

Report to Cabinet

Title:	Buckinghamshire Youth Justice Strategic Plan
Date:	Monday 10 September 2018
Date can be implemented:	Tuesday 18 September 2018
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Local members affected:	(All Electoral Divisions)
Portfolio areas affected:	All Portfolio Areas

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to refer the 2018-19 Youth Justice Strategic Plan to full Council for approval

A. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Buckinghamshire Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2018-2019. The Youth Justice Plan provides details of progress made against agreed outcomes for Children and Young People. It outlines priorities, alongside potential future challenges for the partnership over the coming year. The Youth Justice Plan highlights the partnership arrangements and budget position for the Youth Offending Service Partnership.

Background

2. Buckinghamshire Youth Offending Service is a multi-agency partnership between the Police, Children's Services, Health Services, Probation, Community Safety and both voluntary and private sector providers.

3. The Youth Offending Service plays a key role in keeping our communities, families, children and young people safe by through the prevention of offending and reoffending, reduction in the use of custody and through contribution to multi-agency protection and safeguarding.

4. The Youth Justice Plan is produced in compliance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 40 which stipulates the following:

‘It shall be the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the relevant persons and bodies, to formulate and implement for each year a plan (a “youth justice plan”) setting out—

(a) How youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded; and

(b) How the Youth Offending Team (YOT) or teams established by them (whether alone or jointly with one or more other local authorities) are to be composed and funded, how they are to operate, and what functions they are to carry out.’

5. The plan also incorporates guidance from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State.

6. Multi-agency Youth Offending Teams/Services (YOT/YOS) were established in 2000 following the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act with the intention of reducing the risk of young people offending and re-offending, and to provide counsel and rehabilitation to those who do offend. The act stipulates the composition of the YOT and identifies statutory partners to work alongside the Local Authority.

7. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) has set three national outcome indicators for all Youth Offending Teams which form the baseline for performance information included within this year’s plan. These are as follows:

- Reduce the number of First Time Entrants (FTE) to the Youth Justice System
- Reduce Re-offending
- Reduce the Use of Custody

Local Context

8. 126 Young people aged 10-17 entered the Youth Justice System in Bucks for the first time between October 2016 and September 2017.

9. Since 2008 there has been a significant reduction in first time entrants. Over the same period there has been sustained effective joint work between the Youth Offending Service and Thames Valley Police both in relation to the targeted work of the Early Help Panel and strong links with Liaison and Diversion.

10. Priorities to reduce first time entrants include improving the use of voluntary out of court interventions; promotion of family engagement and whole family approaches; and developing partnership approaches with the police and schools to reduce exclusion.

11. The custody rate in 2017 has increased on the previous year (0.23 per 1000) and risen above the average for Thames Valley. It is now in line with the South East, but remains lower than the National Average.

12. This is the first increase in custody numbers in Buckinghamshire for 6 years. The increase can, in part, be attributed to 5 young people receiving custodial sentences for a very serious group robbery offence.
13. Whilst there have been challenges overall in terms numbers of young people in custody, we have seen a significant reduction in the use of custodial remands.
14. Over the coming year, the service will focus on strengthening Pre-Sentence Report proposals- identifying ways in which current resources can be effectively used to provide robust alternatives to custody.
15. The rate of reoffending in Buckinghamshire during the last recording period (2015-16) was 42.7%, an increase from 35.7% in the previous year. This rate has now risen above Thames Valley, South East and English comparators.
16. Beneath these headline figures the actual number of young people who re-offend has reduced considerably over the last 5 years - 103 young people re-offended in Buckinghamshire in the latest 12 month period compared to the 182 young people who re-offended in the same period 5 years earlier.
17. Whilst the number of young people reoffending continues to fall, the numbers of offences per reoffender has increased, leading to the overall increase in reoffending rate.
18. The Youth Offending Service track each young person open to the service and completes an audit of those who reoffend. This informs the way the service develops interventions and support services.
19. Alternative diversionary opportunities for young people will be identified in 2018-19 which, together with the development of innovative approaches in trauma-informed practice, should enhance the effectiveness of the service in engaging with the most complex reoffenders.

Priorities for the coming year

- 20. Continue to focus on reducing reoffending by adopting the enhanced case management model, with trauma informed practice at its core.**
21. The Buckinghamshire YOS have seen increasing levels of vulnerability and complexity in our cohort of young offenders, many of whom have experienced childhood trauma. For this reason we recognise the need to evolve in the way that we work with this group of young people by adopting the enhanced case management model which is being introduced by a number of other Youth Offending Teams nationally.
- 22. Develop a clear and consistent approach to all forms of child exploitation.**
23. In Buckinghamshire the YOS has experienced the growth of 'county lines' criminal exploitation and recognise the need to develop a clear and consistent approach to working with young people at risk of being exploited in this way.
- 24. Work closely with Children's Social Care to support the improvement journey.**
25. There is the potential for more integrated working across Children's Services to improve the outcomes for children and young people and this will be a key focus during the coming year.

26. Review and explore models of service delivery whilst maintaining an effective and efficient response to offending by young people and delivering value for money.

27. The YOS recognises need to deliver positive outcomes whilst also delivering value for money and will ensure efficiencies are made where possible.

B. Other options available, and their pros and cons

N/A

C. Resource implications

The Youth Offending Partnership Youth Justice Plan sets out the resource implications and the staffing establishment needed to deliver the key outcomes.

The budget for Buckinghamshire Youth Offending Service is resourced by grant funding from the Youth Justice Board, Buckinghamshire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Statutory Partners. Statutory partners have also contributed through the deployment or secondment of key personnel.

The funding from Youth Justice Board remained unchanged. Anticipated cuts from central government present a small risk in relation to in-year funding reductions. The YOS Partnership Board will need to ensure any in-year funding reductions are managed with minimal disruption to service delivery.

D. Value for Money (VfM) Self-Assessment

It is important to allocate resources to our top priorities including Safeguarding our Vulnerable. It is vital we secure improvements across Children's Services to achieve positive outcomes for our Children and Young People.

E. Legal implications

The local authority must carry out its statutory obligations in compliance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 40.

The local authority must also carry out its statutory obligations in respect of safeguarding Children and Young People, as set out in the Children Act 2004 and in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

F. Property implications

N/A

G. Other implications/issues

N/A

H. Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views

N/A

I. Communication issues

Communication of the Youth Justice Plan will be managed through the YOS Partnership Management Board, ensuring a multi-agency approach across partners.

J. Progress Monitoring

Progress of the plan will be monitored through the YOS Partnership Management Board which reports into the Safer, Stronger Buckinghamshire Partnership Board.

K. Review

The Youth Justice Plan should be reviewed and agreed annually.

Background Papers

Appendix 1: Buckinghamshire Youth Justice Strategic Plan

Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Democratic Services Team by 5.00pm on Friday 7 September 2018. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382343), or e-mail to democracy@buckscc.gov.uk