introduced a new monitoring framework in 2023. It provides judgments against a range of criteria with 4 quadrants applied for each YOT across the country. Leicester is currently placed in quadrant 2 which is regarded as a good quadrant to be in. However, discussions will be held as to whether the service will start striving to move into quadrant 1 and what this means for the service, partnership and children and families it serves. The Youth Justice Board are currently reviewing this framework one year on from its implementation.
- The Youth Justice Plan is required to address the areas of performance, structure and governance, resources, value for money, partnership arrangements and risks to future delivery. The plan considers local performance issues, lessons from CYPJS thematic inspections, together with learning from any serious incidents.
- The Youth Justice Management Board met in May 2024 to review the plan and consider priorities for the coming year to help shape the report and ensure the voice of the partnership is embedded within the plan refresh. The executive summary is shared with the partnership to ensure it is widely circulated across the organisations for feedback.
- Key priorities for the Leicester Youth Justice Management Board for 2024-25 include areas for further development highlighted by the HMIP thematic inspection and self-assessment against the YJB national standards. Some of the priorities from the 2023-2024 refresh plan have also been rolled forward as it was set out as an ambitious three-year plan in 2022. The following briefly outlines, performance and development plans over the next twelve months focusing upon key priority areas.

3. Key priorities

a. First Time Entrants (FTE)

- The plan identifies key priorities for this cohort of children and young people including the ongoing development of the Early Intervention Team as well as the Youth Support Offer. (Detailed information and performance can be found in section 8 of the Youth Justice Plan).
- We have a jointly held (with the county) Out of Court Disposal Panel that meets weekly to discuss all FTE cases. This is a robust and well embedded panel approach. The Head of Service has recently observed the panel identifying excellent practice.

- The service has a well-established Early Intervention Team with outstanding successes impacting on FTE rates. We have an “opt out” approach to our diversionary work and take up rates for our children is excellent.
- The service recognises that the new inspection framework places a greater emphasis on the Early Intervention and Diversionary work of YOT’s. The service is proud of the work undertaken in this space.

b. Re-offending

- The plan identifies the key performance indicators for this priority. It evidences impact to date and work that needs to be undertaken to continue to strive to reduce the frequency and seriousness of reoffending at all tiers within the youth justice system. (Detailed information and data can be found in section 8 of the Youth Justice Plan).
- The service has developed a range of programmes to meet the trends within reoffending data such as an increase in Motor offences. A new group work programme has been developed to work specifically with young people in this offence category.
- We use a trauma informed approach with all our children to explore behaviours and experiences that impact a child’s life. The risks to themselves, others and increase potential to offend.

c. Custody and constructive resettlement

- The plan identifies the key successes and challenges with this key performance indicator. Over the years the service has successfully reduced the number of remands and custodial sentences. The plan identifies key actions that are required to continue to ensure custody is only used where appropriate and all other options have been fully explored. To ensure the right packages are provided to children to reduce remand and custodial sentences as appropriate. (Section 8 of the plan provides a detailed reflection of work to date on this priority and what is required looking forward over the next year).
- Close partnership working has enabled the service to fully support children who receive custodial sentences or held on remand. Our resettlement offer has been strengthened to ensure we work on key priorities with our children from the moment they enter a custodial establishment to have a robust plan in place for their release. All necessary referrals such as accommodation referrals are made at least three months prior to a child’s release.

d. Other identified priorities – (Section 8 - 8.13 onwards in full plan)

- Education, Training and Employment

- To reduce the numbers of NEET young people with a specific focus on those aged 16+ who are not in full time Education, Training & Employment (NEET) and known to CYPJS. To explore placement opportunities with Connexions as this is an area of need identified through our data sets.
- To ensure the service continues to respond to the needs to children and young people on EHCPs and any identified learning and neuro diversity needs.
- To strengthen our approach to children presenting with Speech Language and Communication Needs. The service is currently working on a bid to secure funding for a dedicated post.
- To hold a yearly spotlight themed session at the board on ETE to enable partners to identify any gaps or areas for development whilst highlighting the successes.

- Criminal Exploitation and Serious Youth Violence

- Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation - CYPJS is a duty holder of the new Serious Violence Duty and as such there is an expectation to fulfil several functions referenced in the Plan including the need to have in place a self-assessment against key criteria within the

Duty which is routinely monitored through the Board. A strong focus on exploitation, missing from home and school as well as knife offences and preventative work is in place within the service.

