

Council

Thursday 17th October 2024

Report Title	Northamptonshire Youth Justice Plan 2024/25
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Executive Member	Cllr Scott Edwards, Executive Member for Children, Families, Education & Skills

Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	
Which Corporate Plan priority does the report most closely align with? Our priorities for the future North Northamptonshire Council (northnorthants.gov.uk)	Brighter, Better Futures

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan 2024/25.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 there is a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. The Youth Justice Board provides guidance about what must be included in the plan and

recommends a structure for the plan. The Youth Justice Plan for the Northamptonshire Youth Justice Service 2024/25 is attached at Appendix A.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Youth Offending Teams are statutory partnerships, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people. Local authorities are responsible for establishing a Youth Offending Team. Police, the Probation Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.
- 2.2. This current plan covers performance for the period 2023/24 and provides service budgets, operational and strategic developments within the service and partnership, service structure and the Service Improvement Plan for 2024 – 2025.
- 2.3. The Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. After submission to the Youth Justice Board, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP - lead for Youth Offending Service inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons library.

3. Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that the Council:

- a) Approve the contents of the Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan 2024/25;
- b) Note Northamptonshire's Youth Offending Service priorities for 2023/24 as set out in the plan;

3.2. *Reasons for Recommendations:*

- To accord with the Councils Constitution which sets out that the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Policy Framework that is decided by full Council.
- To provide strategic direction to the Youth Offending Service that is delivered by Northamptonshire Children's Trust.

3.3. *Alternative Options Considered:*

- To take no action – The Youth Justice Plan is a statutory requirement, failure to produce and submit a Youth Justice Plan would result in non-compliance with a statutory requirement. Further to this the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework and approval by the Council is therefore required. For the reasons set out this option was discounted.

4. **Report Background**

- 4.1. The Youth Offending Service is a statutory multi agency service, which has a responsibility to prevent offending and reoffending by those aged under 18 years who are resident in Northamptonshire. Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service is well respected nationally as an innovative service achieving good outcomes for children and young people.
- 4.2. There is a statutory requirement to produce and submit to the Youth Justice Board a Youth Justice Plan as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 section 40. The plan should set out how youth justice services are to be provided and funded, how the Youth Offending Service will be composed and funded, how it will operate and what functions it will carry out. The Plan must be submitted for approval to the Youth Justice Board and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. The submission of the plan is also a condition for receipt by the service of the second instalment of the Youth Justice Board Good Practice Grant.
- 4.3. The areas of work for the Youth Offending Service are laid out in legislation, government policy and national guidance. The detail of local operational priorities and delivery are developed in agreement and with reference to key local strategic boards including Community Safety Executive; Children Trust Board; Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Northamptonshire's North and East Criminal Justice Board.

5. **Issues and Choices**

- 5.1. Statute requires the production of an annual Youth Justice Plan, the Youth Justice Board also welcomes plans that cover more than one year. Plans must cover both strategic and operational elements. The wider strategic picture should be captured, whilst also outlining the key business activities that will be undertaken by services to achieve wider strategic aims.
- 5.2. The Youth Justice Plan should set out the direction and strategy of youth justice services, describing how quality services will be provided to ensure positive outcomes for children and improvements in performance indicators, in particular:
- reducing first time entrants to the youth justice system
 - reducing the use of custody

- reducing reoffending rates
- locally agreed performance indicators that evidence positive outcomes for children

5.3. The Youth Justice Plan must describe how leadership and governance is set up to monitor the quality and effectiveness of youth justice services across your area.

5.4. The Northamptonshire Youth Justice Plan has identified the following priorities:

- Strategic Priority 1 – Reduce First Time Entrants into the criminal justice system.
- Strategic Priority 2- Recognising and responding to child exploitation and serious youth violence.
- Strategic Priority 3 – Tackling disproportionality in the criminal justice system.

5.5. Due to the restrictions of the Youth Justice Board prescriptive approach, the Youth Offending Service is prevented from innovating and ensuring the document is child friendly and accessible to all. The Youth Justice Board has a long list of key headings and directives the Youth Offending Service must follow which as a result restricts some of the community.

6. Next Steps

6.1. The Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. After submission to the Youth Justice Board, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP - lead for Youth Offending Service inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons Library.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources and Financial

7.1.1. The budget structure of the Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service is complex in nature as there are a number of funding streams with the 2024/25 contributions being provisional. The 2024/25 indicative grant award for Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service is £744,936 which is based on the 2023/24 allocation of £737,177 and a 1.05% uplift amounting to £7,759. The uplift of % for the next financial year is still subject to confirmation by the Youth Justice Board (Ministry of Justice).

7.1.2. Alongside the Youth Offending Service grant, Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service will also benefit from statutory partner contributions, from both North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council

(£1,712,452), Police and Crime Commissioner (£200,900), Probation (£31,690), Public Health (£65,110) and other (£121,059).

