



**Report for: Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

Date of Meeting:	11 June 2024
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT Harrow Youth Justice Plan
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Parmjit Charhal – Director of Children’s Services
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Hitesh Karia – Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Youth Justice Plan 2024 - 2027

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

The Harrow Youth Justice Plan provides an outline of how the Local Authority will deliver and finance youth justice services in Harrow in line with the expectation of our legal duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The proposal is that the Harrow Youth Justice Plan is ratified and signed off by the Council with agreement that the priorities set out within the plan adequately addresses the needs of children and young people involved with the Youth Justice Service.

Harrow Youth Justice Service is meeting outcomes and delivering positively against national indicators with regard to: -

- Reducing First time entrants into the criminal justice system
- Reducing re-offending by children and young people
- Reducing the use of custody for children

Overall, the service is positively impacting all three areas. Our data shows that overall the numbers of children coming into contact with the Youth Justice Service is decreasing as is our rate of reoffending (young people committing repeat offences). We currently have only one young person in custody. The direction of travel has been consistent in Harrow for the last 5 years, meaning, fewer children we are working with are coming to notice for more serious crimes. However those who are known to our service are presenting with more complex backgrounds requiring more intensive support and partnership working to bring about a positive impact on desistance. The some of our cases are also open to Social Work teams as well.

Recommendations: The Overview and Scutiny Committee to note the Plan and provide comments to Cabinet to:

Approve the Youth Justice Plan to cover a three year period from 2024 to 2027 to allow enough time to progress the plan and for it to be reviewed and monitored.

Reason:

To assist the Council to achieve its priorities with regard to residents being safe, protected and supported at their most vulnerable, as well as helping children and young people to avoid coming to the notice of the criminal justice system and for them to prosper from good education and skills development as well as living healthier and happier lives.

Section 2 – Report

1. Introductory paragraph

1.1. Harrow Youth Justice Service is a multi-agency statutory service set up in line with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to deliver services to children involved in the criminal justice system.

1.2. The Youth Justice Plan is an annual plan that reports on the work of the youth justice service within Harrow and the strategic management board that oversees this service. It highlights the performance of the team in meeting the three national performance targets and standards as well as local indicators and expectations.

1.3. The Youth Justice Plan is in line with national and local priorities and has been agreed at a partnership level. The plan outlines how the service will continue to improve services where audit and quality assurance has highlighted areas for improvement and areas of future development. The plan clearly outlines the structure and financial envelope within which it works and delivers in accordance with these.

1.4. The plan sets out the priorities for the coming year and how they align with local and national priorities. Areas of focus for the coming year are:

(a) Over-represented children

- Our data shows that the over-representation of black cohorts and under-representation of Asian cohorts does exist and needs addressing.

(b) Prevention

- Harrow Youth Justice Service sits within a wider system of Early Help and Family Hub universal provision. Within the existing arrangements, there is already close collaboration on preventative work and information sharing between YJS and Children's Social Care, Community Safety and the Police.

(c) Diversion

- Harrow actively took part in a London based deferred prosecution model (Turning Point) pilot - enabling young people to accept rehabilitative interventions such as a contract of work, as an alternative to certain charging with an offence

(d) Education

- Focusing on getting our young people into education, employment and training.

(e) Restorative justice and victims

- There is strong support for victims and Restorative Justice in Harrow. We have established a wide variety of positive reparation programmes to achieve this.

(F) Serious violence and exploitation

- Within the YJS there is a Safety, Wellbeing and Risk Management (SWARM) panel for the multi-agency consideration of higher risk cases
- There is a significant and coordinated approach to identifying, mapping and responding to serious violence and the vulnerability to exploitation including criminal and sexual exploitation on the borough.

(g) Detention in Police custody

- Effective management of children in police custody is critical in ensuring the protection of their rights and well-being. We now have a full-time Liaison and Diversion Worker who is responsible for screening children's communication, learning, and mental health needs.

(h) Remands, use of custody and Constructive resettlement

A working protocol outlines expectations of the YJS and Children's Social Care (CSC) when a child is remanded to local authority care or youth detention.

2. Options Considered

This plan is an expectation of the Youth Justice Board who govern youth justice and set out the expectations for the delivery of youth justice services.

3. Background

3.1 The Harrow Youth Justice Plan has been written to align with the national priorities outlined by Youth Justice Board and local priorities set out by partners in the Community Safety Partnership. The work of the Youth Justice Service and its performance is monitored and governed by the Youth Justice Management Board with representation from across the partnership. The Youth Justice Board also reports into the Community Safety Partnership Board and provides regular updates on pertinent issues related to crime and disorder.

3.2 There is a commitment from the Harrow Youth Justice Service to improve outcomes for children involved in the youth justice system. The service focuses specifically on the adverse childhood experiences of these children young people, and identifies how the trauma that they have experienced has impacted their current behaviours. The service continues to advocate for children and young people who have been marginalised and is committed to having high aspirations for those children who are more likely to experience poor outcomes due to their involvement in crime. The Youth Justice Service sits within Children's Social Care directorate and is focused on the safeguarding and wellbeing of children that access the service.

