

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Tuesday 14 November 2023

at 4.00 pm

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Cowie, Harrison, Holbrook, Lindridge, Little, Moore and Sharp.

Co-opted Members: Tracey Gibson, C of E Diocese and Joanne Wilson, RC Diocese representatives.

School Heads Representatives: Adam Palmer (Secondary), Sue Sharpe (Primary), Zoe Westley (Special).

Parent Governor Representative: Martin Pout

Six Young Peoples Representatives

Observer: Councillor Buchan, Chair of Adult and Community Based Services Committee

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2023 (*previously circulated and published*).

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

- 4.1 Youth Justice Strategic Plan - *Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone.

The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 Dedicated Schools Grant (Former Education Services Grant Rate Per Pupil) – Disapplication Request - *Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services and Director of Finance, IT and Digital Services*

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

No items.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Children Missing Education – Annual Report - *Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.2 Elective Home Education - *Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.3 Children's Social Care Annual Complaints - *Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 5 December at 4.00pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

14TH NOVEMBER 2023



Subject: YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN
Report of: Executive Director of Children's & Joint Commissioning Services
Decision Type: Budget and Policy Framework

COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:
- Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.
- Where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is gain approval for the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2023-2024 (**Appendix 1**) to be presented to full Council on the 30th November 2023 to seek adoption of the Youth Justice Plan 2023/2024.
- 1.2 The report has been presented to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and Audit and Governance Committee for consultation; there were suggested changes.
- 1.3 The final Plan will also be sent to the National Youth Justice Board.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The national Youth Justice System primarily exists to ensure that children and young people between the age of 10 and 17 do not engage in offending or re-offending behaviour and to ensure that where a young person is arrested and charged with a criminal offence, they are dealt with differently to adult offenders to reflect their particular welfare needs as children.

- 2.2 Local Youth Offending Services were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop, deliver, commission and coordinate the provision of youth justice services within each Local Authority.
- 2.3 Hartlepool Youth Justice Service was established in April 2000 and is responsible for youth justice services locally. It is a multi-agency service and is made up of representatives from the Council's Children's Services, Police, Probation, Health and Education.
- 2.4 The primary objectives of Youth Justice Services are to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people and reduce the use of custody.
- 2.5 There is a statutory requirement for all Youth Justice Services to annually prepare, a local Youth Justice Plan for submission to the national Youth Justice Board.
- 2.6 The annual Youth Justice Plan provides an overview of how the Youth Justice Service, the Youth Justice Service Strategic Management Board and wider partnership will ensure that the service has sufficient resources and infrastructure to deliver youth justice services in its area in line with the requirements of the National Standards for Youth Justice Services to:
 - Promote performance improvement;
 - Shape youth justice system improvement;
 - Improve outcomes for young people, victims and the broader community.

3. PROPOSALS/ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The final draft of the Youth Justice Plan for 2023 – 2024 is attached at **Appendix 1**. This outlines the Strategic Objectives and Priorities for the service as follows:
 - **Re-offending** - reduce further offending by children who have committed crime with a particular emphasis on continuing the development of Service interventions that are structured, responsive, tailored to meet identified individual need and evaluated. (Both within Youth Justice Services and provided by external agencies).
 - **Early/Targeted Intervention, Prevention & Diversion** – sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that creative strategies and services remain in place locally to prevent children from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.
 - **Remand, Custody & Constructive Resettlement** – demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the need for remands and custody. Ensure bespoke constructive resettlement packages are implemented at the earliest opportunity.

- **Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus)** – ensure all children entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a high quality structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management.
- **Restorative Justice** – ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is incorporated in to the work undertaken with children who offend.
- **Effective Governance** – ensure that the Youth Justice Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Justice Service performance and drives continuous improvement.
- **Voice of the Children** – ensure that all children are actively involved in developing their own plans and are encouraged and supported to inform current and future service delivery.
- **'Child First'** – *ensure that the Child First principles are regularly reviewed and embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and make a positive contribution to society.*
- **Education, Training, Employment** – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Schools, Virtual School and One Stop Shop to ensure all children open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers, increasing attendance and improving outcomes.
- **Substance Misuse** – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of children open to the YJS within substance misuse services
- **Serious Violence & Exploitation** – Working with and alongside all partners including the Police, MACE and Violence Reduction Unit to address and reduce serious violence and all forms of child exploitation
- **Over Represented Children** - Identify and address any areas of over representation within the YJS cohort alongside the management board and partners.

