



# Buckinghamshire Youth Justice Strategic Plan

2019 - 2020



**Buckinghamshire**  
**Youth Offending Service**

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**Welcome to the 2019-20 Youth Justice Strategic Plan**

This plan gives an overview of the work of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) in Buckinghamshire, setting out details of performance over the past twelve months and our priorities for the coming year.

In Buckinghamshire, we work together in partnership to ensure our communities, families, children and young people are safe. The YOS plays a key role by helping prevent offending and reoffending, reducing the use of custody and contributing to multi agency public protection and safeguarding. The YOS does this by working together with its key partners to deliver high quality and effective services to young people, their families and the victims of offending. These partners include; the police, children's services, health services, probation, community safety and both voluntary and private sector providers.

Having attended my first Management Board meeting in March 2019, I have been delighted to see such a wide ranging and engaged group of attendees, representing both statutory and voluntary organisations. It is clear that the Board have a real focus on supporting, scrutinising and ultimately delivering effective and efficient Youth Justice services across the county. With this level of engagement, I am pleased that we are able to report outcome indicators in terms of youth offending in Buckinghamshire that paint a positive picture. Notably, there are low numbers of young people entering the justice system for the first time, lower levels of reoffending than comparative averages and there continues to be reduction in the use of custody, in line with the national trend.

Our strategic priorities for 2019-20 seek to reduce:

- the exploitation of children and young people within organised criminal groups and in the supply of drugs (county lines);
- repeat offending and serious youth violence by delivering trauma informed models of intervention; and
- children becoming involved in violence through early intervention.

Over the coming year, we will continue to embed the adopted enhanced case management model, with trauma informed practice at its core; ongoing work to further address disproportionality, and seeking a system wide approach to address exploitation of young people.

Aman Sekhon-Gill took up the challenge of Head of Youth Offending Services last year and has put in place structures and processes, with energy, drive and determination. The Youth Offending Service, with the support of a renewed Management Board, is creating an environment which will ensure high quality services are available to support young people, families and victims. As always, the Management Board is extremely grateful for the skill and dedication of those working in this arena. On behalf of the Management Board I am pleased to present the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2019-20.

***Superintendent Michael Loebenberg – LPA Commander for Aylesbury, Thames Valley Police***

Staffing	Recruitment has presented significant challenges and as a result, the YOS were unable to appoint to all vacancies in a timely manner. Agency cover has been sought for staff maternity leave. One vacancy remains, and the workload has been distributed amongst the workforce. Efforts will continue to appoint a fully permanent workforce.
Strengthening preventative services	<p>Thames Valley were successful in securing funding from the Early Intervention Youth Fund. The money has locally funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 x Full Time Equivalent Speech and Language Worker to work across 8 secondary schools,</li> <li>• 1 x Full Time Equivalent Youth Worker to work with children who are arrested but not charged.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, theatre productions and bespoke mentoring have also been commissioned via this funding pot. Impact of this work will be evaluated throughout 2019-2020.</p>
Work with partners	The YOS has delivered training to Social Care, Foster Carers, Care Homes and Education staff. This includes Restorative Justice as well as bespoke training on working with adolescence. The YOS have worked closely with colleagues in Social Care to contribute to the development of the revised Exploitation Hub. The YOS have also embarked on a bespoke piece of work looking at over-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) children which has been reported on in the Youth Justice Bulletin.
Outcome Indicators NB – all data is retrospective and historical. These are the official measures in relation to desistance.	<p>1) First Time Entrants: 100 young people entered the youth justice system for the first time in Buckinghamshire in 2018. This is a 26.5% decrease on the 136 first time entrants in 2017.</p> <p>2) Reoffending: The proportion of young people reoffending within a 12 month follow up period has continued to fluctuate. At 29.2% for April to June 2017, the rate of reoffending in Buckinghamshire is lower than the National average (38.4%), the South East (36.7%) and Thames Valley (33.9%).</p> <p>3) Use of Custody: There were 0.15 custodial sentences per 1000 of the 10 to 17 year old population in Buckinghamshire during 2018-19. This is lower than the National average (0.30) and the South East (0.16), and is in line with the Thames Valley figure (0.15).</p>
YOS board re-launch	The YOS relaunched its board to ensure partners were fully engaged in delivering a multi agency response to local youth justice issues. During 2018-19, partners were consistent in attendance and engagement was positive. Representation includes statutory, local authority and voluntary sector.

## Our Priorities for the Coming Year

Partners from voluntary and statutory services have engaged in the consultation of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan. In particular, colleagues attended a workshop delivered by the YOS which identified opportunities to learn from recent inspections and also supported in identifying the priorities for 2019-20. Prior to final plan being submitted, a draft was circulated for feedback and amendments were made accordingly.

