



# Report to Full Council

<b>Date:</b>	24 November 2021
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Buckinghamshire Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021-22</b>
<b>Cabinet Member(s):</b>	Cllr Anita Cranmer, Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services
<b>Contact officer:</b>	Richard Nash, Corporate Director Children' Services
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	None specific
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>For Council to agree the 2021-2022 Youth Justice Strategic Plan.</b>

## **1. Executive summary**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Buckinghamshire Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021-2022. 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.

## **2. Content of report**

2.1 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.

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

2.3 The Youth Justice Strategic 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.'

- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 Multi-agency 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.
- 2.6 The Youth Justice Board (YJB) has set three national outcome indicators for all YOTs 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**

- 2.7 First Time Entrants: 88 young people entered the youth justice system for the first time in Buckinghamshire between January and December 2019. At a rate of 160 per 100,000 10 to 17-year olds, the Buckinghamshire figure is lower than the National average (207) and Thames Valley (179) but above that seen across the South East (141).
- 2.8 Reoffending: The proportion of young people reoffending within a 12 month follow up period has continued to fluctuate. At 30.2% for October to December 2018, the rate of reoffending in Buckinghamshire is lower than the National average (37.3%), the South East (36.4%) and Thames Valley (30.4%).
- 2.9 Use of Custody: There were 0.04 custodial sentences per 1000 of the 10 to 17 year old population in Buckinghamshire during 2020. This is lower than the National average (0.14), the South East figure (0.05) and slightly higher than the Thames Valley figure (0.03).
- 2.10 Following a significant decrease in both the number of young people remanded to custody and the number of bed nights accrued in 2019-20, there was an increase in

both figure for 2020-21. This represents a 15.2% increase in bed nights from 2019-20 and a 14.6% decrease in comparison to 2016-17. This is reflective of the seriousness of offending which is a national trend.

- 2.11 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 58 young people offered a voluntary programme in 2019-20, 1 (1.7%) went on to commit offences and become a first time entrant within 12 months. The 1 young person was engaged via the Schools Early Intervention programme. This compares positively with the 11 out of 87 young people who went on to offend from the 2017-18 cohort and is in line with the 1 out of 44 young people who became a first time entrant in the 2018-19 cohort (2.3%).

### **Priorities for the coming year**

- 2.12 Despite challenges presented by Covid 19, the Youth Offending Service continued to deliver creative solutions to maintain service delivery. The YOS worked alongside partners to continue to assess the quality of provision being delivered, including adapting the performance framework to focus on Covid related intervention delivery.
- 2.13 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.
- 2.14 The YOS will continue to underpin all the work they do on the following 3 areas to contribute to systematic change across the wider organisation.
- Continuing to address disproportionality;
  - Addressing exploitation of young people; this priority will also consider focussing on serious youth violence given the introduction of the new statutory duty and
  - Embedding an evidence based model of practice
- 2.15 For 2021/22 the YOS will continue to make progress towards the above strategic priorities and alongside covid recovery planning, will progress work streams against the above and work towards securing positive outcomes against our three national indicators

## **3. Other options considered**

- 3.1 N/A.

## **4. Legal and Financial implications**

- 4.1 The local authority must carry out its statutory obligations in compliance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 40. In addition, 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 2018.
- 4.2 Overall, the YOS budget for 2021-22 demonstrates a reduction in funding of approx. £42,000 (3%) compared to 2020/21, despite an 8.8% one off uplift in YJB funding. The YOS will continue to work creatively in year to manage budgets in line with YJB grant funding requirements.
- 4.3 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.

## **5. Corporate implications**

- 5.1 N/A

## **6. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views**

- 6.1 N/A

## **7. Communication, engagement & further consultation**

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

## **8. Next steps and review**

- 8.1 The Youth Justice Plan should be reviewed and agreed annually. Progress of the plan will be monitored through the YOS Partnership Management Board which reports into the Safer, Stronger Buckinghamshire Partnership Board.

## **9. Background papers**

- Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021-2022
- Youth Justice EQIA 2021

## **10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)**

- 10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

