

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Service
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	2 February 2023

## YOUTH JUSTICE TEAM: UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the committee with an update regarding Blackpool's Youth Justice Service (YJS).

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to have oversight of the service to provide scrutiny, challenge and support to aid service development and ensure positive outcomes for children are achieved.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 No other alternative options to be considered.

### 5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

### 6.0 Background information

6.1 Our approach:

The service provides children with interventions that support their needs and addresses their offending behaviour, maintaining a "Child First" approach and always seeks to work in partnership with children and their families.

The “Child First” principle has been adopted by the Youth Justice Board<sup>1</sup> (YJB) as a strategic priority for the Youth Justice System (YJS) of England and Wales. As the central and guiding principle of youth justice practice, “Child First” underpins the Standards for children in the youth justice system, which in turn directs the policy and practice of the youth justice sector as a whole and the range of services therein.

“Child First” summarises contemporary understanding of what works in youth justice, built on decades of evidence. A “Child First” approach means putting children at the heart of what we do, treating children as children, see the whole child, including any structural barriers they face and focus on better outcomes for children. Evidence tell us this will also create safer communities with fewer victims. Children in the Youth Justice system face multiple, complex challenges and need support to remove barriers and create opportunities for them, to move forward with their lives. T

Blackpool’s YJS was last inspected by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in the Summer of 2021. The Inspectorate worked jointly with partner inspectors from policing, health, social care and education to undertake this inspection. Three broad areas were examined: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court work (such as community sentences) the service was rated ‘Good’ and in three aspects ‘Outstanding’.

The Inspectorate were particularly impressed by the comprehensive overhaul of the arrangements for out-of-court disposal (OoCD) work, led by police colleagues commenting the quality of the service has changed from ‘Inadequate’ across the board, to at least ‘Good’ and in some respects ‘Outstanding’. OoCD work is considered when a child commits an offence and where it may be most appropriate to divert or ‘triage’ them away from the criminal justice system entirely and work with the child, family and victim through more informal ways to address their needs and prevent further offending. There is no one method of working with children to divert them. OoCD disposals can be used for children who have admitted an offence, but it is not in the public interest to prosecute as it is not always appropriate for children that commit a crime to be sent to Court. It may be appropriate for the Police and Youth Offending Teams to consider an OoCD disposal.

Actions to address the HMIP recommendations to advance the service further form part of our Youth Justice Plan. The Youth Justice Plan along with performance and resource data is monitored quarterly via the Blackpool’s Youth Justice Executive Board providing a multidisciplinary strategic focus on the impact of service delivery on children’s outcomes. The Blackpool Youth Justice Executive Management Board is committed to working effectively and collaboratively with all relevant partners and agencies to reduce the numbers of children and young people entering the criminal justice system and to reduce re-offending.

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<sup>1</sup> The youth justice system in England and Wales is overseen by the Youth Justice Board (YJB), a non-departmental public body operating at arms-length from ministers. Its primary function is to monitor the operation of the youth justice system and the provision of youth justice services.

## 6.2 Update since the last report to scrutiny in September 2022:

Blackpool's Youth Justice Executive Board last met on 23 January 2023 and reviewed performance in the last quarter.

- During this period the service supported 75 children, predominately male (85%), White-British (87%) and average age of 16. 15% of the Children supported were 'Our Children' and looked after by the Local Authority.
- Blackpool has seen an increase in the Children remanded and sentenced to custody in the last quarter.
- In addition the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System in Blackpool remain higher than local and national averages. Further work is being undertaken to explore the issue to better understand the issue and support.

## 6.3 As Scrutiny Committee are aware in 2021/22 three quarters of children involved with the Blackpool Youth Justice Service had SEND, Speech, Language or Communication needs. The Youth Justice Executive Board recognise swift access to Speech and Language services are needed however not always available. Following a meeting with the Blackpool Teaching Hospital provider in April 22 it was outlined that there was no provision for Children with a Targeted Need and a 12 Month wait for Children with Specialist Need. This information was fed into a meeting with the review lead from a Better Communication to enable the needs of children involved in the Youth Justice System to be heard.

To support young people Blackpool Youth Justice Service have entered into a service level agreement with Children's Targeted Services, Children's Therapy Team, Blackpool Teaching Hospital to provide the service with specialist Speech and Language support for screening, intervention consultation, for children known to the Youth Justice team.

In Autumn 2022 the majority of Youth Justice Service Practitioners were trained in using a speech and language assessment tool. Youth Justice Service Practitioners are now using the tool as part of their assessment process.

Consultations with a Therapist have also commenced with practitioners reporting that these are useful. One team member shared:

"They certainly help to identify strengths and areas where more support might be needed or where I need to adapt my practice such as not using ambiguous phrases, explain things in more detail, give more prompts/examples or writing things down rather than rely on memory."

