

COUNTY COUNCIL

Meeting date: 4 November 2021

From: Executive Director – People (Deputy Chief Executive)

YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2021-2022

PART A - RECOMMENDATION OF CABINET

That Council recommend that the Cumbria Youth Justice Plan 2021-2022 is agreed for full submission to the Youth Justice Board.

PART B – ADVICE OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 *This report has been prepared to both advise Members about the planning requirements for the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and seek approval of the Youth Justice Plan which requires submission to the Youth Justice Board. The Cumbria Youth Justice Plan is required to be submitted to the Youth Justice Board by 30th June 2021. However, a draft copy of the plan has been accepted by the Youth Justice Board, with a final formal submission made after the plan is presented to full council in November 2021.*

Appendix 1 provides Members with the current draft of the plan for approval.

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 *The work of the Youth Offending Service contributes to and supports a number of themes and priorities within the County Council's plan:*
- *Focusing on the most vulnerable: Through our work with young people, managing the risk they can pose to themselves and others we can not only support those young people who are vulnerable, but reduce the risks they can pose to other young people. The Youth Offending Service has its own internal systems to oversee and manage risks posed to and from the young people we work with. We work hard to ensure that whatever harm young people may have caused by their actions, we also recognise and try to help them overcome the factors in their lives that could otherwise limit their future potential, such as substance misuse, disaffection with mainstream opportunities and social exclusion.*

- **Supporting communities to thrive:** Through a number of initiatives, ranging from our Prevention services through to our Intensive Supervision programmes, and involvement in the Focus Family programme, we work with young people and their families to support them to access and benefit from services aimed at promoting their wellbeing, and increase their ability to reach their full potential. Additionally, a number of young people and families that we work with are living in poverty, through both direct interventions and partnership projects, we work with young people to develop their education, training and employment opportunities. In this way we aim to increase the likelihood of them gaining employment and a more prosperous future. Alongside the above, we work closely with a number of partners, particularly the Police and National Probation Service, to ensure that the minority of young people, who pose a serious risk of harm to others, are managed safely (both in the community and in preparation for release from custody). We also undertake a large amount of Restorative Justice Work; this enables members of the community who are affected by youth crime to influence the responses made to those crime(s).
 - **Managing demand:** The plan sets out how we ensure we identify early, children and young people who need intervention to prevent escalation into statutory services. We will use resources carefully to deliver best outcomes to ensure children and young people are prevented from entering the criminal justice system and reoffending is reduced. We will ensure that skills, experience and resources are shared across service areas to make sure the service fulfils its statutory responsibilities and works in partnership to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
- 2.2 **The YOS performance and risk management framework supports the above work. The following key Youth Justice outcomes are used nationally to assess the services' performance:**
- **Reduction of First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System**
 - **Reduction in Youth Reoffending**
 - **Use of Custodial Sentences**
- 2.3 **The service must demonstrate that it can work with enterprise and efficiency, working together with partners and communities to ensure an effective service that offers value for money. We have a key role to play in making the link between criminal justice and social welfare systems – it is only by working together that we can achieve the best outcomes for children, young people and their families in Cumbria. Cumbria Youth Offending Service takes part in this partnership working formally, through representation on numerous partnership boards and through the multi-agency working that takes place via more informal partnerships**
- 2.4 **Cumbria Youth Offending Service has a “Child first, offender second” approach firmly embedded at its core. The key equality issues in respect of the work of the service are rurality and supporting young people with a criminal history to access mainstream services. To**

address these issues, the service works closely with statutory and third sector partners to develop supportive, responsive services to enable young people to address their criminal activity and develop their skills to ensure they can take advantage of services that are in place to support them. This support is also a focus upon transition from youth supervision when the young person turns 18 years old. This is completed via the “Youth to Adult” transition process with adult criminal justice services (National Probation Service).

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Cabinet recommends that Council agree the Cumbria Youth Justice Plan 2021-2022 for submission to the Youth Justice Board.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice (YJ) plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth offending 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 the youth offending team or equivalent service will be composed and funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.

4.2 As a result of this, the Youth Offending Service is required to submit a single plan - the Youth Justice Plan. To further support alignment with local planning, there is no pre-set template¹ required by the Youth Justice Board. In relation to the format of the plan, the Youth Justice Board has produced YJB Practice guidance that sets out what must be included in the plan.

Cumbria Youth Justice Plan is required to be submitted to the Youth Justice Board by 30 June 2021. A draft copy of the plan will be accepted by the Youth Justice Board, with a final formal submission made after the plan is presented to full council in November 2021. The work of the service and the outline of the plan has also been presented to an informal meeting of the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Advisory Board. It is recognised that each local area will have its own governance and oversight arrangements for the completion of statutory plans, and that some aspects of this ‘sign off’ may need to be completed after the required date of submission to the YJB. Therefore, it is acceptable to gain an “in principle agreement” from youth justice partners (Management Board) and sign off via the Chair of the Management Board as a minimum requirement for submission to the YJB.

