

Youth Justice Service Plan – 2024-27

Date: 13th November 2024

Report of: The Director of Children & Families

Report to: Full Council

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to submit a Youth Justice Plan relating to its provision of Youth Justice Services under s.40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the 'Youth Justice Service Plan,' which includes the refreshed multi-year plan for the Youth Justice Service (YJS) covering 2024-27, and the work that sits underneath the plan.

This report gives an update on each of the workstreams under the previous multi-year plan 2021-24 in terms of recent activities, outcomes and next steps, and provides rationale for the refreshed plan. It also considers the impacts that the national cost of living crisis is having on children and their families, and how that impacts on offending behaviours, paired with links with child exploitation and serious youth violence on offending behaviours.

This report provides information on the youth justice service, both at a preventative and statutory level, and supports and strengthens existing strategies within Leeds, including the Children and Young People's Plan, the Safer, Stronger Communities Plan and contributes to the Best City Ambition, with a focus on taking a Team Leeds, strengths-based approach to focusing on preventing children from entering the criminal justice system.

Recommendations

- a) That Full Council approves the Leeds Youth Justice Service Plan, and formally adopts the Plan as part of the Budget and Policy Framework.
- b) To note that the responsible officers for implementation will be the Service Delivery Manager, Leeds Youth Justice Service and the Head of Service, Children Looked After and YJS. The Youth Justice Service Partnership Board has statutory responsibility to monitor performance, ensuring the delivery of service improvements and the meeting of local priorities.

What is this report about?

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Youth Justice Service Plan, and the work that sits underneath. This report gives an update on workstreams under the previous strategy in terms of recent activities, outcomes and next steps, and demonstrates the evidence base for the refreshed plan.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 The aim of this plan is to reduce offending behaviours in children across the city. The Leeds Youth Justice Service Plan 2024-27 sets out our ambitions and priorities for the next three years, including arrangements to ensure that we continue to deliver our successful YJS in the city. It provides detail as to how Leeds YJS intends to deliver services to improve outcomes for children, families and communities through delivery of four key priorities:
 - Prevention & Diversion: Reduce the number of children entering or re-entering the youth justice system
 - Custody & Resettlement: Reduce the number of children in custody and positive resettlement from custody
 - Risk Outside of the Home: Reduce and prevent exploitation and serious violence whilst developing families as protective partners
 - Disproportionality: Identify and address inequality in the youth justice system

Underpinning the priority areas are the six Golden Threads of the service, which the YJS will have a relentless focus on:

- Child-First
- Education, Training and Employment
- Think Family, Work Family
- Trauma-Informed Practice
- Mental Health
- Victims

- 3 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.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 4 **Health & wellbeing:** Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone: where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, with health and care inequalities reducing, and people being supported to thrive from early years to later life.
 - ensuring children have the best start in life and enjoy a healthy, happy childhood, where their right to play and have fun is protected and they are free to express their views and feel heard
 - promoting a mentally healthy city for all, where people are treated with compassion and are well-supported by their families, workplaces and communities
 - providing high quality care as part of an integrated system, with equitable access to essential services which support people to age well and are focused on prevention and early intervention

Inclusive Growth: Leeds will be a place where we create growth in our economy that works for everyone, where people and businesses can thrive, and we work together to tackle poverty and inequality.

- ensuring people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy access to education, skills development, and employment opportunities to meet their needs and the needs of a growing economy, where businesses and educators are encouraged to invest in upskilling people and supporting them to reach their full potential
- supporting our businesses, organisations and social enterprises to be productive, innovative, creative, ambitious and connected to their local community, with access to the talent they need to boost productivity in a rapidly changing labour market

Zero Carbon: Leeds aims to become the first net zero city in the UK, rapidly reducing carbon emissions and reversing the decline in biodiversity, while supporting people to make more sustainable choices which can improve their standard of living.

- improving transport to give people in Leeds a good alternative to car use, creating a safer and more walkable city to reduce unnecessary travel and support people to be physically active, while enabling drivers to switch to zero emission vehicles
- promoting a vibrant and resilient food economy for Leeds so everyone can access and enjoy a healthy diet, where more produce is grown locally, and less food is wasted

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:
Have ward members been consulted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

- 5 The ongoing work highlighted within the Youth Justice Service Plan remains under the scrutiny of the Youth Justice Service Partnership Board which comprises of statutory services, including Children’s Social Work Service (CSWS), the YJS, education, police, health and probation, third sector organisations, education sector representatives, Elected Members, including the Executive Member for Children & Families, and includes the voice of the children, their families and victims.
- 6 The Youth Justice Service Plan was considered and approved by Children & Families Scrutiny Board on 10th June 2024 following a delegated decision taken by the Director of Children and Families which released the initial proposals for the Plan for the purposes of consultation and consideration by Scrutiny Board. The Plan was endorsed at the Executive Board on 18th September 2024. The Children and Families Directorate will provide an update on progress against the plan to the Children & Families Scrutiny Board in Spring 2025.

What are the resource implications?

- 7 There are no new proposals with resource implications presented in this paper.

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

- 8 Legislative changes, new youth crime trends and financial challenges are key risks to the delivery of this plan. Regular reporting is the key to ensuring that outcomes are improving and that challenges are swiftly identified, and remedial action is taken to mitigate the negative impact of those challenges. The Youth Justice Service Partnership Board has strategic oversight of the delivery of this plan which will be reviewed annually.

What are the legal implications?

- 9 The Youth Justice Service Plan sits in the Budget and Policy Framework 4 1 (i) (of the Constitution) and specified by the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) 2000 to require adoption by the full Council.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

10 This is an agreed plan for the YJS, endorsed by the Youth Justice Service Partnership Board.

How will success be measured?

11 The plan includes four priorities with outcomes measures, describing what success will look like. These measures will be reviewed regularly under the oversight of the strategic Youth Justice Service Partnership Board, and annually reviewed against the Youth Justice Service Plan, as required by the Youth Justice Board as part of the core grant terms and conditions.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

12 The Youth Justice Service Partnership Board and Director of Children's Services (Chair of the Board) will have strategic responsibility for the implementation of the Plan. The Plan was endorsed at the Executive Board on 18th September 2024. Formal adoption by full Council is sought in November 2024.

Appendices

- Leeds Youth Justice Service Plan 2024-27.
- Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) Screening.

Background papers

- None