

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL CABINET

10 OCTOBER 2023

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION: COUNCILLOR FIONA BAKER

Report Title	Northamptonshire Youth Justice Plan
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Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

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List of Appendices

Appendix A –Youth Justice plan 2022

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 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. 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 Northamptonshire Youth Justice Service is attached at Appendix One.

2. Executive Summary

2.1. Youth Offending Teams are statutory partnerships, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young

people. Local authorities are responsible for establishing a Youth Offending Team. Police, the Probation Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.

- 2.2. This current plan covers performance for the period 2022/23 and provides service budgets, operational and strategic developments within the service and partnership, service structure and the Service Improvement Plan for 2023 – 2024.
- 2.3. The Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. After submission to the YJB, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP - lead for YOS inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons library.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Cabinet agree the content of the Youth Justice Plan for 2023/24 and recommend the Plan to Council for approval.

4. Reason for Recommendations

- To comply with the Constitution of the Council where the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Policy Framework that is approved by Full Council.
- To provide strategic direction to the Youth Offending Service that is delivered by Northamptonshire Children's Trust.

5. Report Background

- 5.1. The Youth Offending Service (YOS) is a statutory multi agency service, which has a responsibility to prevent offending and reoffending by those aged under 18 years who are resident in Northamptonshire. Northamptonshire YOS is well respected nationally as an innovative service achieving good outcomes for children and young people.
- 5.2. There is a statutory requirement to produce and submit to the Youth Justice Board a Youth Justice Plan (Plan) as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 section 40. The Plan should set out how youth justice services are to be provided and funded, how the Youth Offending Service will be composed and funded, how it will operate and what functions it will carry out. The Plan must be submitted for approval to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. The submission of the Plan is also a condition for receipt by the service of the second instalment of the Youth Justice Board Good Practice Grant.
- 5.3. The areas of work for the YOS are laid out in legislation, government policy and national guidance. The detail of local operational priorities and delivery are developed in agreement and with reference to key local strategic boards including Community Safety Executive; Children Trust Board; Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Northamptonshire's North and East Criminal Justice Board.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1. Statute requires the production of an annual Youth Justice Plan, the YJB also welcomes plans that cover more than one year. Plans must cover both strategic and operational elements. The wider strategic picture should be captured, whilst also outlining the key business activities that will be undertaken by services to achieve wider strategic aims.
- 6.2. The Plan should set out the direction and strategy of youth justice services, describing how quality services will be provided to ensure positive outcomes for children and improvements in performance indicators, in particular:
- reducing first time entrants to the youth justice system
 - reducing the use of custody
 - reducing reoffending rates
 - locally agreed performance indicators that evidence positive outcomes for children
- 6.3. The Plan must describe how leadership and governance is set up to monitor the quality and effectiveness of youth justice services across your area.
- 6.4. The Northamptonshire Youth Justice Plan has identified the following priorities:
- Strategic Priority 1 –Early Help & Prevention.
 - Strategic Priority 2- Recognising and responding to child exploitation and serious youth violence.
 - Strategic Priority 3 – Tackling disproportionality in the criminal justice system.
- 6.5. Due to the restrictions of the YJB prescriptive approach, the YOS is prevented from innovating and ensuring the document is child friendly and accessible to all. The YJB has a long list of key headings and directives the YOS must follow which as a result restricts some of the community.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1. The Youth Offending Service is partly funded by the Youth Justice Grant which is distributed by the Youth Justice Board. Receipt of this grant is dependent on submission of a Youth Justice Plan to the Youth Justice Board.

7.2. Legal

- 7.2.1. It is a legal requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 section 40 to produce a Plan and submit this to the YJB for approval.

7.3. Risk

7.3.1. There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.4. Consultation and Communications

7.4.1. In accordance with statutory requirements, the Plan was placed before Northamptonshire YOS Management Board on which statutory partners sit (Police, Probation, Health) and was approved in May 2023.

7.4.2. The YOS intends to prepare a child friendly version of the Plan once the Plan has been agreed. The Plan at present is not child friendly due to the prescriptive nature of the YJB requirements, Northamptonshire YOS are committed to ensuring that young people have a full understanding of the YOS Plan for 2023. The Northampton Children's Trust Youth Engagement Team have been identified to contribute to this.

7.5. Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

7.5.1. The Overview and Scrutiny have not requested to comment in relation to this report and recommendations.

7.6. Climate Impact

7.6.1. There is no specific climate impact arising from this report.

7.7. Community Impact

7.7.1. There is no distinct community impact arising from this report.

8. Background Papers

Youth Justice Plan in appendix A