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The strategic plan identifies key risk to future delivery as detailed in Section 15 of the plan these are:

- The unpredictability associated with secure remand episodes and secure remand length has the potential to place significant financial pressure on the Youth Justice Service and the broader Local Authority;
- Managing the potential for reduction in YJB grant and partnership financial and 'in-kind' contributions pre and post 2023/24;
- Ongoing recruitment issues within the Probation Services having a direct impact on YJS Seconded Probation officer;

- Continued concerns around Serious Youth Violence, Criminal Exploitation and County Lines.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, a local authority must submit a youth justice plan annually to the Youth Justice Board setting out (a) how youth justice services are to be provided and funded in their area and (b) how the YOTs established by them are to be composed and funded, how they are to operate and what functions they are to carry out. The plan must be published in such manner and by such date as the Secretary of State may direct.

7. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)

- 7.1 There are no specific child and poverty impact from the report, the cohort of young people are across a wide spectrum of socio- economic backgrounds, all young people receive an assessment of need which includes consideration of poverty.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)

- 8.1 There are no specific equality and diversity considerations arising from the report. The Youth Offending Service works in an anti discriminatory way with all young people who access the service.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To note the progress made in delivering the local Youth Justice Plan (2022/2023).
- 9.2 To approve the Youth Justice Plan to be presented to full Council on the 30th November to seek adoption of the Youth Justice Plan 2023/2024.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The development of the Youth Justice plan for 2023/2024 will provide the Youth Justice Service with a clear steer to bring about further reductions in

youth offending and contribute to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families alongside the broader community.

- 10.2 The local Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2023/2024 will establish responsibility across the Youth Justice Service and the Youth Justice Strategic Board for taking each improvement activity forward within agreed timescales.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 12.1 Jane Young, Assistant Director, Children and Families, Hartlepool Borough Council, level 4, Civic Centre, TS24 8AY. Tel 01429 523957. E-mail jane.young@hartlepool.gov.uk

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 17 October 2023
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 13 October 2023
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 13 October 2023



Hartlepool Youth Justice Service Strategic Plan 2023-24



Service	Hartlepool Youth Justice Service
Service Manager/ Lead	Roni Checksfield, Youth Justice Service Manager
Chair of YJS Board	Jo Heaney, Head of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery (Children, Young People and Maternity - Tees Valley) North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board. (Chair Hartlepool YJS Management Board)

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Appendix 1 – Staffing Structure

Appendix 2 – Budget costs & contributions 2023/24

Foreword

Welcome to the 2023 - 2024 Hartlepool Youth Justice Strategic Plan. This plan sets out our ambitions and priorities for Hartlepool Youth Justice Service and the broader local Youth Justice Partnership for the next year.

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership, Community Safety Plan 2021-24 establishes a vision for the town:

“To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit”

The Youth Justice Service and broader partnership has a key role in contributing to this vision, by continuing to deliver a high quality, effective and safe youth justice service that prevents crime and the fear of crime, whilst ensuring that children who do offend are identified, managed and supported appropriately, without delay.

In recent years Hartlepool has witnessed a significant reduction in youth crime. The local youth justice partnership has been particularly effective in reducing the numbers of children entering the youth justice system for the first time, but there still remains a need to drive down incidents of re-offending by children who have previously offended.

This will be achieved through a combination of robust interventions designed to manage and reduce risk of harm, support safety & wellbeing, restore interpersonal relationships, promote whole family engagement and achieve positive outcomes all wrapped around a “Child First” ethos. Encouragingly, Hartlepool Youth Justice Service alongside partners continues to maintain a strong health offer for all children and is constantly striving to build upon its restorative offer whilst ensuring that victims of youth crime also have a voice.

There has been a significant increase in work placed upon the Youth Justice Service both last year and in the current year. The introduction of the Turnaround programme nationally with its very tight lead in and planning times, the addition of the new KPIs, representation and input into the newly funded Cleveland Violence Reduction Unit (CURV) and more recently ongoing discussions with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) regarding the recently published Anti-Social Behaviour action plan and the pending YJS involvement within the “Immediate Justice” element.

Despite the increased workload, I am confident that Hartlepool Youth Justice Service and the broader Youth Justice Partnership will continue to help make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit.