There are a number of systemic issues which lead young people into the Criminal Justice System. The YOS are keen to influence change across the organisation to not only prevent young people entering the Criminal Justice System but also to secure more positive outcomes for those that have already entered.

The YOS will underpin all the work they do on the following 3 areas to contribute to systematic change across the wider organisation.

1. Continuing to address disproportionality
2. Addressing exploitation of young people
3. Embedding an evidence based model of practice

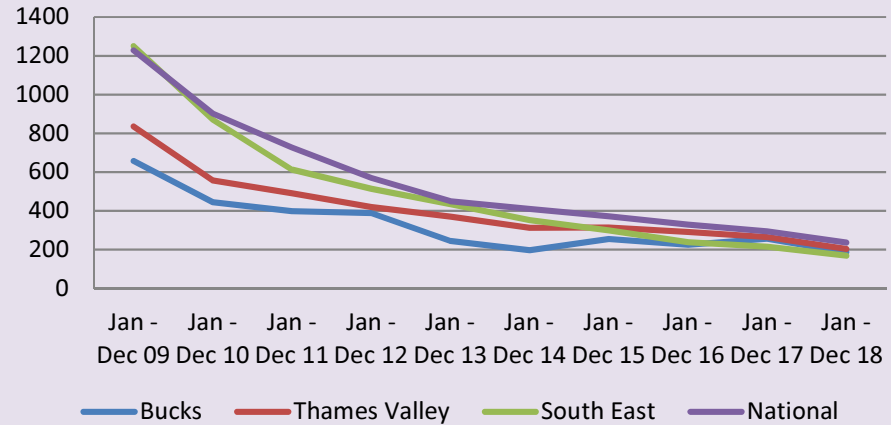
More specifically, priorities for 2019-20 will include:

- Raise awareness of and aim to reduce the exploitation of children and young people within organised criminal groups and in the supply of drugs (county lines).
- Aim to reduce repeat offending and serious youth violence by way of delivering trauma informed models of intervention.
- Strengthen engagement and intervention delivery with partners to reduce children becoming involved in violence through early intervention.

First Time Entrants

100 young people entered the youth justice system for the first time in Buckinghamshire in 2018. This is a 26.5% decrease on the 136 first time entrants in 2017 and a 71.2% reduction on the 347 young people entering the system in 2009. At 186 per 100,000 10 to 17 year olds, the Buckinghamshire rate for 2018 is lower than the National average (236) and Thames Valley (203) but above that seen across the South East (168).

Trends in First Time Entrants per 100,000 10 to 17 Year Population 2009 - 2018



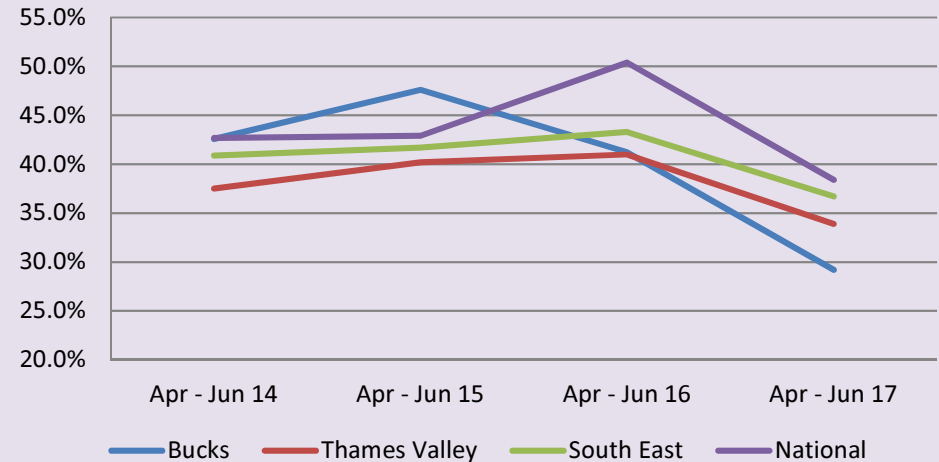
Risks to YOS Effectiveness

- Resources continue to focus on prevention; however, some of these resources are time limited (i.e. year long funding) which could impact future first time entrant rates.

Reducing Repeat Offending

The proportion of young people reoffending within a 12 month follow up period has continued to fluctuate. At 29.2% for April to June 2017, the rate of reoffending in Buckinghamshire is lower than the National average (38.4%), the South East (36.7%) and Thames Valley (33.9%). There were 14 reoffenders in Buckinghamshire within this most recent cohort in comparison with 23 reoffenders in April to June 2014, representing a 39.1% decrease in the number of young people reoffending.

