

Youth Justice Plan 2021 - 24

Date: 17th November 2021

Report of: The Director of Children & Families

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- This report provides the context to the requirement that the Leeds Youth Justice Plan 2021 - 24 is formally adopted by full Council.
- This Youth Justice Plan will contribute directly to the Best Council Plan (2020 – 25), specifically in relation to the child friendly city and the safe, strong communities element, with its ambition to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe from harm.

Recommendations

- a) That the Executive Board endorses the appended Leeds Youth Justice Plan 2021 – 24, and that the Board agree to refer the Plan to full Council in January 2022 for approval and formal adoption as part of the Budget and Policy Framework.
- b) That Executive Board approve the preferred approach which is for the Board to endorse the Youth Justice Plan on a 3-year cycle and refer to full Council for approval and formal adoption.
- c) Note the responsible officers for implementation will be the Service Manager, Leeds Youth Justice Service and the Head of Service, Children Looked After.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Local authorities have a legal duty under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce a Youth Justice Plan that shows how they will provide and fund youth justice services. The completed Youth Justice Plan must be sent to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State for Justice. This is reinforced within the YJB's terms and conditions of grant. This requirement is set out in the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and is included in the council's constitution.
- 2 A draft Youth Justice Plan 2021 – 24 was discussed by the Leeds Youth Justice Partnership Board on February 10th, 2021 and approved on 19th July, 2021. The plan was submitted to the YJB in order to meet terms and conditions of the Youth Justice Grant 2021/22 (totalling £1,321,446, with

final payment by the end of October 2021). Whilst requiring submission by 30th June 2021, the YJB recognise that planning in the current context is challenging and that youth justice plans are likely to be subject to regular review and amendment and as such are 'live' documents.

- 3 Whilst statute requires the production of an annual plan, the YJB welcomes plans that cover more than one year. Plans covering more than one year require an annual refresh and updating of key information, particularly relating to finance, governance and key achievements from the previous year.
- 4 The Leeds Youth Justice Plan requires approval by full Council under the current constitution. The production of a three-year plan, going to council every three years with annual updates to the Youth Justice Board and Youth Justice Partnership Board in years two and three, is seen as the best option in ensuring compliance with regulations and minimising the impact on the Youth Justice Service and on full Council.
- 5 The Youth Justice Plan is consistent with the Safer, Stronger Communities Plan 2021 – 24 in that it will contribute to the strategic priorities of keeping people safe from harm; preventing and reducing offending and creating safer, stronger communities. A focus on children and young people at risk and involved in the youth justice system will deliver on the ambitions stated in the Safer, Stronger Communities Plan around early identification, prevention and intervention.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 6 Leeds Youth Justice Plan 2021 -24 sets out our ambitions and priorities for the next three years, including arrangements to ensure that we continue to deliver our successful Youth Justice Partnership in the city. It provides the detail as to how Leeds Youth Justice Service intends to deliver services to improve outcomes for children, families and communities through delivery of six key priorities:
 - Reducing the number of children and young people entering or re-entering the criminal justice system
 - Identifying and addressing racial inequality in the youth justice system and supporting cultural cohesion
 - Doing the simple things better
 - Reducing serious youth violence
 - Attendance, achievement and attainment
 - Reducing custody and positive resettlement children and young people from custody
- 7 An equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening has been completed, which identifies that achieving the priorities identified in the plan would have a positive impact on equality characteristics and promote strong and positive relationships between groups.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 8 Consultation has taken place primarily through the multi-agency Youth Justice Partnership Board which is the main forum for governance and oversight of the Youth Justice Service in Leeds. The

Youth Justice Partnership Board has good representation from all statutory partners and a range of non-statutory partners to the YJS and includes the Lead Member for Children and Families.

- 9 The Youth Justice Plan was considered and approved by Scrutiny Board for Children and Families on 13th September 2021. The Children & Families Directorate will provide an update on progress against the plan in Spring 2023.

What are the resource implications?

- 10 There are no additional resource implications, the plan will be delivered utilising existing resource and multi-agency partnership work. Funding for Leeds Youth Justice Service is made up of contributions from statutory partners (NHS, West Yorkshire Police, the Probation Service, LCC); the Youth Justice Board, the West Yorkshire Mayor and the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit.

What are the legal implications?

- 11 The Youth Justice Plan sits in the Budget and Policy Framework 4 1 (i) and specified by the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) 2000 to require adoption by the full Council. It is not eligible for call in as set out in the Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules Part 4, which states that the power to call in does not extend to decisions made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 12 Legislative changes, new youth crime trends, financial challenges and the social, health and educational impact of the pandemic are key risks to the delivery of this plan. The Youth Justice Partnership Board will respond flexibly and creatively to changes or emerging trends and the plan itself will be refreshed annually with key information updated and will be reviewed by both the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales and the Leeds Youth Justice Partnership Board.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 13 This plan will contribute to the inclusive growth ambition in the Best Council Plan by improving skills for young people in order to help them reach their full potential. Our trauma informed, child-centred approach will also support healthy lifestyles for our young people and our values are aligned to those of our Child Friendly City.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

- 14 A one-year plan has been considered but rejected as a practical option, given the governance processes as outlined above.

b) How will success be measured?

- 15 The plan includes six priorities with outcome measures, describing what success will look like.

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

- 16 Formal adoption by full Council in January 2022.

Appendices

- 17 Leeds Youth Justice Plan 2021 – 24.

Background papers

18 None.