The speech and language service have also reviewed the letter templates and questionnaires Blackpool Youth Justice Service use and have provided advice and recommendations for amendments to make them easily understandable to children and young people

## 6.4 Feedback from courts regarding the Pre-Sentence Reports prepared by the service this quarter includes confirmation reports are focused, sufficient in length, analytical and take into account the needs and views of victims. Feedback has included 'An extremely thorough and comprehensive report', 'A very difficult case for all parties. The reports was well written with lots of detail' and the

child 'was open and respectful of the work being done with him by the Youth Justice Service. Both the written and verbal reports given were helpful in reaching our sentence'.

6.5 Early Intervention: The Turnaround Programme is a voluntary youth justice early intervention programme, developed and funded by the Ministry of Justice and will be led by the Local Authority. The Programme spans three-years and comes into effect January 2023. Turnaround aims to improve outcomes and prevent offending for children who are on the cusp of the youth justice system and who do not meet the threshold for statutory support.

The overall aims of the Turnaround programme are to:

- achieve positive outcomes for children with the ultimate aim of preventing them going on to offend;
- build on work already done to ensure all children on the cusp of the youth justice system are consistently offered a needs assessment and the opportunity for support;
- improve the socio-emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children; and
- improve the integration and partnership working between YJSs and other statutory services to support children.

Turnaround is based on similar principles to those underlying the Supporting Families programme in England and equivalent programmes in Wales such as the Youth Offending Blueprint, including the view that children on the cusp of offending often have complex needs.

For children and their families to access the Turnaround Programme there is mandated eligibility criteria that children must meet (Appendix 1).

6.6 Further development planned for 2023: In October 2022 the Ministry of Justice informed the Authority a revised set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for YJS will be introduced in England from April 2023. The Ministry of Justice outlined that it is only by working together to consider the holistic needs of children and their families that we can address the root causes which drive offending behaviour. YJSs are designed with this principle at their core, which is why a new set of metrics which capture the range of partnership working on which YJSs rely in order to be effective is being introduced. The Ministry of Justice intend the revised KPIs will ensure that at both a local and the central level there is a clear understanding of how local multi-agency partnerships are operating. The new KPIs focus on Accommodation, Employment, Training and Education, Learning Needs, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing. Substance Misuse, Management Board Attendance, OoCD, Serious youth violence, wider service involvement and victims (Appendix 2).

In addition to the 10 new KPIs listed above, the YJS will continue to be required to capture data on the 4 current KPIs (First Time Entrants, reoffending binary rate and frequency rate, and the number of children in custody) as they provide a helpful overview of how the youth justice system as a whole is delivering against our principle statutory aim of preventing (re)offending by children. These system measures should continue to inform discussion at a local level. The Youth Justice Board and the Ministry of Justice will also continue to use the information to perform their oversight function and to understand the performance of the whole partnership.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

## 7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 7(a): Turnaround Programme eligibility criteria

7.2 Appendix 7(b): New Key Performance Indicators

## 8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 The YJS partnership will fund the service in 2022/23 through the budget outlined below:

### B5: YJS budget - England Costs and Contributions

2022-23 BUDGET

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Police	58,336		0	58,336
Probation	24,608		5,000	29,608
Health	39,974		15,442	55,416
Local Authority	345,016		103,807	448,823
YJB	435,178		54,251	489,429
Other				0
<b>Total</b>	<b>903,112</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>178,500</b>	<b>1,081,612</b>

In 2022/23 there has been a £40,000 reduction in the funding the service receive from Police partners however are no current budget pressures at this present time due to a 9.8% uplift across all Local Authorities in the Youth Justice Grant.

The service has received £45,319 for the implementation and delivery of the Turnaround Programme Jan-March 2023.

Terms and Conditions of the Youth Justice Grant will be updated to include the monitoring of the 10 additional KPIs from 1 April 2023 onwards.

## 9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 There are no legal implications to consider.

## 10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 There are no issues of concern, appropriate governance arrangements are in place.

