

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	Youth Justice Service Strategic Plan 2021-22		
Directorate	Children's Services		
Service	Youth Justice Service		
Responsible Officer	Phil Rutherford		
Proposal planning start	03/02/2021	Proposal start date (due or actual date)	01/04/2021

1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Policy		
	Procedure		
	Guidance		
	Is this a service to customers/staff/public?		
	If yes, is it contracted or commissioned?		
	Other - give details	Yes	
	The YJS has a statutory duty to complete an Strategic Plan on an annual basis. It is within the Council's constitution to seek Council's approval.		
2	What is the business case for this proposal? Please provide the main purpose of the service, intended outcomes and reasons for change?		
	<p>Walsall Youth Justice Service (YJS) remains a statutory multi-agency service under Section 37 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act in partnership with the Local Authority, Walsall Children's Services, West Midlands Police, National Probation Service and Health. The YJS is also supported by numerous other partners who contribute to the YJS' agenda. The principle aim of the YJS partnership is to prevent and reduce offending and re-offending behaviour in children and young people.</p> <p>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. The plan is prepared on an annual basis in accordance with the guidance 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.</p>		



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

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.
- Disproportionality in the youth justice system.
- COVID-19 recovery.
- Improving quality of practice and demonstrating outcomes.

3 Who is the proposal likely to affect?

People in Walsall	Yes / No	Detail
All		The Youth Justice Service work with young people aged between 10 and 17 who enter the Youth Justice System either via a Police disposal, such as a Youth Caution, or via conviction in the criminal courts.
Specific group/s	Y	
Council employees		
Other (identify)		

4 Please provide service data relating to this proposal on your customer's protected characteristics.

Continuing to develop understanding and address disproportionality is a priority for the YJS in 2021/22.

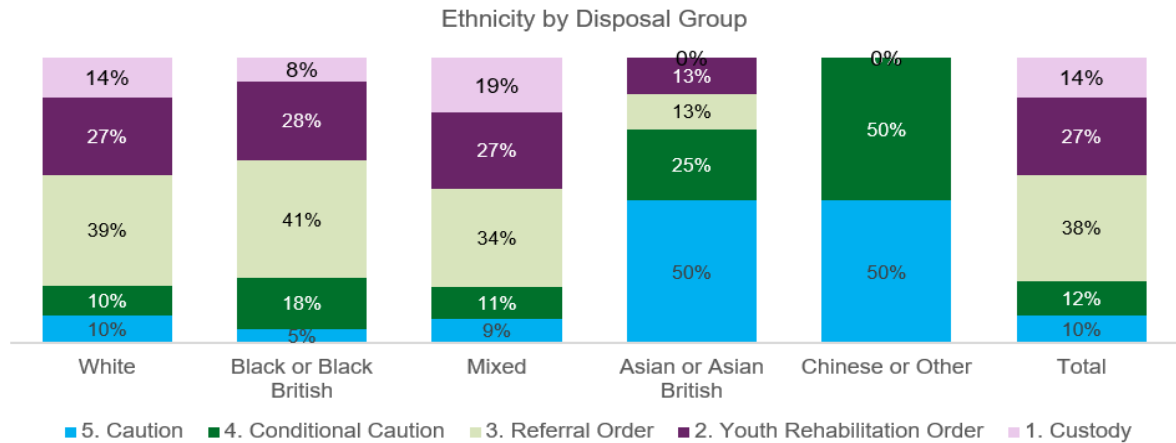
Disproportionality (overrepresentation) within the youth justice system is a national and local issue. We have developed our ability to monitor and analyse the ethnicity of young people subject to disposals and we can see that, when compared to local demographics, young people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds are overrepresented.

Through funding from the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the partnership has worked with an organisation to consult with our families, staff and partners. The YJS has completed training as a team and is developing systems and processes to enable the monitoring and checking of disproportionality in work with our young people.

Work has also commenced with West Midlands Police to consider how to ensure young people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds have the same opportunities to receive out of court disposals as other young people.

The Youth Justice Service has an analysis of the ethnic disproportionality of young people in the youth justice system between 1/4/2018 and 31/3/2020.