4. Ward Councillors' comments

Not applicable

5. Performance Issues

The Harrow Youth Justice Service provides quarterly key performance data to the Partnership Management Board and the national Youth Justice Board (YJB). Currently, the service data indicates that the service is performing well and providing a right level of service to the children and young people known to the service.

6. Environmental Implications

The impact on the environment is minimal in that some of the work undertaken by the the Governance Board is via the use of technology and virtual meetings and less of driving to venues for face to face meetings. However this will soon change as more meetings are being planned to be face to face in future.

7. Data Protection Implication

Any data processed by Harrow Youth Justice Service is provided via the Children's Social Care legal expectations on data protection, and governed by the Data Protection Act 2018.

8. Risk Management Implications

If this plan is not approved, it will mean the priorities outlined are not subject to accountability and scrutiny by those responsible for overseeing the functioning and delivery of Youth Justice Service, mainly the Youth Justice Board. The regulatory body will also raise concerns should the plan not be approved.

Risk included on Directorate risk register. Yes

Separate risk register in place? No

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
If the Plan is not approved, structured and appropriate scrutiny and monitoring may not be available to focus on how the Youth Justice Service is meeting its expected functions and priorities.	This is mitigated by the approval being granted which will reduce the risk from red to amber.	Amber
If the plan is not approved it may trigger an interest from the regulator which may result in early inspection of Harrow Youth Justice Service.	Approval of the report will provide assurance and mitigate the risk to green from amber.	Green
If the plan is not approved, the ability for the service to use the Plan as a tool for engagement and co-production with the service users is minimised.	Approval will provide assurance and confidence in the service's ability to engage with key partners, the children, young people and their families, and mitigate the risk down from red to amber.	Amber

Legal Implications

It is a requirement under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to formulate and implement a youth justice plan and to submit the plan to the Youth Justice Board.

Financial Implications

Financial Implications

- The table below shows the income and expenditure budget of the Harrow YJS for 2024-25.

INCOME	Youth Justice Board	Local Authority	Police	Police and Crime Commissioner	Probation	Health	Welsh Government	Other	Total
Cash	£269,230	£850,722			£5,000				£1,124,952
In-kind			£108,000		£33,272	£55,492			£196,764
Total income	£269,230	£850,722	£108,000	£0	£38,272	£55,492	£0	£0	£1,321,716

EXPENDITURE	Youth Justice Board	Local Authority	Police	Police and Crime Commissioner	Probation	Health	Welsh Government	Other	Total
Salaries	£243,906	£681,114	£108,000		£33,272	£55,492			£1,121,784
Activity costs	£16,012	£45,891			£5,000				£66,903
Accommodation	£0	£0							£0
Overheads	£9,312	£123,717							£133,029
Equipment	£0	£0							£0
Total expenditure	£269,230	£850,722	£108,000	£0	£38,272	£55,492	£0	£0	£1,321,716

- Funding from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) is provided through an annual grant managed by the Council. The YJB is yet to confirm the grant allocation for 2024-25 and the budget figure of £269,230 is equal to the initial grant allocation for 2023-24. Funding from the Police, Probation Service and Health are provided in-kind.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 applies to this plan in that the plan is targeted at ensuring certain ethnic groups and those groups who are not experiencing the same level of outcomes as others are being taken into consideration. When making decisions, decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties and they are not duties to secure a particular outcome.

Therefore, equalities impact will be revisited on each of the priorities as they are delivered. This will enable specific and targeted plans to be developed equally over the 3-year delivery window to improve outcomes for children and young people known to Youth Justice Service regardless of their backgrounds and ethnicity.

Council Priorities

Please identify how the decision sought delivers this priority.

- 1. A council that puts residents first**
- 2. A borough that is clean and safe**
- 3. A place where those in need are supported**

Keeping the residents safe is a key focus of the Harrow Youth Justice Plan under the authority of the Youth Justice Board. The Plan outlines clearly its priorities and ambitions to keep the most vulnerable people in our community safe. This is achieved by supporting and engaging with those children and young people who are at risk of being further involved or who become involved within the criminal justice system. These include children who are vulnerable to being exploited to participate in criminal activities or exposed to life of crime and anti-social behaviour. Early Intervention work is key in preventing the children and young people going down the path of youth offending which may result in them being brought before the Courts or ending up in custody.

It is through undertaken comprehensive assessments that the needs of the children and young people who are subject to court orders are understood and plans are put in place to address these needs. Common to the characteristics of such children and young people is the issues of them not being in education, employment or training. This has a huge impact on their future outcomes and their economic contributions to the community. Huge part of the work undertaken in the service is focused on bringing positive results in gainfully reconnecting these vulnerable young people with the educational institutions, apprenticeships, training and employment.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Patricia Harvey

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 04.06.2024

Statutory Officer: A. Hansrani, Principal lawyer children social care and Isha Prince, Principal Lawyer criminal litigation

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 04.06.2024

Chief Officer:

Signed off by the Managing Director

Date:

Has the Portfolio Holder been consulted? Yes

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

EqlA carried out: No

EqlA cleared by:

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Priscilla Kurewa

Assistant Director: Children's Safeguarding and Youth Justice Service - priscilla.kurewa@harrow.co.uk

Background Papers:

Section 39 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, link below:-

[Crime and Disorder Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee: NO