¹ Whilst there is no template for the plan, there are key headings that must be included i.e Structure & Governance; Resources & Value for Money; Partnership Arrangements; Risks to the future delivery of the three outcome measures.

- 4.3 To deliver against our primary aim of preventing offending and re-offending, the Youth Offending Service not only works to improve the outcomes of young people and thus reduce the risk of a criminal lifestyle, we also work to support victims and improve the safety of Cumbria's communities.
- 4.4 The Youth Offending Service must continue to focus on its key strategic aim of preventing offending by children and young people and the Youth Justice plan sets out how we will do this for the year ahead. We must ensure that the work of the service reaches across to wider services, working together to focus on building resilient and strong communities and improving outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people in Cumbria. Many of the children and families we work with are involved with services across the partnership, accessing support at an early help level or from other statutory services. We must continue the work we have started to ensure greater alignment with partner services, to intervene early and prevent escalation into these statutory services. We recognise that there will be ongoing challenges as we move forward following the COVID-19 Pandemic, as we move out of this latest period of national lockdown and try to move toward full recovery. This is further explored in Section 5 of the plan.
- 4.5 Section 7 of the plan sets out the service delivery plan for the year ahead. This has been captured on one page to align the identified priorities with the priorities in the County Council plan. It is important to note that this plan will be further developed, monitored and overseen by the YOS Management board.
- 4.6 The plan was presented to the Children and Young Peoples informal Scrutiny meeting on 17th June 2021 and there were some useful questions for clarification and overall received good feedback from Members.

5 OPTIONS

- 5.1 The options for Council are:

Option (a)

- To approve the current draft of the Plan

Option (b)

- Request amendments and/or

Option (c)

- Seek further information/clarification on its contents

6 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The overall budget for the Youth Offending Service in 2021/2022 is comprised of a specific grant from the Youth Justice Board and contributions from the statutory partners through a combination of cash, in-kind and staffing contributions.

6.2 In total, the overall resource available to the Youth Offending Service in 2021/2022 is £1.694m compared to £1.589m in 2020/21. The total Youth Justice Grant for 2021/22 has been confirmed at £0.819m. This is an increase to the funding that was received last year (£0.762m). This one-off uplift is by exception and is not guaranteed for future years. The Youth Justice Board has sought this additional funding to support local authorities to address some of the pressures in the system as we move into recovery following the impact of COVID-19.

6.3 The table below sets out the funding in more detail:

Funding Source:	2020/2021 (£000)	2021/2022 (£000)	Variance (£000)
Youth Justice Board Grant	762	819	57
Cumbria County Council	561	609	48
National Probation Service (NPS) cash contribution	5	5	0
YOS Budget	1328	1433	105
North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust	59	59	0
Cumbria Constabulary	157	157	0
National Probation Service	45	45	0
Total Contributions to the YOS	1589	1694	105

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the Local Authority is required to formulate and implement for each year a plan setting out how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded; how the youth offending team or teams established by them are to be composed and funded; how they are to operate; and what functions they are to carry out. Under Part 2.1 of the Council's Constitution one of Cabinet's responsibilities is to make recommendations to Full Council in respect of policy and strategies on the Council's Policy Framework of which the Youth Justice Plan is part.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 Cumbria Youth Offending Service has a strong record of managing young people who have offended, significantly reducing their risk of reoffending and helping to improve safeguarding outcomes. It has made a strong contribution

to improving the life chances of children and young people and to promoting safer communities who have confidence in the Youth Justice System.

- 8.2 The Youth Justice Strategic plan will assist Cumbria Youth Offending Service in aligning priorities for the year ahead and allow a focus on identified areas for development.

John Readman
Executive Director – People (Deputy Chief Executive)
6 October 2021

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Youth Justice Plan 2021-22

Electoral Division(s): All

** Please remove whichever option is not applicable*

Executive Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny? If so, give details below.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A*
Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A*

N.B. If an executive decision is made, then a decision cannot be implemented until the expiry of the eighth working day after the date of the meeting – unless the decision is urgent and exempt from call-in and the Head of Member Services and Scrutiny has obtained the necessary approvals.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS ***[including Local Committees]***

No previous relevant decisions.

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Considered by an informal meeting of Scrutiny on 17th June 2021.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers.

RESPONSIBLE CABINET MEMBER

Anne Burns – Cabinet member for Childrens' Services

REPORT AUTHOR

Samantha Starmer – Service Manager Youth Offending and Prevention Services