

Report to:	COUNCIL
Relevant Officer:	Victoria Gent, Director of Children’s Services
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Young People and Aspiration
Date of Meeting:	31 January 2024

BLACKPOOL YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE ANNUAL PLAN 2023/24

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To provide an update regarding Blackpool’s Youth Justice Service and to consider the recommendation of the Executive at its meeting on 11 December 2023 to approve the Youth Justice Service Annual Plan with effect until 31 December 2024. The Decision Notice EX47/2023 from that meeting can be found via this link: [Decision Notice](#)

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To approve, as one of the key partners, the Youth Justice Annual Plan 2023/24 with effect until 31 December 2024.

3.0 Reason for recommendation(s)

- 3.1 To have oversight of the Youth Justice Partnership plan to provide scrutiny, challenge and support to aid development and ensure positive outcomes for children are achieved.
- 3.2 Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan and deliver against the priorities set out in their plan.

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

3.4 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 and key information

6.1 The Youth Justice Partnership plan attached at Appendix 7a outlines the strategic vision and unwavering dedication to providing exceptional support to children and families involved in the youth justice system. Building upon the progress partners have already made; our goal is to ensure that the children and families partners serve thrive away from the Youth Justice system.

6.2 Blackpool's Youth Justice Partnership acknowledges and supports the research-backed notion that children should be treated in a manner that considers their age, level of comprehension, and overall circumstances. This approach considers their needs and holistic well-being. Blackpool Youth Justice multiagency Executive Board believe the children who display harmful behaviour, and the communities in which they live, are best served by identifying and addressing the underlying welfare and support needs that drive much of this behaviour. The Partnership understands that children are inherently vulnerable by virtue of age, levels of maturity and other factors and as such their rights should be protected.

6.3 The Youth Justice Partnership 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 Executive Board ensures our Youth Justice Partnership is provided with clear and coordinated strategic governance to support with the delivery of high-quality youth justice services with a focus on:

- Ensuring a Child First approach to Youth Justice provision in Blackpool
- Ensuring sure children and young people are safe
- Reducing the likelihood of reoffending
- Reducing the risk of harm that children and young people can cause to other people and themselves.

The annual Executive Board Development Day was held in April 2023 and the outcomes from this have contributed to the development of the plan.

6.4 The priorities outlined in the plan include:

Priority One: Our Youth Justice Partnership will continue to strive to ensure that the Executive Board is efficient and effective, securing positive outcomes for children and families.

Priority Two: Our Youth Justice Partnership will increase prevention and diversion ensuring children receive support at the earliest opportunity to reduce the number of First Time Entrants in Blackpool.

Priority Three: Our Youth Justice Partnership will ensure our Youth Justice workforce have access to appropriate development opportunities and resources to reduce the risk of re-offending.

Priority Four: Our Youth Justice Partnership will ensure the educational needs of children open to the service are understood and appropriate action taken to ensure that they have access to high quality education and training services that met their individual needs.

Priority Five: Our Youth Justice Partnership will seek to reduce the number of children in custody.

6.5 In addition to Blackpool Youth Justice multiagency Executive Board the national Youth Justice Board (YJB) monitor the operation of the youth justice system. The Youth Justice Board also monitor the provision of youth justice services and the extent to which the system aims are being achieved and any such standards met. In April 2023 the Youth Justice Board introduced a new Oversight Framework to increase understanding of performance across the system and assure value for money from the Youth Justice Core Grant. As part of the new framework performance quadrant assessments are undertaken quarter. The assessments review service delivery, service leadership, local strategic priorities and continuous improvement. Blackpool Youth Justice partnership is currently in performance quadrant 2 deemed satisfactory performance.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of appendices

Appendix 7a: Blackpool Youth Justice Plan 2023-24

Appendix 7b Youth Justice Board oversight framework service classification and support.

Appendix 7c: Case Study

8.0 Financial considerations

8.1 Costs and contributions 2022-23

Agency	Staffing Costs	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
Total	903,112	178,500	1,081,612

9.0 Legal considerations

9.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan, relating to their provision of youth justice services, to the Youth Justice Board. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth justice partnership's responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that 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.

10.0 Risk management considerations

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

11.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people

11.1 The young people supported by the Blackpool youth justice service in 22/23 were mainly White ethnic background (89%), 8% of young people were mixed ethnicity/heritage which is similar to Blackpool population. The large majority were boys (84%) vastly disproportionate to overall population however similar to national Youth Justice Service pattern (86%). 20% of children assessed by the youth justice service in 22/23 had been in care at some point in their lives (a reduction on 21/22 which stood at 25%).

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations

12.1 There are no sustainability, climate change or environmental factors to consider.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken

13.1 Blackpool's Youth Justice Service recognise that children and families are more likely to feel motivated to engage with support when they feel understood, valued, and heard. Capturing the voice of the child and using this to inform individual plans and the continued development of our service is a fundamental part of the services function. Please see Appendix 7c for an example case study.

14.0 Background papers

14.1 None.