In 2023-24 we will strive to continuously improve by:

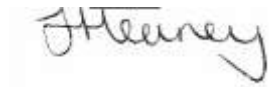
- Maintaining and building upon the current Health offer with trauma informed practice at its core.
- Continuing to work with partners to develop a clear and consistent approach to all forms of child exploitation.
- Building on the improving YJS offer of a ‘whole family approach’
- Ensuring the Service maintains a ‘child first’ ethos.
- Continuing to maintain a creative Early/Targeted Intervention, Prevention and Diversion offer.

4.1 APPENDIX 1

None of the above will be possible without the continued support and close working relationships of our partners and Children's Social Care. In addition, these relationships allow us to mitigate the risks of reducing partnership budgets whilst maintaining the quality and effectiveness of the Service.

As always, the local authority and Strategic Management Board is extremely grateful for the skill and dedication shown by managers, staff, employees and volunteers of the YJS in continuing to support children who offend, or are at risk of becoming involved in offending.

On behalf of the Youth Justice Service Strategic Management Board I am pleased to pledge my support to and endorse the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2023-24



Jo Heaney, Head of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery (Children, Young People and Maternity - Tees Valley) North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.
(Chair Hartlepool YJS Management Board)

1. Introduction, vision, strategy & local context

Introduction

The National Youth Justice System primarily exists to ensure that children between the age of 10 and 17 (who are arrested and charged with a criminal offence) are dealt with differently to adult offenders, to reflect their particular welfare needs.

In summary, children who offend are:

- Dealt with by youth courts;
- Given different sentences in comparison to adults and
- When necessary, detained in special secure centres for children.

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority and statutory partners to secure and coordinate local youth justice services for children in our area who come into contact with the Youth Justice System as a result of their offending behaviour. This is achieved through the established Youth Justice Services.

The primary functions of Youth Justice Services are to prevent offending and re-offending by children, reduce the use of custody and ensure all of the above are delivered with a “Child First” ethos embedded across the service.

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service was established in April 2000 and is a Multi-Agency service made up of representatives from Children’s Services, Police, Probation, Public Health, Health, Education and Community Safety. Hartlepool Youth Justice Service seeks to ensure that:

- All children entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and protective factors associated with their offending behaviour in order to inform effective interventions.
- Courts and Referral Order panels are provided with high quality reports that enable them to make informed decisions.
- Orders of the Court are managed in such a way that they support the primary aim of the youth justice system, alongside managing risk of harm and ensuring there is due regard to the welfare of the child.
- Services provided to courts are of a high quality and ensure that magistrates and the judiciary have confidence in the supervision of children.
- Comprehensive bail and remand management services are in place locally for children remanded or committed to custody, or on bail while awaiting trial or sentence.
- The needs and risks of children sentenced to custodial sentences (including long-term custodial sentences) are assessed to ensure effective resettlement and management of risk.
- Those receiving youth justice services are treated fairly regardless of race, language, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or any other factor, and actions are put in place to address discrimination if identified

In addition to the above, the remit of the service has widened significantly in recent years due to both national and local developments relating to prevention, diversion and restorative justice and there is now a requirement to ensure that:

- Creative strategies and services are in place locally to prevent children from becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour;
- Out-of-court disposals deliver targeted and bespoke interventions for those at risk of entering the Youth Justice System
- Assistance is provided to the Police when determining whether Youth Cautions should be issued and
- Restorative approaches are used, where appropriate, with victims of crime and ensures that restorative justice is central to work undertaken with children who offend.
- The Turnaround Programme is implemented and meeting targets in line with Government criteria

The Hartlepool Youth Justice Plan for 2023-2024 sets out how youth justice services will be delivered, funded and governed in response to both local need, national policy changes and in line with the Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019, our most recent HMIP inspection findings, ongoing HMIP Thematic reports and the YJB Strategic Plan 2021-24. It also highlights how Hartlepool Youth Justice Service will work in partnership to prevent offending and re-offending by children and reduce the use of remands and custody ensuring we put the “Child First” throughout all processes.

Vision & Strategy

Hartlepool’s Children’s Strategic Partnership has set out its vision for children within the town as follows:

Vision:

Our ambition as a children’s partnership is to enable all children and families in Hartlepool to have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and be supported to be safe in their homes and communities.

