
YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE – UPDATE

Purpose of the Report

1. Following the publication of the HMIP Inspection report of the Youth Justice Service in 2020, the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee agreed that it would prioritise the Youth Justice Service as a topic for scrutiny and has continued to monitor improvements since this time.
2. **Appendix A** attached to this report provides Members with an update on progress in relation to the Youth Justice Service.

Background

3. The Cardiff Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a statutory partnership set up under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work with 10 to 18-year-olds and their families, to prevent anti-social behaviour, offending and re-offending. YJS workers provide intervention and support to young people sentenced to a community penalty or custody or those dealt with by an out-of-court disposal, as well as prevention and diversion work to try to steer young people away from entering the youth criminal justice system. They also offer support to victims of youth crime and anti-social behaviour.
4. The inspection, in January 2020 was led by HMI Probation and supported by inspectors from Care Inspectorate Wales, Estyn, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, and HMI Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

5. At that time, Cardiff Youth Offending Service was rated as 'Inadequate' across all areas of work: leadership and staffing; working with partners such as health, education and police; and providing services to children and young people who have offended and to their victims. The inspection found improvement was required across all areas. The report made 14 recommendations. A subsequent Strategy and Action Plan "All Our Futures" was agreed and implemented.

6. A further inspection was undertaken in March 2022 and the report was published on 2 August 2022. HMIP concluded that...

Overall, Cardiff YJS was rated as 'Requires improvement'. We also inspected the quality of resettlement policy and provision, which was separately rated as 'Good'.

HMIP made 7 recommendations in the August 2022 report.

7. In October 2022, this Scrutiny Committee received a copy of the "Building Safer Futures Together", the Youth Justice Services Strategy for 2022-2024. This built on the "All Our Futures" Strategy and set out key data and improvements to date; as well as setting out 3 key commitments for the lifetime of this Plan. These commitments are:
 - Working With Children, Families and Partners
 - System Analysis and Change
 - Better Choices; Safer Places

A link to the Strategy document can be found here, for Members reference:

[Youth justice services strategy 2022 to 2024 \(cardiff.gov.uk\)](https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/youth-justice-services-strategy-2022-to-2024)

Issues

8. Since the Inspection in 2020, this Scrutiny Committee has monitored progress and improvements to the YJS, via bi-monthly updates. At its work programming forum on the 19th July 2022, this Committee agreed that, given the progress and improvements made within the YJS and the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales's decision to 'de-escalate' the Service from Stage 3 to Stage 1, the Committee would now receive YJS Updates on a quarterly basis. In June 2023, the Committee agreed to a further commitment of quarterly updates.
9. Attached at **Appendix A** is an update on the Youth Justice Service provided by the Service Area. Some of Appendix A's content refers to requests made by this Scrutiny Committee following its last update in June 2023. An extract from the Chair's letter is attached at **Appendix B** for reference.

Previous Scrutiny

10. At its meeting on the 30 July 2020, CYPSC considered the YJS Inspection Report and the Council's response to it¹. It was agreed that the Committee would monitor developments in relation to
 - Youth Justice Board Governance and Progress
 - Performance Measures
 - Engagement and consultation with Young People and their Families/Carers
 - Improved/Joined working internally
 - Improved/Joined up working across the Partnership
11. As stated in Paragraph 1 of this report, CYPSC Members agreed that YJS be a priority topic for the Committee's work for the foreseeable future. Members have received updates across Children's Services (including YJS) at the following CYPSC meetings:

¹ [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Thursday, 30th July, 2020, 4.30 pm : City of Cardiff Council \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

- 30 July 2020 – full briefing to Committee
- 15 September 2020 – during the consideration of the Local Authority Social Services Annual report 2019/2020
- 12 October 2020 – during the Children’s Services Update
- 15th March 2021 – full briefing to Committee
- 11 May 2021 – full briefing to Committee; meeting with young people in the YJS
- 13 July 2021 - full briefing to Committee
- 13 October 2021 – full briefing to Committee
- 9 December 2021 – full briefing to Committee
- 1 March 2022 – full briefing to Committee
- 19 October 2022 – full briefing to Committee
- 20 March 2023 – full briefing to Committee
- 13 June 2023 - full briefing to Committee

12. In addition to the issues highlighted in Paragraph 10, during these briefings, Members have made comments and requested evidence in relation to the following:

- Post 16 opportunities/NEETs/Young Homeless (September and October 2020)
- Recruitment and retention of staff (September 2020; May 2021; October 2021)
- Demand on Services (October 2020; July 2021; October 2021)
- Staff Health & Wellbeing (October 2020; October 2021)
- Role of the Judiciary (October 2020)
- Quality Assurance (March 2021; October 2022)
- HMIP Inspection (March 2021; March 2022; October 2022)
- Early Help (March 2021)
- Impact of Strategic Partners (March 2021; December 2021)
- The Voice of young people (March 2021)
- Meeting young people (May 2021)
- Engagement and Evidence Gathering (May 2021; July 2021)

- Partnerships and Joined-Up Working (May 2021; July 2021; December 2021; March 2022; October 2022; March 2023)
- Funding and Resources (May 2021)
- Substance Misuse (July 2021)
- Young People Vulnerable to Criminal Exploitation (July 2021; December 2021; March 2022; March 2023)
- Impact Evidence (October 2021)
- SAFE Model (October 2021; March 2022)
- Prevention and Early Intervention (December 2021; October 2022; March 2023)
- Resettlement Tracker (December 2021)
- First-time entrants into the system (March 2022)
- Diversity and proportionality of those in the YJS (March 2022)
- Reoffending rates (March 2022; March 2023)
- Turnaround Grant (March 2023)

Way Forward

13. Members will be able to agree any comments, concerns or recommendations that they wish to pass on to the Cabinet Member, Director of Children's Services and Operational Manager, YJS arising from the update in **Appendix A**.

Legal Implications

14. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be

undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

15. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

That Committee considers this report and its Appendices and agrees any recommendations, comments or advice it wishes to offer to the Cabinet Member, Independent Chair of the Youth Justice Board; Director of Children's Services and Operational Manager, Youth Justice Service.

Leanne Weston

Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer

8 November 2023