- The CCE work has been moved to sit firmly within the Early Intervention Service with key representation at Hub meetings and partnership meeting. This work is overseen by the Head of Service who attends the CE and SV Delivery Group that is chaired by the Director for Children's Social Care, Early Help and Prevention Services. This work ensures a multi-agency holistic approach to supporting children at risk of exploitation and serious youth violence. A new data report is being designed to monitor trends and impact of the work being undertaken with children in need. This will be presented at Board level and the Delivery Group for scrutiny.
- The service has a strong risk of reoffending toolkit meeting to monitor individual cases and intelligence and programmes of delivery as well as a Case Management and Diversity Panel to oversee cases at a multi-agency level.

- **Victim and Restorative Justice**

- Victim and Restorative Justice work is strong in the city including reviewing existing data sets to the victim offer uptake and exploring processes to capture satisfaction rates of victims to inform interventions. The service is keen to support the concept of a restorative city and what the service can offer as this is explored and developed.

- **Child First and participation**

- Participation, co-production and the voice of the child is a key priority to ensure the service is a rights' respecting service. We have developed a robust feedback form for our children to complete to help shape service delivery and feedback into our quality assurance processes.
- All children create their own plans that are supported by their key worker. This ensures they truly own their plans and don't feel disconnected from them. They identify their own targets with support and guidance from their key worker.
- The service continues to encourage a partnership wide "child first approach" to strategy, planning and delivery. In 2024/5 The service will implement an approach whereby the voice of the child is reflected in all reports received by the board, as well as other partnership meetings, to reflect its rights respecting approach.
- The service will continue to ensure a child's plan is always in place and that children are fully involved in the creation of it and the monitoring, reviewing and feedback thereafter.

- **Evidence based practice, evaluation, and quality of delivery.**

- To continue to promote evidence-based practice to further impact on our reoffending rates and associated KPI's. To provide opportunities to evaluate key programmes and interventions to ensure resources are being used in the right places for the right children thus having the greatest impact.
- To continue to ensure a robust quality assurance process is in place with clear themes for the year and learning that is extrapolated and delivered upon. This also ensures an "Inspection ready approach" is embedded within practice.
- Maintain scrutiny in relation to disproportionality and children looked after due to their overrepresentation within the service. Ensuring that packages of intervention meet specific need, and that there is a preventative offer in place for residential homes. To ensure the Board receives reports on partnerships work on disproportionality as part of the new suite of KPI's. For the partnership to consider what actions are required to consider disproportionality across all organisations and front-line service delivery

- To complete national standard self-audits yearly with the next being in October 2024. To continue to ensure areas for improvements are delivered upon from previous self-audits. Recommendations are held within the partnership and operational delivery plans.

- **Transitions**

- To develop and establish a bespoke programme to support young people through all transitions including health, education, accommodation, children who move services and children who reach the end of their order.
- To continue to promote the health dashboard to support daily work and transitions. To monitor themes and trends to help build a CYPJS health profile and identify any service specific needs.

- **Youth Support Offer**

- To develop and embed a Youth Support offer in 2024/5. A strong offer has been developed but requires clear communication across the partnership and through comms.

- **Staff and workforce development.**

- To celebrate success across the partnership
- To invest in staff and ensure quality conversations are routinely held and training needs identified and addressed.
- To monitor the operational delivery plan and for staff to be aware and own the vision and priorities within the plan for 2024/5.
- Maintaining a resilient workforce in challenging times. By remaining committed to staff events, team meetings and reflective supervision with strong management oversight on cases.

- **Sustainability**

- Work is being undertaken looking at several of our short-term funded projects specifically in our early Intervention space to provide a more sustainable offer and approach moving forward.
- To monitor the impact of any decrease in funding across the partnership to ensure minimal impact on service delivery. A risk log is in place and monitored at Board level.

4. Key successes – (Section 12 of the full plan.)

- The REACH Team has been successfully evaluated and continues to have a significant impact on children and young people on the cusp of exclusions from school or missing education regularly. The delivery was independently evaluated by Sheffield Hallam University with fabulous findings as well as identifying areas for ongoing development. The service is only funded until March 2025, so work is currently underway to firm up funding and sustainability planning through the Board.
- The service has embedded a robust offer to young people who have experienced Adverse Childhood Trauma (ACE) in their lives and how to support young people with a history of trauma.
- Developed a robust approach to working with children and young people on EHCP's to ensure staff are skilled and able to adapt plans to meet identified needs. The service is working with key partners to strengthen the support for children with neurodiversity needs and staff are being trained to recognise and work with said children. This will remain an ongoing priority in 2024/5.

