

**Meeting:** Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Board      **Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Wards affected:** All

**Report Title:** Torbay Youth Justice Service Improvement Plan Update December 2023

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** N/A

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 This report has been prepared to provide members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Board with an update on the progress of the Torbay Youth Justice Service Improvement Plan 2023-24

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its Benefits

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- 2.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 39) introduced the statutory requirement for local authorities to establish Youth Offending Team<sup>1</sup> (YOTs) in their area, requiring the involvement of the local authority, Police, Health, and Probation – the statutory partners.
- 2.2 Local Authorities are required under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to 'formulate and implement' an annual Youth Justice Plan, setting out how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out. The plan should equally address the functions assigned to a youth justice service, including how services will prevent offending behaviour and reduce reoffending.
- 2.3 The Torbay Youth Justice Plan was developed through multi agency consultation, including feedback from children, parents and victims and was approved by Cabinet and Torbay's

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'Youth Offending Team' remains in the legislation but locally the service is called the Youth Justice Service.

Strategic Youth Justice Board. It was submitted to national Youth Justice Board (YJB) before the deadline of the 30th of June 2023.

2.4 The Improvement Plan Update before the committee shows progress against the stated priorities of the TYJS Improvement Plan 2023-24.

2.5 The Youth Justice Plan contributes to the desired outcomes of the Community and Corporate Plan: -

*'We want Torbay and its residents to thrive'*

The Youth Justice Service works with vulnerable children whose offending behaviour if not addressed is likely to have lifelong impact on their ability to thrive.

*'where our children and older people will have high aspirations'*

The Youth Justice Service supports children to develop alternatives to their current behaviours and raise their expectations and aspirations.

*'Build safer communities'*

- *Work with partners to tackle crime, including exploitation, and its effects.*
- *Work with partners to reduce offending and reoffending and its impacts*
- *Work with partners to tackle domestic abuse and sexual violence and its effects'*

The Youth Justice Service contributes to the delivery of these aspects for children as part of the 'Thriving Community' element of the Corporate Plan

### 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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3.1. That members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Board note the contents of the report.

### Appendices

Appendix 1: TYJS Improvement Plan 2023-24 Dec 23 Update

### Background Documents

N/A

# Supporting Information

## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 The Improvement Plan has 10 priority areas for improvement activity, 2 of which are showing as 'Green' meaning they have been completed or are on target to be completed within the originally estimated timescale or a revised one agreed by the YJS Strategic Board.

(the numbers below refer to the Torbay YJS Improvement Plan attached document)

6) There have been positive developments particularly in relation to increasing our focus on ensuring the children known to the service are attending appropriate education or training provision. It is well established that children open to youth justice services nationally are less likely to be in education or training and more likely to have additional learning needs. Torbay Youth Justice Service is working well with education partners and providers to ensure children have suitable placements and are supported to attend regularly.

10) In October 2023 the service completed a multi partner audit against the Youth Justice Board (YJB) National Standards of children who were sentenced at court. Overall, we rated ourselves as at the upper end of 'Good' and have developed an action plan to address the areas identified for improvement. At the time of writing this report the service is currently waiting for feedback from the YJB on our submission.

- 1.2 There are 5 areas that are 'Amber' indicating that they are in progress but are delayed these are in the areas of: -

1) Child First Approach –There has been much development activity in this area and as part of the YJB National Standards Audit this area scored well overall. However the implementation of new systems for gathering feedback from children, parents and victims was initially delayed, but is now in place, and we are gathering a robust and statistically viable body of feedback which will be used to inform service provision and priorities.

3) The further development of the Trauma Recovery Model (TRM) through the ability to access psychologist support has been mitigated by Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (FCAMHS) providing clinical supervision and case formulation insights for high-risk cases. This support by FCAMHS is not long term and does not fully meet the best practice guidance for the Enhanced Case Management (ECM) approach recommended by the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

5) The Review of the Prevention / Turnaround provision is taking place in December 2023 one month behind schedule, overall performance is on target and the review will focus on whether we are intervening early enough as many children referred are already being investigated for alleged offences.

7) Swifter Youth Justice: - A tracking system for all youth cases has been delayed due to problems with the Police NICHE system result in unreliable data. Work is in progress to seek Police approval for the tracking and prioritisation of all youth cases by the Police as part of the peninsular wide update of protocols for Out of Court Disposals. This will likely come into force in early 2024.

8) More Positive Activities: - this area has been delayed by the late start in the commissioning of youth club provision in Torbay. This has been resolved and most provision started in September and November. Work on the new 'Youth Offer' will start in January 2024 and should codify what is available to children and young people in the local area 'Youth Offer'.

1.3 The 2 areas flagged as 'Red' are in respect of

2) and 2a) securing safe, secure and accessible locations to deliver face to face work with children, we have agreement to use the Torr Abbey Lodge building as a temporary location, but initial scoping work has identified a number of issues in terms of both health and safety matters and cost in making the building suitable for use. Additionally given the significant rise in the number of children being seen by the service it may no longer have enough capacity to meet all the service needs. Another potentially more suitable building has been identified which is within Council ownership in which we are in early discussions about its use.

4) The second area is the lack of access to mental health and well-being provision for children open to YJS. This had been caused by an inability to recruit to the CAMHS seconded post, but I am very pleased that this post has now been filled with the new worker started on the 27th of November. The Red rating has not been changed because the appointment happened after the last Strategic Board meeting.

9) There is one area that has not started yet which is the website development which is due to delays with the Family Hub website which have now been resolved and work should start before Christmas.

1.4 The Improvement Plan is regularly updated and reviewed at the bimonthly YJS Strategic Board meetings which all statutory partners attend and agree progress and mitigations outlined in the Improvement plan.

## 2. Options under consideration

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2.1 N/A

## 3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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3.1 N/A

## 4. Legal Implications

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4.1 N/A

## 5. Engagement and Consultation

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5.1 N/A

## 6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

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6.1 N/A

## 7. Tackling Climate Change

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7.1 N/A

## 8. Associated Risks

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8.1 N/A

## 9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups

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	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
Older or younger people	Positive Impact for children who have or are likely to offend		
People with caring Responsibilities			No differential impact
People with a disability	Positive impact for children with SEND as they receive intensive support package		
Women or men	90% of children in contact with YJS are male. Young males are more likely to criminalised for their behaviour & therefore referred to the service.		
People who are black or from a minority ethnic background			No differential impact

(BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)			
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)			No differential impact
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual			No differential impact
People who are transgendered			No differential impact
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership			No differential impact
Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave			No differential impact
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)			No differential impact
Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)			No differential impact

## 10. Cumulative Council Impact

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10.1 None

## 11. Cumulative Community Impacts

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11.1 The positive impact of the service is that children are diverted from crime and those with SEND and the impact of trauma are supported to develop positive life choices.