Ethnicity by Population and Number of Offenders				
Ethnicity	Percentage 10-17 Population	Percentage of Offenders	Difference	Number of offences / offender
White	72% (20,253)	66% (216)	-6%	3.20
Mixed	5% (1,396)	18% (39)	13%	3.32
Black or Black British	3% (723)	11% (24)	8%	2.63
Asian or Asian British	19% (5,473)	4% (8)	-15%	1.50
Chinese or Other	1% (423)	1% (3)	0%	1.33



*Only 2 young people within the 2 year period had a recorded ethnicity of 'Chinese or other'

There is disproportionality in the disposals received by young people with mixed ethnicity with 46% of offenders in this ethnic group receiving one of the two most severe disposals compared with 41% of white offenders and 36% of black or black British offenders.

The disproportionality is high when compared with the fact that young people with mixed ethnicity are only slightly more likely to be convicted of violent crime (67% compared with 63% for white young people) and that the offences committed by white youths are more likely to be in a higher category of severity. Overwhelmingly, disproportionality is affecting boys.



5 Please provide details of all engagement and consultation undertaken for this proposal. (Please use a separate box for each engagement/consultation).

Walsall YJS continue to believe that if young people are involved in decisions that affect their lives, they are more likely to accept and support them, even if they are hard, and will take ownership of the changes required to avoid getting into trouble and to stay safe. We think that the voice of our young people needs to be at the forefront in tackling all issues affecting or affected by offending behaviour and in particular violence and knife crime. The YJS seeks the views of our young people, and parents, in every aspect of our work to help us make decisions, focus our interventions and develop a training plan for staff.

To inform the Strategic Plan, consultation has occurred with young people in the justice system, parents, with the YJS practitioners and also with the YJS Performance and Partnership Board members.

Consultation Activity

Type of engagement/consultation	Consultation with YJS Performance and Partnership Board members	Date	March 2021
Who attended/participated?	Strategic Leaders from across the partnership including National Probation Service, West Midlands Police, Public Health, Community Safety, Children's Services.		
Protected characteristics of participants	-		
Feedback YJS Board members have been consulted in preparation for submission of the strategic plan to the national Youth Justice Board as per the conditions of the effective practice grant. The priorities within the Strategic Plan align with the partnerships', including reducing youth violence (Safer Walsall Partnership and WMP) and reducing disproportionality (National Probation Service).			

Type of engagement/consultation	Consultation with YJS staff group	Date	March 2021
Who attended/participated?	YJS practitioners and specialists		
Protected characteristics of participants	Current YJS establishment: 4 x Male 15 x Female 11 x white 3 x Asian 4 x black 1 x dual heritage		
Feedback YJS practitioners were consulted on the Services strategic priorities for 2021-22 through a full Service meeting. The priorities identified within the Strategic Plan have been informed by the consultation.			

Type of engagement/consultation	Young people safer lives surveys	Date	February 2021
Who attended/participated?	Young people open to the Youth Justice Service on either a Police Disposal or Court Order		
Protected characteristics of participants	White (English) x 8 Asian (Pakistani) x 3 Black (Caribbean) x 3 Dual Heritage x 1 Male x 13 Female x 2		
Feedback 40% of the young people had seen violence within their school or college on a monthly basis, with 2 of those that were surveyed stating that this occurred each day. 40% had seen violence within the local neighbourhood during the past year.			

53% knew someone who had previously been the victim of serious violence with 47% knowing someone who needed hospital treatment. A small number of young people stated that they know 10 of more young people who had been the victim of violence. 27% of the young people knew at least one person who carried a knife.

Type of engagement/consultation	Walsall's Youth Voice-workshop	Date	February 2020
Who attended/participated?	Young people open to the Youth Justice Service on either a Police Disposal or Court Order		
Protected characteristics of participants	24 young people attended the event. 16 young people from BAME background.		
Feedback			
<p>In half term, our young people, as part of our wider partnership knife crime workshop, hosted and led on a recorded debate. The following is their summary of points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The lack of trust with the police and a poor relationship with communities. This was countered by those that felt the police were in a tricky position and the police do rescue a lot of people.</i> • <i>Audiences felt schools could do more with enrichment and they valued the need for more community investment in youth spaces for activities to get involved in.</i> • <i>Audience members talked about the lure of money and the temptations of social media/music drawing certain young people into certain behaviours.</i> • <i>'Clout chasing' - the expression used for those trying to get a reputation through anti-social behaviours - was identified as something which fuels young people being drawn into certain behaviours</i> • <i>We want better quality role models & mentors. Young people identified the need for more proven mentors who have actually achieved things.</i> 			

6 Concise overview of all evidence, engagement and consultation

Her Majesties Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) undertook an inspection of youth offending in Walsall in 2019 and made the recommendation that the Youth Justice partnership needs to do more to understand the issue and improve outcomes for young people from BAME backgrounds.