Proportion of Young People Reoffending Comparative Cohorts 2014 - 2017



Risks to YOS Effectiveness

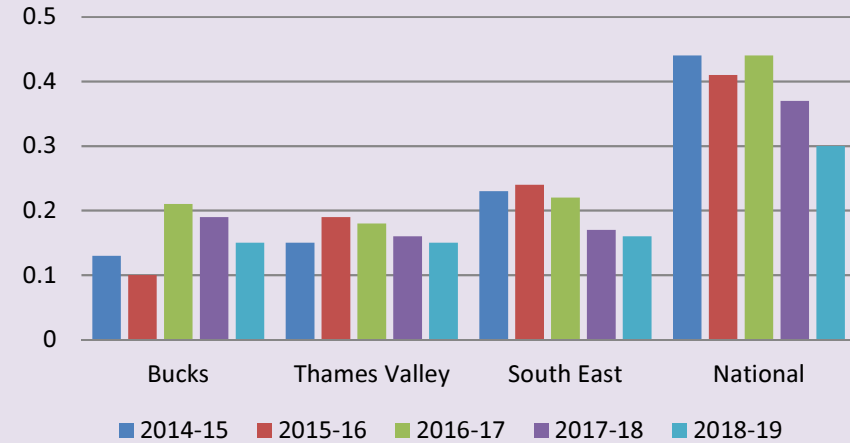
- Although numbers of young people repeat offending is reducing, the number of offences committed by those children is increasing. As a result, the cohort of children is becoming far more complex and require a more intensive approach to managing multiple needs.

Reducing The Use of Custody

There were 0.15 custodial sentences per 1000 of the 10 to 17 year old population in Buckinghamshire during 2018-19. This is lower than the National average (0.30) and the South East (0.16), and is in line with the Thames Valley figure (0.15). This represents 8 young people receiving custodial sentences in comparison with 7 in 2014-15.

*Footnote:* Please note there have been issues with a small number of Youth Offending Teams returning custodial data to the Youth Justice Board and as a result this data may be subject to minor inaccuracies. This should not impact on the overall trends.

Custodial Rate per 1000 10 to 17 Year Old Population, April 2014 - March 2019



Risks to YOS Effectiveness

- An increase in the seriousness of offending means there is a risk that custody rates may increase. The YOS remain committed to reducing the use of custody by way of offering courts robust alternatives to custody; however, acknowledges there may be a small number of young people who commit very serious offences where custody is the only option to protect the public and prevent further victims.

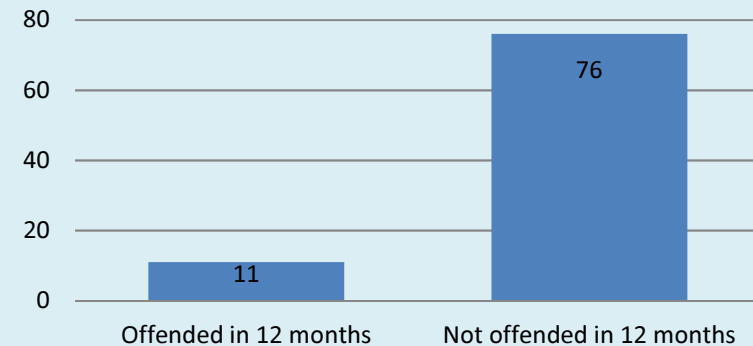


## Local Indicators

**Effectiveness of Prevention Programmes**

All young people offered a Prevention programme by Buckinghamshire YOS are tracked for 12 months to monitor whether they commit any offences and subsequently become a first time entrant.

Of the 87 young people offered a voluntary programme in 2017-18, 11 (12.6%) went on to commit offences and become a first time entrant within 12 months. All of these 11 young people refused the Prevention programme they were offered, therefore no intervention had been delivered by the YOS.

**Prevention Programmes Offered 2017-18****What does this mean?**

- Once young people have engaged in a prevention programme, the YOS is able to demonstrate positive outcomes in the rates of children who then go onto offend.
- In contrast, when a child refuses the programme, the evidence suggests these children are most likely to end up in the Criminal Justice System.
- Young people are offered a programme and should the child not engage, no work is delivered.
- The YOS have realigned their existing prevention worker by way of direct engagement within a school setting, rather than a referral process. It is hoped this will increase engagement at the earliest possible opportunity.

