



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2022

REPORT TITLE:	WIRRAL YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-23
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an introduction to the Wirral Youth Justice Service (YJS) Strategic Plan 2022-23.

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is a non-departmental public body for overseeing the youth justice system in England and Wales. The preparation and submission of an 'Annual Plan' is linked to the terms and conditions of the Youth Justice Board grant award, this award contributes to the funding of youth offending teams and services across England and Wales.

The Wirral Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2022-23 links to the Wirral 2021-2026 Plan against delivery of the following:

- Brighter futures for all regardless of their background.
- Safe and pleasant communities that our residents are proud of.
- Active and healthy lives for all, with the right care, at the right time to enable residents to live longer and healthier lives.

This matter affects residents across the borough.

This report relates to a key decision

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is recommended to:

1. Endorse the Wirral Youth Justice Service's Strategic Plan 2022-23, and recommend to Council for approval.
2. Note the approach and ongoing development work within the Youth Justice Service and across the Youth Justice Management Board (YJMB).

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Wirral Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a statutory partnership between Police, Probation, the Local Authority and Health partners in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 1.2 Section 39 (1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the co-operation of the named statutory partners to form a Youth Offending Team, or YOT (Now known as the 'Youth Justice Service', or 'YJS' in Wirral and in most Local Authority areas nationally). Section 38 identifies the statutory partners and places upon them a duty to co-operate to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. These statutory partners are:
- The Local Authority.
 - Police.
 - Probation service.
 - Health.

Additional partners may also be recruited to the joint strategic effort to prevent offending by children and young people.

- 1.3 The primary duty to ensure a Youth Justice Service is in place rests with the local authority. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the responsibilities in producing and implementing a plan, after consultation with the partner agencies.
- 1.4 The Youth Justice Service is overseen by the Wirral Youth Justice Management Board (YJMB). The management board should be formed to provide strategic direction with the aim of preventing offending by children and young people.
- 1.5 As a statutory partner under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Wirral Local Authority has key role to play in delivering Youth Justice. Endorsement by The Council will support the delivery of this Strategic Plan and therefore the linked aspects of The Wirral Plan 2021-26.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Not supporting the Wirral Youth Justice Service Strategic Plan 2022-23 may result in less clearly aligned and coordinated multi agency activity to prevent offending and re-offending. The lack of an 'Annual Plan' would be contrary to Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Wirral's Youth Justice Service was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in July 2021, receiving an overall rating of 'Good'. This inspection came in the first cycle of strategic planning for the Youth Justice Service, after moving into the Children's Services Directorate in 2020. This plan affords Wirral the opportunity to build on the 2021-22 Strategic Plan, using the insight and experience from the 2021 inspection.

- 3.2 The Youth Justice Board sets out 3 National areas of key performance for all YOTs. These national indicators are:
- The amount and rate of First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System (FTEs).
 - The rate Re-offending.
 - The use of custody (Use of youth custody as opposed to managing young people in the community).
- 3.3 First time entrants' rate between January 2021 and December 2021 was 114 per 100,000 children compared to 112 per 100,000 YOT family average. Four YOT's within Wirral's national Youth Offending Team 'family' of 11 had higher rates than Wirral. Compared to the previous year, Wirral saw 5 more young people enter the system than 2020. This equated to a 15% increase.
- 3.4 Use of custody was 0.16 per 1000 children, compared to 0.10 per 1000 YOT family average. This equated to 3 more young people entering custody in the financial year 2021-22 compared to the previous year.
- 3.5 The rate of re-offending saw a small increase of 3.2 percentage points. This related to less offenders overall but was impacted by a small cohort who committed several offences.
- 3.6 Section 7 of the plan sets out the progress against the previous strategic plan's areas of focus. The HMIP inspection in July 2021 was positive in respect of the initiatives set out in the previous plan, such as Operational Inclusion.
- 3.7 Section 11, at Page 26 of the Strategic Plan, set out the improvement areas for Wirral YJS. These are linked to the HMIP Inspection in July 2021.
- 3.8 Looking forward, the Police Crime Courts and Sentencing Act 2021 will enact a Serious Violence Duty on partners, including the YJS. This duty stipulates that partners must work together to tackle serious violence in their area. Wirral identified serious youth violence as a priority in 2021-22 and will continue to focus on this area in 2022-23.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Wirral YJS Strategic Plan sets out the budget for 2022-23. This is drawn from local authority and statutory partners contributions through direct payment or the commitment of resources as 'in kind' payments. (See Appendix 3 of the Strategic Plan, Page 32).
- 4.2 Efficiencies found in 2021-22 have allowed the Local Authority contribution to reduce by £25,000 compared to the last financial year.
- 4.4 The current financial pressures are noted as a relevant risk within section 7 of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 As per section 1, above, there is a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to form a Youth Justice Service and submit an annual plan.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 The Strategic Plan references a broad range of activity delivered in the context of youth justice in Wirral. As part of the Youth Justice Management Board arrangements, the board will retain an overview of any changes to partnership structures, assets and activities that may impact on service delivery around those activities and services highlighted within the plan.

6.2 Changes to the structure of the YJS in Wirral will only be undertaken through report and approval to the Youth Justice Management Board, taking into account local need, cost benefit and considering other options.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Failing to deliver the Strategic Plan will be mitigated through management oversight and Youth Justice Management Board arrangements for monitoring performance and delivery.

7.2 The current financial pressures facing the Council and its partners represents a risk. Considerations on changes to any future funding arrangements will include cost-benefit analysis, including invest to save considerations.

7.3 Risks in the context of service delivery are set out in Section 10 of the Strategic Plan.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Feedback has been gathered through the partnership's participation and engagement network, this included direct feedback from young people involved with Youth Justice.

8.2 Members of the Youth Justice Management Board and Community Safety Partnership have been consulted with during the development of the Strategic Plan.

8.3 Section 7 of the Strategic Plan highlights the ongoing commitment to participation and engagement across young people, victims and carers linked to the work of Wirral's Youth Justice Service.

8.4 Appendix 7 contains a case study and youth feedback (Page 38).

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and reviewed for the Wirral Youth Justice Service Strategic Plan. There are no material changes required for the 2022-23 period. The EIA can be found via the following link:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental and climate implications arising from this report. It is anticipated that the Strategic Plan will have no impact on the emission of greenhouse gases.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The work being done to reduce vulnerability to exploitation supports the development of resilient local communities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Wirral Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2022-23

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Youth Justice Board: Youth Justice Plan guidance 2022-23

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date