

Joint Report from the Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing and Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equality

Birmingham Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2018/19

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The attached strategy is the Local Authority's response to its statutory duty under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to consult with partner agencies to prepare and implement an annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan, setting out how Youth Justice Services are to be provided and funded and how the youth offending team or teams established by them are to be composed and funded, how they are to operate, and what functions they are to carry out, outlining the contributions of the City Council and its partners towards the principal aim for the youth justice system: 'the prevention of offending by children and young people'. The Youth Justice Service is provided on behalf of the Council by Birmingham Children's Trust.
- 1.2 The Birmingham Youth Justice Strategic Plan reviews the performance of the Service and its partners in 2017/18 in relation to the three national indicators: first time entrants into the criminal justice system; reducing reoffending and reducing the use of custody. The Service's Management Board also monitors the performance of other local indicators identified as significant contributors to achieving broader outcomes, including a young offenders' engagement in suitable full-time Education, Training and Employment (ETE). The plan identifies the barriers for these cohorts highlighting progress made and sets out priorities and on-going actions across partner agencies to address performance over the next 12 months.

2. Background and Key Issues

- 2.1 In the period 01/04/2017 to 31/03/2018, the Service worked with 968 young people on court ordered and preventative programmes. 549 (56.7%) of these were existing clients. This compares with 1138 young people, of whom 547 (48.1%) were existing clients, the previous year: a decrease of 14.9% from 2016/17.
- 2.2 Though the overall number of young people worked with by the Service has fallen, a significant number continue to present with complex needs and high risk behaviours and the Service has increased its intensive interventions from 17.2% in 2016/17 to 20% in 2017/18. In addition, the Service worked with approximately 1039 parents and siblings under its 'Think Family' responsibilities.
- 2.3 The first time entrant rate fell between April 2017 and March 2018 to 453 young people per 100,000 (541 young people), compared with 545 per 100,000 in 2016. This is an improvement of 16.8%, however Birmingham is performing less well compared to the national average and the majority of other Core Cities.
- 2.4 Birmingham has sustained one of the lowest re-offending rates of all core cities and is below the national average. Birmingham's reoffending cohort comprised of 1110 young offenders, the largest across the core cities, with 36.1% re-offending, which was one of the lowest percentages of reoffenders of all core cities and compared with 41.9% nationally.
- 2.5 Challenges remain in relation to the use of custody. Birmingham has a higher rate of custodial sentences than the national average, although within the range of other Core Cities. The number of custodial sentences in Birmingham decreased in the 2017/18 period to

94. This compares to 96 custodial sentences in 2016/17 and has been reducing year on year from the 253 young people sentenced in 2007/08.

- 2.6 The Service continues to monitor education outcomes as a local indicator in recognition of the importance of building and sustaining resilience and protective factors. School aged young people engaged in full time education at the end of their order has increased from 82.4% during 2016/17 to 84.4% in 2017/18. Post school aged engagement into full time training or employment has reduced from 73.03% to 69.2% however these young people continue to receive support from the Youth Promise Plus programme.
- 2.7 Black or Black British young people remain over-represented in the Criminal Justice System in relation to the general 10 - 17 population. The proportion of offenders from Black or Black British background increased slightly from 21.8% in 2016/17 to 23.7% in 2017/18. The Partnership continues to take action to reduce this over-representation including contributing to preventative work to reduce school exclusions and gang affiliation, which is significant to this agenda.
- 2.8 Children in Care (CIC) are an especially vulnerable group and their prevalence in the youth justice system is regularly monitored and reported upon. In 2016/17, 263 young people were currently or had previously been looked after at the point of receiving a substantive outcome.
- 2.9 The Youth Offending Service partnership's overall delegated funding for 2018/19 is £7,895,423, of which the City Council's contribution (£3,963,838) for staffing is funded from the Birmingham Children's Trust (BCT) approved budget. There are funding pressures in this area that the Children's Trust has to manage within its overall financial envelope

3. Strategy Approach and Themes

- 3.1 The Plan is consistent with the Early Help Strategy and Safeguarding Improvement Plan for Birmingham Children's Trust and contributes to the Council Business Plan, which includes working together to make people safe, especially the most vulnerable; improving health and wellbeing and ensuring that young people are in employment, training or education. It focuses on how partners in Birmingham will ensure that services for children and young people in the City are delivered in a manner which reduces youth crime and re-offending, protects the public from harm, promotes safeguarding, takes into account the views of victims and utilises restorative justice where appropriate.

Motion

That Council adopts the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2018/19, taking into account the financial implications and the priority actions identified.