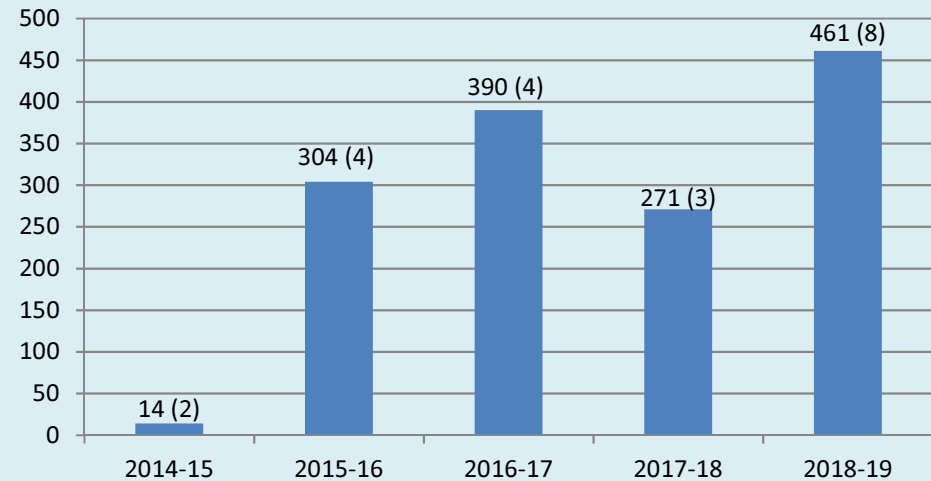
Local Indicators

**Remand Bed Nights**

There has been a significant increase in both the number of young people remanded to custody and the number of bed nights accrued in 2018-19. This represents an increase of 70.1% in bed nights since 2017-18.

Please note that one of the young people remanded in 2018-19 remained on remand at the time of producing this data. Bed nights have been calculated to the end of March 2019.

**No. of Remand Bed Nights (No. of Young People)**



What does this mean?

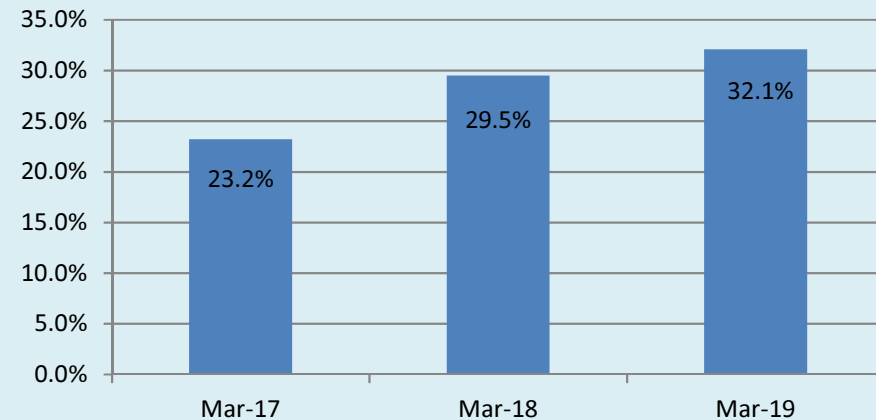
- The length of time a child spends on remand has increased, alongside the number of children who have been on remand. This is reflective of the seriousness and nature of offending.
- This has a significant implication on finance, as all remand bed nights are paid for by the Local Authority with the Youth Justice Board providing a grant to support costs.
- Alternatives to custody and suitable bail packages will ordinarily be explored, unless the offence is so serious the YOS are not in a position to support bail and ensure public safety.

## Local Indicators

**Education Health and Care Plans**

The following chart provides a snapshot from 3 comparative periods of the percentage of young people on the YOS caseload with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

There has been an increase in the overall percentage of young people open to the YOS with an EHCP over the last 3 years. In March 2019, there were 27 young people in this category, which is an increase from 23 in March 2017. However, it is important to note that within the last 12 months, data cleaning processes have been introduced to enhance the accuracy of this data, which may therefore have impacted on the increase in percentage.

**Snapshot of YOS Caseload with EHCP****What does this mean?**

- The link between education and criminal justice has been well researched, and the YOS recognises the importance of ensuring young people have an appropriate plan in place to address educational needs.
- Although there has been an “increase” in children with an EHCP, this is yet to be tested in terms of whether the accuracy of recording has impacted the figures that are being recorded.
- This will continue to be monitored alongside education colleagues to ensure there is an understanding of educational needs of those within the Criminal Justice System.

