

Meeting: Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Board **Date:** 3rd June 2024

Wards affected: All

Report Title: TYJS Improvement Plan Update June 2024

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

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1. Purpose of Report

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

2.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 39) introduced the statutory requirement for local authorities to establish Youth Offending Team¹ (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

¹ The term 'Youth Offending Team' remains in the legislation but locally & nationally services are called the Youth Justice Services.

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

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 March 2024 Update

Background Documents

N/A

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Improvement Plan 2023-25 has 13 priority areas for improvement activity, 7 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)

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). The service has been able to recruit to the CAMHS worker role for the first time in nearly 3 years, which enables swift access for all children open to the YJS for both mental health screening, support, and referral on if required.

5) The Review of the Prevention / Turnaround provision took place in December 2023 which was one month behind schedule. Vikki McGeough from Community Safety chaired the review and all relevant partner agencies took part. Overall partners agreed that good progress had been made and that the programme was delivering its targets specifically 81% of children open to the service had not offended. Questions were raised about was the service getting the 'right' referrals and were they coming early enough as many children referred were already being investigated for alleged offences. An action plan has been created for the changes to the program agreed at the review and this is being overseen by the Strategic Board. Turnaround funding from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) funds half of the Prevention Service and this is due to end in March 2025, the YJS strategic Board is looking at how this can be funded in the future.

6) The Committee will be aware of the concerns re school attendance, suspension and exclusion in the Bay and this is also true for children open the YJS. 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 with education partners, providers and the Virtual School and Vulnerable Pupils Unit to ensure children have suitable placements and are supported to attend regularly. Attendance at the PRUs by children open to YJS is better than other groups but is still high.

8) More positive activities and opportunities for children. Torbay Council contracted a range of providers to enhance youth work provision in the bay (started in November 2023) and has brought other services back in house to increase the coordination. Torbay YJS use these new activities and clubs to refer children to pre and post interventions as supportive activities and social networks away from offending behaviour. Many of these clubs are also based in

the higher crime areas within the bay as well as the assertive outreach programmes targeting these areas.

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.

11) This Action Plan was introduced during the year following a Multi-Agency Case Audit (MACA) for Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) that was carried out by the Torbay Safeguarding Children's Partnership (TCSP). Four of the five areas for improvement identified in the audit are either completed or on track to complete. One area is rated as amber which is attendance in education for children at risk of CCE. This links to 6) above.

13) This Action Plan was introduced during the year following CEO Deep Dive led by Anne Marie-Bond and the actions were accepted by the Strategic Board in March 2024 and an action has been developed to ensure work is progressed.

1.2 There are 2 areas that are 'Amber' indicating that they are in progress but delayed these are in the areas of: -

1) Child First Approach –There has been significant 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.

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.

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. The service has looked at nine different buildings in the last 2 years recently we had agreement to use the Torr Abbey Lodge as a temporary location, but initial scoping identified a number of issues in terms of both health and safety matters and cost that made the building unsuitable. Most recently TDA identified the Upton Vale building (behind the Torquay Town Hall) as a suitable building but this has again been ruled out very recently due to fire regulations preventing the use of the most usable space upstairs. The lack of suitable, safe and confidential space to carry out sensitive work with children and their parents and victims is not only potentially impacting the quality of the work the service delivers, as well as the

efficiency of the service and may impact the HMIP Inspection rating if we were inspected again as this is an outstanding recommendation from the 2020 inspection.

4) The second area is the lack of access to mental health and well-being provision for children open to YJS. The red rating 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, after a gap of nearly 3 years. The new worker has started and is already making an impact in the ability of children open to the service to access CAMHS screening, support and ongoing referrals. The red rating has not been changed as the other aspect of the action was to review the contract with Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD) re the provision of the CAMHS support to seek access to psychologist input for the staff team for child case formulation as part of the best practice model for youth justice services.

There are two areas that has not started yet which are: -

9) the website development which is due to protracted negotiations with the Family Hub website about suitability which have not been resolved. The service is now seeking an alternative location through the council website.

12) After Action Review (AAR) this review was requested by the service following a nearly 3-year delay in the investigation and resolution of allegations serious sexual offences by a Torbay child and the impact of this on his education, employment, and health and wellbeing. The review was carried out by the TSCP and has produced a final report which is currently with the TCSP executive group for ratification of the recommendations.

- 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

- 2.1 N/A

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 N/A

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 N/A

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 N/A

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

6.1 N/A

7. Tackling Climate Change

7.1 N/A

8. Associated Risks

8.1 N/A

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

	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	77% 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 (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)			No differential impact
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

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

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.