- Leicester City Violent Crime Joint Action Group (JAG). Working in partnership the JAG is working to redesign the public service response to violence in Leicester City through greater collaboration and integrated working.
- The Early Intervention Team has now been operational since November 2019 and has provided intervention to more than 600 children and young people. Data demonstrates a significant drop in the number of young people who have re-offended as well as the number of offences committed which is supporting our reduction in FTE's and Statutory Orders.
- The Summer Arts College (SAC), established by the YJB in 2005, has been adopted by Leicester CYPJS for many years. The programme is run over several weeks during the school holidays and provides children with the opportunity to participate in art-based activities, whilst working towards an Arts Award. Evidence of impact can be clearly seen with children gaining apprenticeships at key art organisations post college. The Service continues to seek professionals with a talent in the Arts to help run session in 2024 Summer Arts College.
- Continual improvements in several performance indicators including the reduction of numbers being remanded and entering custodial establishments and an increase in pre and post 16 ETE engagement. A recognition that further work is required specifically with post 16 young people and addressing spikes in custodial sentencing through serious youth violence.
- Leicester CYPJS has worked closely with the Crown Prosecution Service to avoid unnecessarily criminalising children. This has resulted in an increased number of children being diverted from Court for an Out of Court Disposal, acknowledging the child's needs and circumstances, thereby diverting away from the formal justice system at an early stage. There will be a far greater focus on diversionary activities and resources under the new HMIP inspection framework.
- A key priority in 2023/4 was to embed the Social Care and Education Participation Strategy, ensuring that the views of children and young people, their parents/carers and other stakeholders are fully embedded in key areas within the CYPJ service. This has been achieved with good evidence of impact and outcomes.
- Victim voice to be more evident within out of court disposals with a stronger focus on restorative justice processes. Dip sampling of cases and observations have seen this to be the case.
- The establishment of a bespoke programme to support young people through transitions smoothly. Probation have embedded a young person's team which has assisted in the transitions work. Probation received a thematic inspection on transitions by HMIP in April 2024 and any recommendations pertinent to youth justice will be embedded within the partnership plan as well as the operational delivery plan.
- The establishment of a bespoke Health dashboard for CYPJS to track themes and trends but also provide staff with a wealth of health data to inform their planning and delivery.
- The creation of a 'Remand Strategy' to support the effective management and support for young people who are remanded into custody including those who are held overnight in police custody.
- Substance misuse services. There has been a marked increase in referrals, engagement and outcomes for young people receiving support. This will continue to remain a priority area for the service to ensure this continues to be the case throughout 2024/5
- The adolescent offer now re-named the Youth Support Offer - The Expansion of the offer within the service, merging a range of programmes to develop a co-ordinated pathway of interventions to both prevent and protect young people who are at risk of offending, child criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.
- The service has continued to be a core member of the Violent Reduction Network and helped prepare, alongside partners, for the Serious Violence Legal Duty within the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. As a specified authority, the Head of Service is the

nominated lead for this area, within serious youth violence, with the strategic director overseeing the work for the local authority.