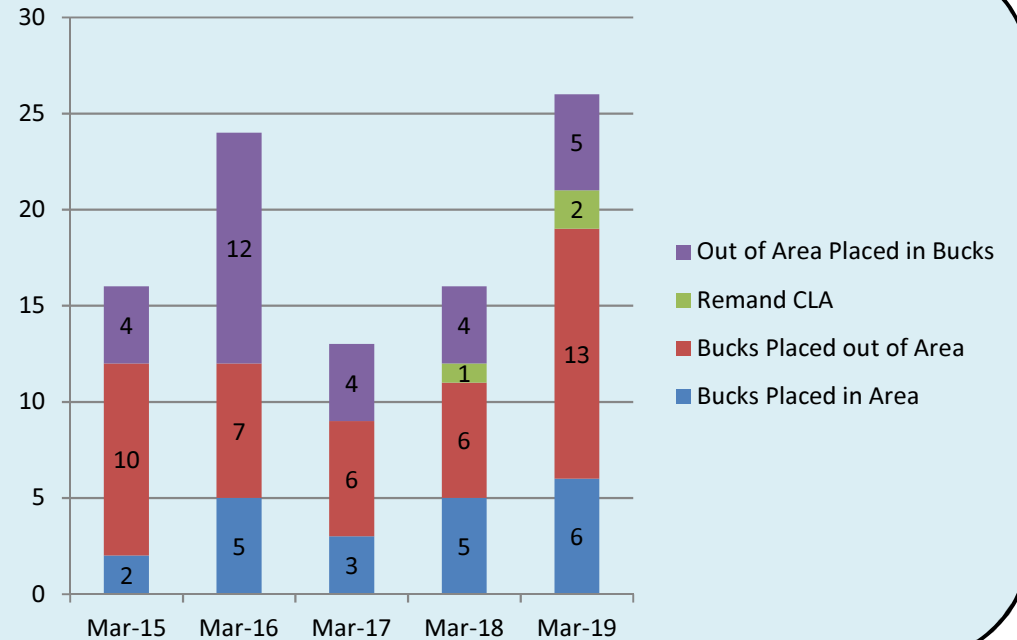
Local Indicators

**Children Looked After**

The following chart shows a snapshot of the YOS caseload by Children Looked After (CLA) over 5 comparative periods, broken down by their CLA status.

Between March 2015 and March 2019 there has been a significant increase in the percentage of young people on the YOS caseload who are Looked After. In actual numbers, this is an increase from 16 young people in March 2015 to 26 in March 2019 (62.5% increase).

More detailed analysis of the March 2019 cohort shows that 20 of the 26 CLA offended first, prior to becoming Looked After (76.9%). However, of the 20 young people who offended first, 15 were known to Social Care prior to committing their first offence. Therefore, 21 out of 26 (80.8%) were known to Social Care prior to committing their first offence.



What does this mean?

- This is reflective of national trends, where an increase in CLA is visible in the YOS cohort of children.
- It is recognised that the expertise of the YOS in working with adolescents within the criminal justice system can be shared across Social Care teams to ensure there is greater understanding of children considered “at risk”.
- The YOS currently deliver training using a real life case study to support social care colleagues to increase the awareness of children who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

The table shows that between 2017-18 and 2018-19 there has been a:

- significant decrease in the number of Buckinghamshire young people who have offended (26.6% reduction);
- a decrease in the number of offences being committed (5.7% reduction);
- an increase in the average number of offences per offender (0.8 increase); and
- a significant decrease in the number of disposals (25.5% reduction).

	2017-18	2018-19	Level of change
No. of Young People who Offend	229	168	26.6% decrease
No. of Offences Committed	617	582	5.7% decrease
Average No. of Offences Per Offender	2.7	3.5	0.8 increase
Number of Disposals	298	222	25.5% decrease

What does this mean?

- This is not dissimilar to the national trends where it is evident that although the number of young people who offend has decreased, the number of offences committed per young person who offends has increased.
- This demonstrates an increase in the complexity of the children who are being worked with, as it is recognised those within the system are responsible for repeat offending.
- There is a need to ensure staff are equipped and able to deliver interventions that meet these complex needs. As a result, the model of delivery the YOS have been trained on is Trauma Model.

