

## **Cabinet – 21 April 2021**

### **Walsall Youth Justice Annual Strategic Plan.**

**Portfolio:** Councillor T. Wilson, Children's

**Related portfolios:** Councillor G. Perry, Deputy Leader Resilient Communities,  
Community Leisure and Culture

Councillor C. Towe, Education and Skills

**Service:** Walsall Youth Justice Service – Children's Services

**Wards:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Forward plan:** Yes

#### **1. Aim**

1.1 Youth Justice partnerships have a statutory duty to produce an annual youth justice plan for submission to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales showing how youth justice services will be provided and funded.

#### **2. Summary**

2.1 The Youth Justice Plan is prepared on an annual basis in accordance with the guidance "Youth Justice Plans: YJB Practice Note for Youth Offending Partnerships" and specific conditions as set within the Youth Justice Board Effective Practice Grant. The youth justice plan sets out key achievements over the past 12 months, how Walsall Youth Justice Service is structured and funded and also identifies risks to service delivery and improvement.

2.2 The plan outlines the partnerships priorities for 2021/22 and provides commentary on the three national performance indicators for youth offending services;

- Rate of first time entrants to the youth justice system
- The number and rate of custodial sentences
- The proportion of young people re-offending

#### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 To recommend to Council:

1. That Walsall's Youth Justice Annual Strategic plan be approved.

2. That the Executive Director Children's Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder be authorised to make any future minor amendments to the plan if and when required.

#### **4. Report detail - know**

##### ***Context***

4.1 Under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 each Local Authority has a duty to produce a Youth Justice Plan setting out how Youth Justice Services in their area are provided, funded and composed. The plan is submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

4.2 The plan identifies 5 main priorities as stated below:

- Reducing exploitation and youth violence.
- Ensuring that education, training and employment outcomes improve for 16+ young people in the Youth Justice System.
- Reducing disproportionality in the youth justice system.
- Effective COVID-19 recovery.
- Improving quality of practice and demonstrating outcomes.

##### ***Council Corporate Plan priorities***

4.3 Reducing the number of young people entering the youth justice system is a corporate measure and a key performance indicator for the Youth Justice Board.

4.4 The YJS plan will contribute to the Council's priorities as follows:

- People- the YJS Plan supports our families to integrate and make a positive contribution to their community whilst improving health and wellbeing
- Children- improving outcomes for the children in the justice system is at the heart of the work undertaken by the Youth Justice Service and intrinsic to each of the priorities within the plan.
- Communities- working closely with the Safer Walsall Partnership, the YJS shares a priority to manage and reduce violence and to make our communities safer.

The strategic plan focusses on how partners in Walsall will ensure that Youth Justice Services are effectively delivered to reduce youth crime and re-offending, protect the public from harm and promote safeguarding.

##### ***Risk management***

4.4 The strategic plan recognises a number of risk to future delivery, including the impact of COVID-19, the increase in first time entrants and reduction in funding streams. The Youth Justice Performance and Partnership Board maintains oversight of risks to delivery and mitigating action on a quarterly basis through detailed performance and quality assurance reports. Partners, including West Midlands Police, National Probation Service, Community Safety, Public Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS), Education, Employment and Skills, are required

at each quarterly board meeting to confirm their resource allocation and are held accountable for the performance of their own organisation.

### ***Financial implications***

4.5 The strategic plan outlines the resource and funding arrangements for YJS including those from statutory partners, the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

4.6 Adopting the strategy is not expected to incur any additional costs over and above the above budgeted costs detailed within the plan.

### ***Legal implications***

4.7 Under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the relevant persons and bodies, to formulate and implement a youth justice plan for each year setting out how youth justice services are to be provided and funded in their area; and how the youth offending team (Youth Justice Service) established by them are to be composed and funded, how they are to operate, and what functions they are to carry out. The youth justice plan is required to be submitted to the Youth Justice Board and be published in such manner and by such date as the Secretary of State may direct.

### ***Procurement Implications/Social Value***

4.8 None

### ***Property implications***

4.9 None

### ***Health and wellbeing implications***

4.10 The health and wellbeing of Walsall young people is a key within the content of the strategic plan. Improving outcomes for young people in the justice system increases the health and wellbeing of those who commit offences and associated victims. The plan details the YJS' response to the COVID-19 pandemic and identifies our recovery from the pandemic as a priority for 2021-22.

### ***Staffing implications***

4.11 There are no staffing implications in the creation of the Strategic Plan 2021-22. The current establishment is fully funded and financial contributions have been confirmed.

### ***Reducing Inequalities***

4.12 Inequality is inherent within the Criminal Justice System. The plan does not represent an adverse impact to young people at risk of offending and re-offending. Indeed, it identifies that addressing disproportionality (the overrepresentation of young people from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups) is a priority leading into 2021-22. Significant work has been undertaken during 2020-21 and the youth justice partnership is in a stronger place to better understand this inequality through data and consultation with families and partners.

### ***Consultation***

4.13 Consultation has been carried out with young people involved in the criminal justice system and with Youth Justice Service Performance and Partnership Board members have been consulted.

## **5. Decide**

5.1 A 'do nothing' option is not seen as viable as it is a statutory requirement for the council to have a Youth Justice Plan

5.2 To recommend to Council:

3. That Walsall's Youth Justice Annual Strategic plan be approved.
4. That the Executive Director Children's Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder be authorised to make any future minor amendments to the plan if and when required.

## **6. Respond**

6.1 The Youth Justice Service will continue to fulfil its statutory functions and deliver services to young people in Walsall to work towards those key performance indicators. The plan details some of the actions that the YJS will take to reduce offending behaviour, manage risk of harm to the public and safeguard. The strategic plan set the vision and strategic direction of the service over the coming 12 months.

## **7. Review**

7.1 There is an annual requirement to complete a YJS Strategic Plan and as such progress against priorities and a review of achievements will be completed in the planning schedule for 2022-23.

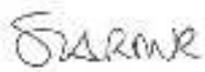
7.2 The YJS Performance and Partnership Board meets on a quarterly basis and will monitor and review progress made against the priorities and the delivery plan.

### **Background papers**

None

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Sally Rowe  
Executive Director  
April 2021



Councillor Wilson  
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April 2021