5. Key risks and mitigations (see section 10 of the Youth Justice plan for further detail)

- A key risk at the time of finalising this plan is the continued impact of the cost-of-living crisis, remaining challenges from the pandemic and impact on our children and families. The impact of COVID for years to come is evident and will impact on all children's services including CYPJS. There are significant risks to short term funded projects that are likely to come to an end this financial year (24/5).
- An ongoing challenge for the CYPJS is to maintain continuous improvement in the context of any proposed national changes. Additional risks to future service delivery arise from reduced government and partnership funding. Partners as well as local authorities are in increasingly challenging times financially, whilst demand is increasing, which may impact indirectly, or directly on service delivery in the coming years.
- The service is working with strategic partners through the Youth Justice Management Board to ensure that national changes to the criminal justice system through Police, HM Courts and Probation services are managed appropriately and address risk, public protection and safeguarding priorities for children and young people.
- HMIP were clear, during the ETE thematic inspection, that the service was working with complex children and young people and the challenges this places on the service and partnership. The complexities of cases escalating through the criminal justice system is notable and has been the case for a significant number of years. Reflecting children's experiences of trauma, serious youth violence and exploitation will be paramount.
- Transitions- The growing cohort of young people aged 16 -18 open on orders makes it imperative that we improve all transitional arrangements (health, services, accommodation, education, probation etc), ensuring that there are strengths in the transitions such as to adult probation services particularly around maturation and understanding gaps in support.
- Prevention and Early Intervention - Considering the balance of the prevention open case load compared to the statutory caseload we will continue to strengthen the focus on the prevention and early intervention opportunities and realign resources as needed for sustainability.
- Disproportionality within CYPJS processes and practice affecting young people's experience and outcomes will remain a priority and key to partnership working too. To make further progress in meeting our public-sector equality duties, in particular that we are advancing equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination, the service will ensure that the monitoring of disproportionality, trends and issues include the protected characteristics of young offenders not least sex, race, disability, religion and belief.
- Key Performance Indicators. We have developed a robust approach to the new KPIs that have been put in place from April 2023. These were presented to the board in 2022 prior to launching and a workshop in June 2023 highlighted an opportunity for board members to "adopt" a KPI to ensure strategic partners had an eye to themes and trends in the KPIs being monitored.

6. Recommended actions/decision

6.1 The purpose of the report is to review the statutory Youth Justice Plan for 2022-2025 and refresh in 2024, directing any comments to the Head of Service for Prevention.

Recommendations

6.2 To consider, and note, the achievements from 2023-4

6.3 To consider, and agree, the priorities for 2024-25 as a final refresh of the three-year plan.

6.4 To consider a five year plan from 2025-2030 with a strong yearly refresh.

7. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

7.1 The report has been presented to the Leicester Youth Justice Management Board as part of a partnership workshop in May 2024 and all partners have contributed to the plan.

7.2 An executive summary was shared across the partnership and within organisations with feedback to the Head of Service. This will be ongoing.

7.3 Our children have reviewed the children's plan from 2023-4 and presented a new children's plan of their hopes, wishes and vision for the service.

8. Background and options with supporting evidence

8.1 The full report has been provided with appendices

9. Detailed report

9.1 Attached with this summary

10. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

10.1 Financial implications

The total 24/25 budget is £2.4m funded by Youth Justice grant £842k(tbc) , Leicester City Council £639k and various other contributions including Health ,Police and National Probation Service.

Paresh Radia – Finance.

10.2 Legal implications

there are no employment law implications.

Hayley McDade
Solicitor

For City Barrister and Head of Standards

10.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The report sets out the proposed statutory Leicester City Youth Justice Plan for 2024/25, provides an update on the achievements from 2023/24 and consideration of a five-year plan from 2025-2030. From the perspective of meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty aims, the Youth Justice Plan sets out priority activities that seek to promote equality of opportunity for young offenders by reducing the adverse impacts they are likely to experience through involvement with the criminal justice system; and by achieving these outcomes and enabling young offenders to take part in city and community life, contribute to improved good relations between different groups of people.

In terms of the protected characteristic of race, the Leicester Youth Justice Management Board will continue to implement the recommendations from the task and finish group findings, exploring disproportionality of ethnicity and children looked after. In terms of the protected characteristic of disability, the service will continue to respond to the needs of children and young people with EHCPs, those who have identified learning and/or disabilities and neuro diversity needs as well as strengthening its approach to children presenting with Speech Language and Communication Needs.

Disproportionality within CYPJS processes and practice affecting young people's experience and outcomes will remain a priority and key to partnership working and monitoring of these will include at least include sex, race, disability, religion and belief. The Early Intervention offer is ensuring that we are reaching more girls and this work should continue. Overall, the service is continuing to encourage a partnership wide child first approach to strategy, planning and delivery, which should continue to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The proposed Youth Justice Plan 2024/25 offers a high-level overview of the planned work for the coming year, however there are a number of strands of work where equalities, and particularly the PSED, will need to be an on-going consideration, such as the creation and implementation of the Remand Strategy and the work of the Case Management and Diversity Panel. It may be the case that an Equality Impact Assessment is required for some strands of work such as reviewing policies and services, where changes will directly impact on young people in the service, and advice can be sought from the Equalities Team on this as required.

Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer, 454 4175

10.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are no significant climate emergency implications directly associated with this report.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

9.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

10. Background information and other papers:

11. Summary of appendices:

12. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

13. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?