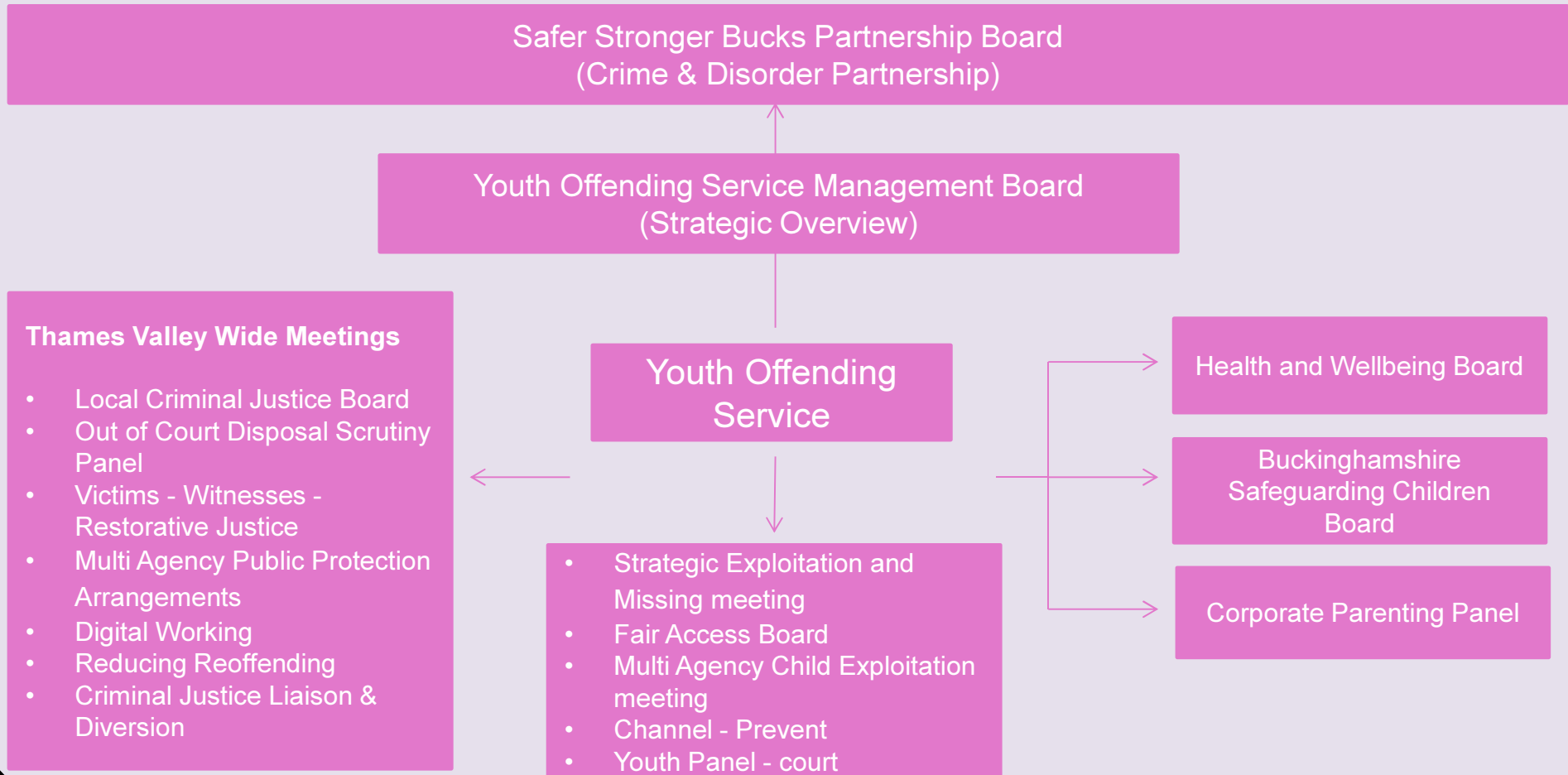
**Buckinghamshire YOS 2019-20 Budget**

Partner Contributions 2019-2020	Staffing Costs (£)	Payments in Kind (£)	Other Delegated Funds (£)	Total (£)
Buckinghamshire County Council	507,389	-	155,378	662,767
Thames Valley Police	-	119,511	-	119,511
Clinical Commissioning Group	-	76,285	-	76,285
National Probation Service	-	48,019	5,000	53,019
Police Crime Commissioner	120,000	-	102,000	222,000
Youth Justice Board Grant	346,059	-	23,700	369,759
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>973,448</b>	<b>243,815</b>	<b>286,078</b>	<b>1,503,341</b>

**Budget Summary**

- Overall, the YOS budget for 2019-20 demonstrates a reduction in funding of approx. £82,000 compared to 2018-19. The YOS has been creative in utilising funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner to support prevention work and allocating the majority of Youth Justice Board and Buckinghamshire County Council funding against the staffing establishment to deliver core statutory services.
- The YOS has reviewed all aspects of the service to consider where any additional savings can be made. This includes the use of sessional workers, holding a vacant post for 3 months (going into 2019-20) and use of one agency post to cover two establishment posts where staff are on maternity leave. The YOS will continue to regularly review funding to make best use of available resources.
- This has led to additional pressures on existing staff in not only managing caseloads but covering court-office duty. It is recognised that the cohort of children has become more complex and delivering statutory work is at times prioritised over the delivery of preventative interventions.
- The YOS have continued to receive posts in kind from Police, Probation, Clinical Commissioning Groups (Health Nurse, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

The Management Board is the strategic partnership body within Buckinghamshire that oversees the local delivery of responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for youth justice services and the Youth Offending Service.



## What Have We Done?

- Sourced and analysed data enabling the YOS to have increased understanding of what the disproportionality issues are.
- Engaged partners in dialogue regarding disproportionality.
- Identified specific streams of work to develop an understanding of the cohort of children.
- Trained all staff in unconscious bias training.
- Worked with Thames Valley Police to review data on disproportionality.