Priorities:

- Children have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and are safe
- Improving family relationships, strengths, skills and ability to cope
- Reducing the impact of domestic violence, mental health, drugs and alcohol misuse on children and families
- Helping parents, carers and children to gain skills and get jobs

The Youth Justice Service, as part of the wider services for children, seeks to deliver on the vision and ambitions through a number of identified Youth Justice Service Strategic Priorities for 2023 - 2024.

In addition, these priorities align and overlap with the strategic priorities set by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership for 2021-24:

- Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour
- Reduce the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse
- Reduce Domestic Violence

Youth Justice Service Strategic Objectives and Priorities – 2023-2024

We will use our grant, partner contributions and available resources to deliver our services that enable us to work towards achieving the following objectives and priorities annually:

Re-offending - reduce further offending by children who have committed crime with a particular emphasis on continuing the development of Service interventions that are structured, responsive, tailored to meet identified individual need and evaluated. (Both within Youth Justice Services and provided by external agencies).

Early/Targeted Intervention, Prevention & Diversion – sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that creative strategies and services remain in place locally to prevent children from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Remand, Custody & Constructive Resettlement – demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the need for remands and custody. Ensure bespoke constructive resettlement packages are implemented at the earliest opportunity.

Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus) – ensure all children entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a high quality structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management.

Restorative Justice – ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is incorporated in to the work undertaken with children who offend.

Effective Governance – ensure that the Youth Justice Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Justice Service performance and drives continuous improvement.

Voice of the Children – ensure that all children are actively involved in developing their own plans and are encouraged and supported to inform current and future service delivery.

‘Child First’ – ensure that the Child First principles are regularly reviewed and embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and make a positive contribution to society.

Education, Training, Employment – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Schools, Virtual School and One Stop Shop to ensure all children open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers, increasing attendance and improving outcomes.

Substance Misuse – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of children open to the YJS within substance misuse services

Serious Violence & Exploitation – Working with and alongside all partners including the Police, MACE and Violence Reduction Unit to address and reduce serious violence and all forms of child exploitation

Over Represented Children - Identify and address any areas of over representation within the YJS cohort alongside the management board and partners.

Local Context

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service (YJS) covers the local authority area of Hartlepool which is impacted upon by a range of social, economic and environmental factors. Using the 2019 average score of the Index of Multiple Deprivation Hartlepool is the 10th most deprived Local Authority in the country with high levels of unemployment, crime and anti-social behaviour, domestic violence and substance misuse.

All of these factors provide significant challenges to the children we work with impacting on their behaviours and influencing outcomes.

According to the mid 2021 population estimates – ONS, the population of Hartlepool was in the region of **92,571** with approx.**9359** being between the ages of 10-17.

The BAME population in Hartlepool continues to remain somewhat low in comparison to other areas locally, **3,270** or **3.5%** of Hartlepool Population (Non-White ethnic groups, Census 2021 – ONS)

10-17 BAME population – No published data.

Current number of Children in our Care (CIOC), all ages – **320** (Active as at 31 March 2023, Hartlepool Performance Team)

Current CIOC figures 10–17 – **203** (Active as at 04 05 2023, Hartlepool Performance Team)

****At the time of writing this Strategic Plan there are 4 children open to the YJS who are CIOC.**

Hartlepool is served by 5 Secondary Schools, 1 Pupil Referral Unit (Horizon School) and Catcote Academy which caters for secondary and post-16 students with special educational needs. There are 4 Sixth Form providers two of which are located within Secondary Schools.

Hartlepool YJS has had to evolve over the years in response to changing local circumstances and economic factors. The current service is a traditional YOS model with two small operational teams delivering case management across Out of Court Disposals and Post Court Orders/DTO. The operational teams are supported by a Leadership Team which carry out day to day operational oversight, performance management, service planning and policies & procedures. There is also support from a small business admin team as well as sessional staff and Panel Volunteers who provide a very valuable service.

The YJS is constantly striving to ensure that the service is able to meet the current and future demands of service users, based on a 'fit for purpose' structure which supports high quality service delivery. Central to this is the recognition that all staff will need to be well equipped to deal with a wide variety of service user needs, and keep abreast of emerging areas of practice not least trauma informed practice, the developing body of knowledge and evidence surrounding County Lines, Modern Day Slavery and Serious Youth Violence as well as findings from HMIP and other relevant inspection bodies.