A significant amount of activity has occurred over the past 12 months to improve the YJS' understanding of the issue locally, completing an extensive needs analysis and also working closely with an organisation to facilitate consultation and to train the staff in engaging with BAME young people and unconscious bias.

Evidence from our disproportionality analysis tells us that between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2020, there were disproportionately more young people from black or black British and mixed ethnicity groups in the young offenders' cohort, compared to the number of young people from these groups in the 10-17 population.

Young people from black or black British and mixed ethnicity groups committed a disproportionately high percentage of drugs offences, breach offences and violent crime and young people with a mixed ethnicity background are more likely to be criminalised at a younger age.

Young people with mixed ethnicity were given a disproportionately high percentage of

the most severe disposals and the amount of severe disposals do not appear to correspond with a higher number of severe offences committed by these young people. The severity of these types of offence does account for the severity of the disposals in each case. In fact, young people with a mixed ethnicity background are disproportionately more likely to receive custody disposals for less severe violent crimes.

The priorities within the strategic plan do not adversely impact certain groups and conversely aim to improve outcomes for young people from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups within or on the periphery of the criminal justice system. Work will continue into 2021-22 to improve the Service's data monitoring, to train staff in better engagement of different communities and unconscious bias and to improve policies to check and monitor issues of discrimination.

7 How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group? The effect may be positive, negative, neutral or not known. Give reasons and if action is needed.

Characteristic	Affect	Reason	Action needed Yes / No
Age	Positive	The strategic plan aims to improve outcomes for young people aged 10-17, and recognises the majority of young people from BAME backgrounds enter the system at ages 15-17.	No
Disability	Neutral	No foreseen impact	No
Gender reassignment	Neutral	No foreseen impact	No
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	No foreseen impact	No
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	No foreseen impact	No
Race	Positive	The Strategic Plan is setting a priority to reduce the overrepresentation of BAME young people in the youth justice system	No
Religion or belief	Neutral	No foreseen impact	No
Sex	Positive	The strategic plan recognises that the majority of young people in the youth justice system are male and therefore the partnership's priorities aim to improve outcomes for this group.	No
Sexual orientation	Neutral	No foreseen impact	No
Other (give detail)	-		

	Further information			
8	Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative effect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details.			(Delete one) No
9	Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation feedback suggest you take?			
A	No major change required			
B	<u>Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality</u>			
C	Continue despite possible adverse impact			
D	Stop and rethink your proposal			

Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	Action	Responsibility	Outcome Date	Outcome
October 2021 (Date TBC)	Establish Out of Court Disposal oversight and scrutiny groups with partners.	Phil Rutherford		Proposed outcomes- Ensuring fairness of criminal justice disposal decision making and impact on BAME monitored & responded to.
October 2021	Establish a Pre-Sentence Report disproportionality working group	Phil Rutherford		Ensuring fairness of decision making, use of unconscious bias and sentencing congruence for BAME young people
October	Review of the Compliance and Engagement policy	Phil Rutherford		Ensuring that enforcement of non-compliance is fair and issues of disproportionality are taken into consideration
May 2021	Develop literature for young people and parents regarding criminal justice processes	Phil Rutherford		Ensure messages are clear and young people fully understand the impact of criminal justice processes.
April 2022 (Date TBC)	Progress against the actions above.	Phil Rutherford		

The Youth Justice Service Performance and Partnership Board will monitor progress against the priorities within the Strategic Plan. The Board meets on a quarterly basis, will receive performance reports, including audit findings and data analysis, and will review updates for the plan. Outcomes from this Strategic Plan will inform our priorities going in 2022 and onwards.

Update to EqIA

Date	Detail

Contact us

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Inside Walsall: http://int.walsall.gov.uk/Service_information/Equality_and_diversity