## What Has the Impact Been?

- Diversity statement added to all Pre Sentence Reports recognising over representation of BAME groups.
- YOS contract reviewed by Head of Equalities, BCC to ensure it is inclusive.
- Pilot programme commenced which screens decision making by multi agency partners in criminal justice by removing all information which may allude to young persons diverse needs in relation to BAME.

## What Will We Do Next?

- Audit cases to assess impact of training and see improved assessments and intervention plans which are inclusive.
- Review impact of pilot programme where ethnicity is removed (by way of case studies).
- Task and Finish group set up to further understand local drivers of disproportionality. This aims to identify what YOS and partners can do differently to have a positive impact on disproportionality at an earlier stage.



## What Have We Done?

- Identified a champion within the service who can support in leading on complex areas of exploitation.
- Raised awareness in the use of National Referral Mechanisms.
- Chaired a task and finish group identifying local picture of what exploitation looks like. This was reported into the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board's (BSCB) exploitation sub group
- Provided access to the front door service to the YOS database.



## What Has the Impact Been?

- Increased referrals to National Referral Mechanism being accepted.
- Having access to YOS database at the front door means a holistic picture of the child is understood and any signs of exploitation are identified at the earliest opportunity.
- Member of BSCB exploitation sub group has meant YOS have been able to influence strategic direction in tackling exploitation.

## What Will We Do Next?

- Release YOS champion to work within the Exploitation Hub within the social care front door service.
- Work closely with local businesses and communities to engage children in supervised reparation within their own communities, reducing the risk of opportunities to exploit.
- Utilise youth workers within the community to identify opportunities to deliver outreach youth work in "hotspot" areas.

**What Have We Done?**

- Trained all staff in Trauma Informed Practice.
- Reviewed aspects of service provision to ensure it is more trauma informed.
- Work with staff to identify how we can manage secondary traumatic stress and increase wellbeing of staff which can have a positive impact on children being worked with.
- Visited high performing local authorities such as Lewisham who have significantly reduced repeat offending through evidence based delivery of local youth justice services.

**What Has the Impact Been?**

- Enabled staff to identify ways in which to engage with children who are suffering complex trauma and secure positive outcomes.
- Focus on relationship based practice.
- Improved use of language in assessments which enables greater understanding of the experiences of the child.
- Increase in YOS staff training other professionals across organisations in Restorative Approaches - facilitator training, such as school staff, care homes and Social Care staff, ensuring consistency in approach for young people.

**What Will We Do Next?**

- Further evaluations of impact of Restorative approaches - facilitator training.
- Review all policies in line with a trauma informed model of delivery.
- Audit cases to identify evidence of relationship building in intervention plans and ensure assessments are trauma informed.

## NATIONAL STANDARDS

- Revised National Standards were implemented as of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.
- These standards define the minimum expectation for all agencies that provide statutory services to ensure good outcomes for children in the youth justice system.
- The YJB require all Youth Offending Services to undertake a self assessment which involves;
  - Auditing against standards of 20% of cases relevant to each standard with a minimum of 20 cases where possible; however to audit all custody cases against related standards.
- Methodology for self assessment will be agreed via YOS Partnership Board in September 2019 where a plan of action to complete this self assessment will be presented.
- A year end submission baseline against all the standard will be made and reported to YOS board.
- Gaps in provision will be identified, will form part of the local priorities and cited in Youth Justice Plan for 2020/21.

## CONSTRUCTIVE RESETTLEMENT

- The YOS recognises that resettlement doesn't only include transition between custody and community; but views resettlement as an ongoing piece of work for all transitional points for young people. This includes resettling young people back into their communities.
- The YOS are building links to local businesses and community settings such as mosques and churches, to gain their engagement in supporting young people to volunteer, gain a skill set, complete meaningful reparation hours and increase attachment to their local communities
- The YOS are being flexible in ensuring professionals who will work with children upon release from custody commence the relationship with the child whilst they remain in custody

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- The input of strategic leads in health at the YOS board has created opportunities to develop increased links, maximise resource and create joint working opportunities to impact health and wellbeing for young people in a positive way.
- This includes Youth Justice Liaison and Diversion & Forensic Community Adolescent Mental Health Service (FCamhs) strategic leads.
- The YOS are also part of the Forensic Camhs stakeholder feedback group recognising the increase in young people with unmet mental health needs who may present a risk to the community

Michael Loebenberg – Superintendent – LPA Commander – Thames Valley Police – Chair