As with the majority of YJSs the service is dealing with smaller caseloads, however these are much more complex individuals with multiple risks and vulnerabilities, the main cohort are predominantly young males aged between 14 and 17, many of whom reside within Hartlepool's most deprived neighbourhoods. Although not mutually exclusive, the common criminogenic and welfare issues prevalent amongst this cohort are identified as:

- higher than average mental health needs
- higher levels of drug and alcohol use than for the general population
- low educational attachment, attendance and attainment
- having family members or friends who offend

- higher than average levels of loss, bereavement, abuse and violence experienced within the family – historical trauma
- a history of family disruption
- chaotic and unstructured lifestyles
- Vulnerable to all elements of exploitation

Alongside this cohort of young males, there is another cohort of young females of similar age 14-17, whom although perhaps not as prolific in terms of reoffending, are of significant concern due to multiple complex issues which are more welfare-orientated. These include: Substance misuse, chaotic lifestyles, and sexual exploitation, missing from home and family breakdown. Again, as with the male cohort, young females who are offending are noted to have a higher prevalence of poor emotional well-being.

As can be seen from the figures above Hartlepool does have a relatively low BAME percentage compared to locally and regionally, however the service does have the necessary training and skills to respond to work with children from a BAME or other diverse background. More notably the number of Children in our care (CIOC) does fluctuate within the YJS cohort, the data is regularly analysed and there is ongoing work with partners and carers in order to ensure appropriate actions are in place to support this vulnerable group of children. This is a strategic priority and actions and progress is reported to the Strategic Management Board.

Working in partnership is key to supporting a greater understanding of these underlying issues and addressing them in a holistic and co-ordinated way to provide “pathways out of offending”, reduce crime and break the cycle of offending behaviour across generations.

2. Child First

In line with the Youth Justice Boards Strategic Plan 2021-24 Hartlepool Youth Justice Service (YJS) is committed to:

- Prioritise the best interests of children and recognise their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.
- Promote children’s individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.
- Encourage children’s active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.
- Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.

We continue to ensure the “Child First” principles are embedded and maintained within all areas of service delivery in collaboration with other services and all partners.

In early 2022 Hartlepool YJS produced a “Child First” guidance for all staff to ensure this approach is embedded across all areas of service delivery from assessment, planning, intervention and at closure and exit.

This approach continues to be central to our operational delivery across the whole service and within staff supervisions, case audits and quality assessment of Asset Plus/plans.

In addition to providing guidance to staff the YJS manager and Chair of the management board designed and delivered bite size “Child First” and the “Voice of the Child” sessions for all board members, which will be reviewed and delivered on an ongoing basis.

** (The process below is taken from Hartlepool YJS Child First Guidance)

Assessment/Planning

- The assessment is needs led and not just offence focussed
- We utilise the assessment period to start relationship building and getting to know the child
- We find out what the child likes doing and what they are good at and promote these throughout their time with the service
- Whilst completing the SAQ within the assessment we utilise Why, Where, What, When, Who etc. to gather the Childs/Parents/Carers feelings and thoughts better
- The child’s plan is completed with them and parent/carer with their comments and signatures included
- We utilise Positive Activities within the plan and in collaboration with the child
- We ensure appropriate priority pathways are identified within the plan i.e. Health input and that they will run concurrent to other areas of the plan

Interventions

- We deliver as many sessions as possible away from the YJS Offices, utilising our offsite facilities more and other external locations as appropriate
- We ensure the Childs journey with the service is non-stigmatising
- We become the child’s advocate during their time with us and have regular communication with all other services involved i.e. Health, Education and Social Care etc. advocating on behalf of the child
- We use appropriate language at all times with the child and throughout their journey with the service
- Reparation isn’t used as a “tick box exercise” but is used correctly in a reparative way with the child understanding why they are required to complete it
- We complete a feedback form after each planned intervention ensuring we capture the child’s voice and their thoughts & feelings (feedback forms are shared with Management Team and presented at Management Boards)

Reviews/Closures

- We will ensure that as and when required Child/Parent/Carer are actively included in all reviews, ensuring we capture their voices and comments
- We ensure that a Case Summary and Survey Monkey are completed with the Child/Parent/Carer at the end of the child’s journey with the service (Case Summary are attached to Child View and the Survey Monkey shared with management team, analysed and findings subsequently presented at board meetings looking at potential service development)

Example - Hartlepool YJS acknowledged the need for a collective response to meeting the educational needs of all children open to the YJS.