## 11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 The young people supported by the Blackpool youth justice service in 21/22 were mainly White ethnic background (87%), 7% of young people were mixed heritage and the remainder were a very small number of Eastern European and Vietnamese young people (data from Annual Executive Board Summary May 2022). One of the new KPIs will monitor senior partner representation at Youth Justice management boards, and monitoring if partners contribute data from their individual services that

identify areas of racial disproportionality.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 Key headlines from the Sustainability Impact tool have been considered and there are no sustainability, climate change or environmental adjustments to be made at this time.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 Consultation with Children takes place at every interaction. In addition at the end of each order Team Managers from the Youth Justice Service contact Children and their parents/carers for feedback on the intervention and support they have received. Feedback received for last month includes one parent sharing *'My child has turned a corner because of the support offered, he spends time in the gym or at his girlfriends and has kept out of trouble'*.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None

## Appendix 7(a): Turnaround Eligibility Criteria

Children aged 10-17 who fit one or more of the following criteria are eligible for Turnaround:

- who are interviewed under caution following arrest or subject to a criminal investigation attending a voluntary interview;
- those who are subject to No Further Action (NFA) decision (including Outcome 22);
- those who are subject to a Community Resolution (Outcome 8);
- those receiving a first-time youth caution, not including conditional caution;
- released under investigation (RUI) or those subject to pre-charge bail (PCB);
- those discharged by a court;
- those acquitted at court; and/or
- those fined by a court.
- those in receipt of Community Protection Orders (CPO), Civil Orders and/or Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) for anti-social behaviour.

The child should be 17 or under at the point of referral onto the Programme.

Turnaround should build on existing practice and avoid duplication of support for children. Out of court disposals (OoCDs) are included in the eligibility criteria in recognition that there can be gaps in the support that children subject to OoCDs can access. When considering Turnaround interventions for children who have received OoCDs, YJSs should ensure that the programme will offer genuine additionality to the local offer and that existing provision is not duplicated.

Where children subject to an OoCD could potentially benefit from a more in-depth assessment, there must be a clear case that there are additional support needs that are not and cannot be met through existing channels. If the child is already being assessed or receiving support, the YJS should consider whether there is a need and/or opportunity to join up with this work.

In addition, the following criteria apply:

- to ensure Turnaround meets its aim of early intervention, referrals must be made within three months of a child meeting the eligibility criteria.
- once a child has received support through the Turnaround programme, they are not eligible for support funded through the programme again. The YJS may choose to continue to support a child following completion of a Turnaround intervention, however if re-referred, the child cannot be supported twice under Turnaround funding.
- children referred to Turnaround are not eligible if they have an open Early Help plan with a package of co-ordinated multi-agency whole family support (or a Families First plan in Wales).. Children with multiple and/or complex needs may have support from several agencies and be an open case to Early Help (England), Families First (Wales), or another existing multi-agency programme of support.
- YJSs have the discretion to use Turnaround funding to fund interventions for cases that are open as children in need (CIN), though if doing so they should ensure:
  - o Turnaround funding is only used to fund Turnaround support and interventions; mechanisms should be in place to guard against funding being used to fund statutory duties. YJSs should
- ensure that the following principles are followed:
- No admission of guilt is required on the part of the child

- There is a clear unmet need identified through assessment that Turnaround can meet
- A strengths-based approach is taken
- A co-ordinated multi-agency plan is in place with a lead practitioner that considers the needs of the child referred to Turnaround and takes a whole family approach.
- Children open to child protection plans, looked after children and children leaving care are ineligible for Turnaround as the programme is not intended to replace or supplement existing Children's Services funding and arrangements for higher threshold cases.
- Children referred to Turnaround are not eligible if they have previously been on the YJS statutory caseload, regardless of the length of time since the case was open.



Appendix 7(b): The 10 new Key Performance Indicators:

1. Accommodation: % of children in the community and being released from custody with suitable accommodation arrangements
2. Education, training and employment (ETE): % of children in the community and being released from custody attending a suitable ETE arrangement.
3. SEND/Additional Learning Needs: % of children who have an identified SEND need (or Additional Learning Need in Wales), are in suitable ETE and have a formal learning plan in place for the current academic year
4. Mental healthcare and emotional wellbeing: % of children in the community and being released from custody with a screened OR identified need for an intervention to improve mental health or emotional wellbeing; and of that the % of planned/offered interventions; of that % of children attending interventions
5. Substance misuse: % of children with a screened OR identified need for specialist treatment intervention to address substance misuse; and of that the % of children with planned or offered intervention/treatment; and of that the % number of children attending intervention/treatment
6. Out of court disposals (OOCs): % of OOC disposal interventions that are completed/not completed
7. Management Board attendance: monitoring senior partner representation at management boards, and monitoring if partners contribute data from their individual services that identify areas of racial and ethnic disproportionality.
8. Wider Services: % children who are currently on either an Early Help (EH) plan; on a child protection (CP) plan or classified as Child in need (CiN) or a looked after child (Our Children). For Wales only, children who are classified as Children in Need of Care and Support
9. Serious youth violence (SYV): rates of children convicted for SYV on the YJS caseload
10. Victims: number of victims who consent to be contact by the YJS, and of those, the number of victims: engaged with about Restorative Justice opportunities; asked their view prior to OoCD decision-making and planning for statutory court orders; provided information about the progress of the child's case (when requested) and provided with information on appropriate services that support victims (when requested)