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Richard Nash – Service Director - Children’s Services, Buckinghamshire County Council</li> <li>• Errol Albert – Head of Safeguarding - Children’s Services, Buckinghamshire County Council / Amanda Andrews – Head of First Response - Children’s Services, Buckinghamshire County Council (rotate to represent Social Care)</li> <li>• Aman Sekhon-Gill – Head of Service - Youth Offending Service</li> <li>• Ollie Foxell – Operational Manager – Youth Offending Service</li> <li>• Becky Beer – Performance Review &amp; Information manager - Youth Offending Service</li> <li>• Darren Frost – YJU Unit Police Officer - Thames Valley Police</li> <li>• Debbie Johnson – Senior Operational Support Manager - National Probation Service</li> <li>• Linda Ricks – SPO - National Probation Service</li> <li>• Lou Everatt – Head of Operations North - Community Rehabilitation Company / Katie Hunter – SPO TV - Community Rehabilitation Company (on rotation)</li> <li>• Marie Mickiewicz – Specialist Commissioning Manager - Commissioning, Buckinghamshire County Council</li> <li>• Alison Pocock – Magistrate - Youth Court Magistrates</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maria Edmonds – Education Strategy Manager - Buckinghamshire County Council / Viv Trundell – Education Entitlement Manager, Buckinghamshire County Council (Rotate attendance)</li> <li>• Sarah Holding – Deputy Head teacher Aspire (PRU)</li> <li>• Yvette Thomas – Equality and School Improvement Manager, Buckinghamshire County Council</li> <li>• Jenifer Cameron – CEO – Action4Youth (VCS)</li> <li>• Simon Barnett – Operations Director - Action4Youth</li> <li>• Helen Fortgang – Service Manager - Barnardo’s</li> <li>• Sandra Aaronson – Team Manager - Barnardo’s</li> <li>• Azad Khan – President - Ghausia Mosque</li> <li>• Angie Sarchet – Manager - Community Safety, Buckinghamshire County Council</li> <li>• Gareth Morgan – Head of Early Help, Buckinghamshire County Council</li> <li>• Sabrina Miller-Cummings - Service Manager - Switch Bucks, Young People Substance Misuse Service</li> <li>• Matt Lister – Consultant Forensic Psychologist - CAMHS</li> <li>• Joseph Franks – Service Manager - Liaison &amp; Diversion</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**Total grant to be used exclusively for the delivery of youth justice services and for the purposes of the following outcomes:**

Reduction in youth reoffending, reduction in the numbers of first time entrants to the youth justice system, reduction in the use of youth custody, effective public protection and effective safeguarding.

Expenditure Category	Description	£
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of effective assessment, intervention planning and supervision for young people at risk of offending or reoffending in Buckinghamshire.</li> <li>• Delivery of services to the victims of youth offending.</li> <li>• Development of key areas of practice such as SEND, Liaison and Diversion and restorative justice.</li> <li>• Analysis of performance information to inform practice development across all areas.</li> <li>• Delivery and development of Community Reparation and Unpaid Work.</li> </ul>	346,059
Overheads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expenses incurred by staff in carrying out core duties.</li> <li>• Development and training of staff in effective practice.</li> </ul>	10,200
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of Core+ to support effective case management, timely submission of statutory data. and the use of connectivity to ensure mandatory documentation is shared securely with the Youth Custody Service.</li> </ul>	13,500
<b>Total</b>		<b>369,759</b>

TYPE OF ROLE	NO. OF STAFF	GENDER	ETHNICITY
Strategic Manager	1	F	Asian
Operational Manager	1	M	White
Team Manager	3	F – 2 M – 1	White - 3
Performance and Information	2	F – 2	White - 2
Early Intervention and RJ Co-ordinator	1	F	White
YOS Officer	10	F – 10	White – 8 Mixed – 1 Asian - 1
Probation Officer (seconded)	1	F	Black
Early Intervention Officer	1	F	White
RJ Support Worker	1	F	White
Education Officer	1	M	White
Youth Worker	2	F – 1 M – 1	White – 1 Black - 1
Police Officer (seconded)	2	F – 1 M – 1	White - 2
Linked Specialists: Addaction Worker (1) Connexions Worker (1) Clinical Psychologist (1) SALT Worker (1)	4	F – 3 M – 1	White - 4
Business Support (4) Finance (1) Reparation - Unpaid Work Officer (1)	6	F – 3 M – 3	White – 3 Mixed – 1 Asian - 1
Volunteers	24	F – 18 M – 6	White – 22 Black – 1 Asian - 1

BAME	Black Asian and Minority Ethnic
BCC	Buckinghamshire County Council
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CLA	Child Looked After
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
FAB	Fair Access Board
BSCB	Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board
MACE	Multi Agency Child Exploitation meeting
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
PCC	Police Crime Commissioner
STEM	Strategic Exploitation and Missing meeting
YJB	Youth Justice Board