- 7.1.3. The Youth Justice Board require submission of the Youth Justice Plan which must be agreed by the Management Board and signed-off by the Chair prior to receiving the grant.
- 7.1.4. The total budgeted funding from the Youth Justice Board Youth Justice and partnership contributions is £2,702,179 This funding will support children across Northamptonshire, in helping them stay away from crime.
- 7.1.5. In respect of the Local Authority contribution, these have been split in accordance with the disaggregation principles applied as part of the overall contract sum. The split is 44.16% for North Northamptonshire Council and 55.84% for West Northamptonshire Council. 100% of grants are paid to North Northamptonshire Council and passported to Northamptonshire Childrens Trust in full.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth offending partnership's responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out:
- How youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded; and
 - How the youth offending team or equivalent service will be funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.
- 7.2.2. The Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework, its approval is therefore the responsibility of both Full Councils.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1 North Northamptonshire Council has identified priorities will be achieved by supporting the Northamptonshire Childrens Trust to provide higher standards of support.
- 7.3.2 North Northamptonshire Council has identified 'Brighter, Better Futures,' 'Active, Fulfilled Lives' and 'Safe and Thriving Places' as key priorities in its Corporate Plan recognising that children, young people and their families may need help at different stages in their lives. The Youth Justice Plan supports these Council priorities.

7.4. Risk

- 7.4.1. There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.5. Consultation

- 7.5.1. In accordance with statutory requirements, the plan was placed before Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service Management Board on which statutory partners sit (Police, Probation, Health) and was approved in June 2024.
- 7.5.2. The Youth Offending Service intends to redraft the plan into a child friendly version once the plan has been agreed. The plan at present is not child friendly due to the prescriptive nature of the Youth Justice Board requirements, Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service are committed that young people have a full understanding of the Youth Offending Service plans for 2024. The Northamptonshire Children's Trust Youth Engagement Team have been identified to contribute to this.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

- 7.6.1. This report has not been considered by North Northants Council's Executive Advisory Panel for Future Communities.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

- 7.7.1 This report has not been considered by the overview and scrutiny committees.

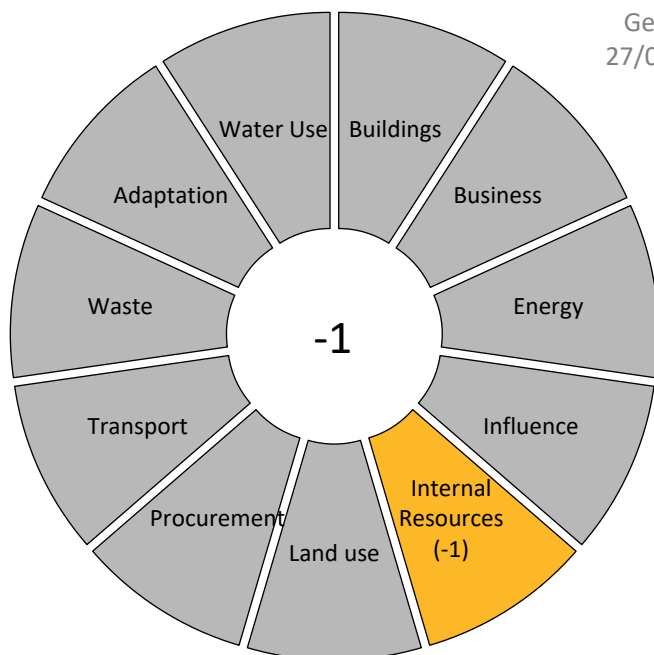
7.8. Equality Implications

- 7.8.1. There are no specific equality implications from this report.

7.9. Climate Impact

- 7.9.1 There is no specific climate impact arising from this report, however as North Northamptonshire Council is committed to considering impact on the environment which is managed via the individual strategic lead partnership organisation via organisational policy and commitments.
- 7.9.2 North Northamptonshire Council and Northamptonshire Childrens Trust are aware there are emissions associated with publishing web content and will seek to minimise the impact where possible.

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North Northamptonshire Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, 5 yrs & 3 mos away.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1. There is no specific community impact arising from this report.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1. A Youth Offending Service is a 'statutory partnership' - the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 required Local Authorities to set up multi-agency partnerships to reduce re-offending by children and young people. The age range in the Youth Justice System is 10 to 18. Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service is funded by central government (Ministry of Justice/Youth Justice Board), from the Northamptonshire Children's Trust and from partner agencies like the Police, Probation, the NHS and the Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT).

7.11.2. Some of the paid staff are directly employed (by the Northamptonshire Children's Trust) to work in Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service, others are seconded by their own agency to work within the service. There are: social workers; youth workers; restorative justice workers; education workers; community psychiatric nurses; probation officers; police officers; accommodation workers and substance misuse workers. Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service also recruits, trains and supports a group of adult volunteers from a range of different backgrounds. Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service works directly with children and young people who have committed offences; their parents/carers and the victims of their offences. Work is undertaken at all points of the formal system: from Out-of-Court outcomes through to Court Orders, both in the community and with young people in custody.

8. Background Papers

8.1. [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)