

Divisions Affected - All

EDUCATION & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26th September 2025

Youth Justice Annual Plan 2025-26

Report by Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to** note and provide any comments and recommendations on Oxfordshire's Annual Youth Justice Plan 2025-26 and consider partnership responses to the action plan for the year ahead.

Executive Summary

2. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the minimum statutory requirements for Youth Justice Services. The statutory aim of the Youth Justice system is to prevent children from offending. Section 39 of the Crime & Disorder Act requires the cooperation of named statutory partners and places a duty on them to cooperate to secure and deliver youth justice services appropriate to the area. These partners are:
 - The Local Authority (inclusive of Children's Social Care & Education)
 - The Police
 - The Probation Service
 - Health
3. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act sets out the youth justice partnership's statutory responsibility to produce a youth justice plan. The local Youth Justice Partnership Management Board governs and owns the process of producing this plan to collectively shape the direction of youth justice delivery so that it best meets the needs of the locality, children, families, victims and communities.
4. The youth justice plan structure is proscribed by the Youth Justice Board statutory guidance and must outline progress against the previous year's priorities, performance data, a plan for the forthcoming year and how the partnership is meeting its statutory responsibilities against the Youth Justice National Standards for Children and the national Key Performance Indicators.

The core priorities for Oxfordshire's youth justice service for 2025-26 are:

- Working in partnership to develop the prevention & diversion offer in Oxfordshire, which will support a reduction in First Time Entrants.
- Working in partnership to improve outcomes for children with SEND in the youth justice system in Oxfordshire.
- Working in partnership to improve support for arrested children.
- Working in partnership to address over-representation and disproportionality for justice-involved children in Oxfordshire.
- Working in partnership to effectively support victims of youth crime in Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire's Youth Justice Annual Plan 2025-26

5. Oxfordshire's Youth Justice Plan 2024-25 was agreed at Oxfordshire's Youth Justice Management Partnership Management Board and approved by its previous Chair. It covers both strategic and operational delivery arrangements and the agreed key strategic priorities for 2025-26. The plan was submitted to the Youth Justice Board for the deadline on 31st June 2025.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

6. Oxfordshire's Youth Justice plan aligns with delivery of the council's corporate strategy priorities to:
 - Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire
 - Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential
 - Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents

Financial Implications

7. The production of Oxfordshire's Youth Justice Annual Plan is a statutory requirement of the Youth Justice Board's grant terms and conditions. The Youth Justice Board grant provision is outlined in Section 41 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Comments checked by:

Lewis Gosling, Assistant Finance Business Partner,
Lewis.gosling@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

8. Section 40(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 ("the Act") provides that: (1) It shall be the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the relevant persons and bodies, to formulate and implement for each year a plan (a "youth justice plan") setting out: (a) how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded; and (b) how the youth offending team or teams established by them (whether alone or jointly with one or more other local authorities) are to be composed and funded, how they are to operate, and what functions they are to carry out.

In accordance with Regulation 4(1) and Schedule 3 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 the Plan is to be referred to Full Council for ultimate consideration and adoption.

There are no direct potential legal implications contained within this report.

Comments checked by:

Craig Cochrane, Head of Law and Legal Business Partner,
craig.cochrane@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

9. There are no direct HR implications contained within this report.

Comments checked by:

Michelle Higgs, Strategic People Partner Children's and Education,
michelle.higgs@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Equality & Inclusion Implications

10. Oxfordshire's Youth Justice partnership is committed to addressing disproportionality and overrepresentation of minoritized groups of children in the justice system in Oxfordshire. We are duty bound to consider and be responsive to the protected characteristics of all children receiving Youth Justice services in Oxfordshire.

Sustainability Implications

11. There is no current sustainability implications associated with either the contents or recommendations of this report.

Risk Management

12. Oxfordshire's Youth Justice Partnership Management Board reviews its Risk Register on a quarterly basis as set out in the Annual Plan on pages 23-25.

Lisa Lyons
Director of Children Services

Annex: Oxfordshire Youth Justice Service Annual Plan

Contact Officer: Jessie Dobson
Service Manager: Adolescence and Prevention
jessie.dobson3@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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