

JOINT REPORT FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S WELLBEING AND CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND EQUALITIES**BIRMINGHAM YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2019/22****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 outlines current performance benchmarked against comparators, the latest evidence on what works and the priorities for 2019 -2022 (which will be refreshed and updated annually). The Plan has been informed by self-assessment surveys by young people.
- 1.3 The Plan reviews the performance of the Service and its partners in 2018/19 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 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 01/04/2018 to 31/03/2019, the Service worked with 778 young people on court ordered programmes and those subject to Youth Conditional Cautions. This compares with 968 young people in the previous year. Though the overall number has fallen, there has been a rise in the proportion presenting with complex needs and high-risk behaviours requiring enhanced and intensive interventions. Additionally, the Service has provided services for 68 young people on Court Orders who are the responsibility of other local authorities but are placed in Birmingham under the YJB's 'Caretaking' responsibilities.
- 2.2 The Service triaged 299 Community Resolutions during the year, directly working with 44 young people who were deemed as requiring interventions. The Service also worked with a total of 138 young people on anti-social behaviour disposals, and specialist programmes such as: harmful sexual

behaviour (7-17 years) and funded preventative programmes. The Service also has a duty under the Victims Charter to support victims of crime and directly supported 118 victims. During 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019 victim satisfaction rates reported were 95.4%.

- 2.3 The Youth Offending Service is also required to work with a wider client group, including adults, delivering whole-family interventions under the Think Family Programme. The Service receives attachment fees to extend its work and has delivered interventions to 1310 families under Phase Two. So far, 526 whole family outcomes that have been significant and sustained have been achieved with targets to achieve 786 by March 2020.
- 2.4 The first-time entrant rate fell between January 2018 and March 2019 to 378 young people per 100,000 compared with 473 per 100,000 in 2017. Whilst this is an improvement of 16.5%, Birmingham is performing less well compared to the national average and mid-range in relation to our Core City comparators. The majority of the 378 young people who were first time entrants were aged 15-17, with 47% aged 16 or older. 15% of first time entrants were female. The most prevalent offences amongst first time entrants were Violence against the Person (including Knife Crime), Motoring offences and Drugs.
- 2.5 Birmingham has sustained one of the lowest re-offending rates of all core cities and is below the national average. Within this cohort were 1057 young offenders, which was one of the lowest percentages of re-offenders of all Core Cities and compared with 40.1% nationally. Birmingham's frequency rate per 100,000 is below the national average at 1.11 compared with the national rate of 1.60 and has the best performing rate of Core Cities.
- 2.6 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 increased in the 2018/19 period to 99. This compared to 94 custodial sentences in 2017/18 and has reduced from the 253 young people sentenced in 2007/08.
- 2.7 The Service continues to monitor education outcomes as a local indicator in recognition of the importance of building and sustaining resilience and protective factors. Of the 587 young people with programmes ending in 2018/19, 426 (72.57%) were in full time full time education or employment at the time their programme finished. The Birmingham Children's Trust and Birmingham City Council Education Managers have established triage and panel arrangements for all those young people not in suitable or full time education and this will support these young people post Order.
- 2.8 Within the Youth Offending Service all young people are screened for issues of safety and well-being. Between 01/04/2018 and 31/03/2019, 778 young people were assessed for safety and well-being compared with 969 young people in the previous year. 400 (51.4%) young people were identified as having medium or high vulnerabilities, requiring an increased response to mitigate these, compared with 38.8% in the previous year. The proportion of those assessed with 'High' or 'Very High' vulnerabilities increased to 16.0% in 2018/19 compared with 10.7% in 2017/18. Responses included referrals to Children's Safeguarding Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health,

intensive family and mentoring interventions and substance misuse and alcohol treatment services.

- 2.9 The management of young offenders subject to court orders is a key responsibility of the Youth Offending Service. Those young people assessed as posing a higher risk to the public from re-offending or causing harm to others are subject to more intensive multi-agency arrangements including increased offender management and enhanced interventions, to address concerns. Compared with 2017/18, 2018/19 saw an increase in the proportion of the Service's caseload presenting other than a 'Low' risk to others from 344 (35.5%) in 2017/18 to 355 (45.6%) in 2018/19.
- 2.10 Nationally and locally there have been rises in serious violence including knife crime. In Birmingham there has been a 19% increase in knife crime across the City when comparing police figures for 2017/18 and 2018/19. The levels of youth violence across Birmingham have increased by 10% when comparing the figures for 2017/18 and 2018/19. A key Community Safety Partnership priority is to continue to reduce violence across communities and to tackle exploitation 'county lines', urban street gangs and child sexual exploitation. This Plan outlines current activity and plans across the partnership to reduce the impact on victims and communities.
- 2.11 The YOS delivers interventions that tackle knife carrying among young people who offend as part of a court order who are convicted of any offence where a knife, or the threat of a knife, is a feature. In 2018/19, 314 young people went through this Knife Possession Programme (up from 237 young people in 2017/18) showing improved identification of young people not charged with knife offences who nevertheless were in possession at the time ('knife enabled' offences). Of the 237 going through the programme in 2017/18, 3 young people were subsequently re-convicted of offences involving knives within the following 12 months. The Service is currently tracking the 314 young people and will report on performance at the YOS Management Board.
- 2.12 The Plan identifies that Criminal Exploitation, including "County Lines" and gang affiliation are complex and developing areas of youth justice, social work and family support practice. Young people at risk of or being criminally exploited or those affiliated to gangs are influenced by their peer group and adults external to the family network and broader partnership work is required that addresses these extra-familial contexts that are often outside the control of their families. The Plan outlines the partnership work across the statutory, voluntary and community sector to ensure early identification of all young people exploited to safeguard and support them to make positive life choices and the partnership work to disrupt exploitation. Plans include establishing new Contextual Safeguarding arrangements led by the Children's Trust.
- 2.13 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 fell from 23.1% in 2017/18 to 21.6% in 2018/19 with a reduction in the number of young people with proven offences from the previous year. 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.

- 2.14 Children in Care (CIC) are an especially vulnerable group and their prevalence in the youth justice system is regularly monitored and reported upon. In 2018/19, 48 (5.0%) of the 954 children aged 10 or older who had been looked after for more than 12 months had a conviction or were made subject to a youth caution during the period 1st April 2017 - 31st March 2018, a small increase from 42 (4.6%) in 2016/17. This compares with the national average of 4.1%. Performance for 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019 is expected October/November 2019.
- 2.15 Young people with a history of being looked after were more likely to be sentenced to custody, with custodial sentences comprising 11.5% (14 young people) compared with 9.5% of all sentences. Despite the high proportion being sentenced to custody, young people with a history of being looked after only constituted 3.4% of First Time Entrants during the period. However, young people with a history of being looked after were less likely to be in full time ETE at the end of their order (54.9%) than those who had never been looked after (75.8%). Of the young people remanded to the secure estate during the period, 12 (15.2%) were looked after at the time of remand. These young people accounted for 18.0% (995) of the 5513 remand bed nights during the period.
- 2.16 The Youth Offending Service partnership's overall delegated funding for 2019/20 is £7,729,055. The Youth Justice Board 2019/20 grant allocation has now been confirmed with a cut of 0.94% (£18,000) compared to the previous year. The Service continues to experience significant budget pressure in relation to the remand budget. The total funding from the Youth Justice Board and Birmingham Children's Trust for remands in 2019/20 is £1,035,311. The total cost of remands for 2018/19 was £1,635,768.

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 2019/22, taking into account the financial implications and the priority actions identified.