As a response, we are now working with the towns 5 secondary schools via the Inclusion Partnership meeting. This partnership affords us the opportunity to work more closely with the Senior Leaders from schools and discuss issues their students face which may include unmet need i.e. undiagnosed Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

Working in partnership we aim to reduce the number of exclusions and improve the child’s attainment and attendance, which will support them into further education and lead positive, pro-social lifestyles, which are free of crime.

Schools also have the opportunity to attend training delivered by the YJS on restorative approaches to help mitigate any in-school behaviours.

3. Voice of the child

Hartlepool YJS work collaboratively with all Children/Parents/Carers to ensure their voice is heard, listened to and helps shape service delivery as required.

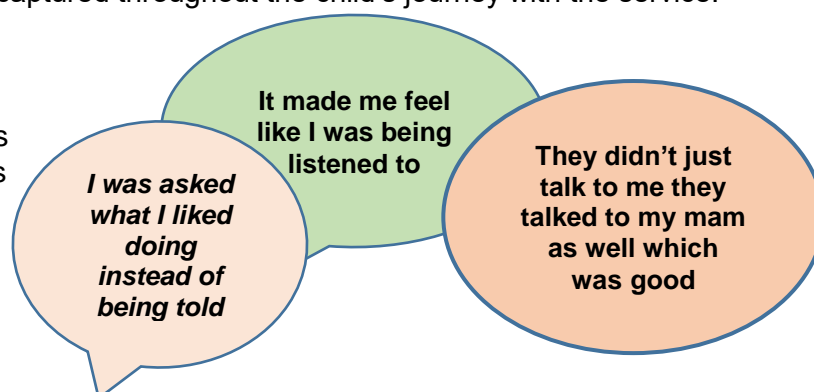
We will continuously review and enhance our delivery, so that the views of children are sufficiently captured, central to our work, and lead to change in the system to support children into positive outcomes and successful adulthood.

We strongly promote and encourage relationship building between staff and children from the outset of all involvement with the YJS.

Staff will start the process of capturing the child's voice during this period which also aids assessment. All SAQ and feedback sessions are completed face to face where possible and relevant and staff will encourage the child to expand on their responses. This process is also carried out with parents/carers.

We ensure that the child's voice is captured throughout the child's journey with the service:

- All SAQs
- Designing the child's plan
- After all completed interventions
- Asset Plus and all other reviews
- Closure Summaries
- Survey Monkey



Feedback is consolidated from the various sources and analysed via the monthly leadership meetings and quarterly service management boards. Any potential areas for concern or good practice are addressed appropriately.

The YJS will always advocate on behalf of the child at all meetings attended and where required their voice and that of parents/carers will be gathered in advance. There has been a marked increase and improvement in this process which has been very evident within education meetings. More in depth discussions are now taking place with education providers on a regular basis especially around exclusions/suspensions, reduced timetables and alternative provision.

Example – A child was encouraged and supported to attend and talk about their experiences of reparation at a recent YJS Management Board meeting. The child highlighted how he was given the opportunity to identify what he likes doing and how if possible the YJS could support with this. Subsequently he was able to help in a local foodbank, helping pack orders, stocktake etc. which gave him a real sense of achievement and pride. He has continued to support the foodbank in his own time.

This direct feedback to board members evoked considerable discussion and ensured we now, where feasibly possible, have those discussions with all children giving them the opportunity to identify what they would like to do and how it benefits the communities and others.

4. Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

Governance:

The Youth Justice Service is part of Hartlepool Borough Councils Children & Joint Commissioning Services Department which also includes Children's Social Care and Early Help services. The Management Board is chaired by Jo Heaney, Head of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery (Children, Young People and Maternity - Tees Valley) North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

The board is made up of representatives from Children's Social Care, Police, Probation, Public Health, Courts, Education, Youth Support Services, and Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, Community Safety, VCS and an elected member.

Effective integrated strategic partnership working and clear oversight by the Management Board are critical to the success and effective delivery of youth justice services in Hartlepool. The board is directly responsible for:

- Determining how appropriate youth justice services are to be provided and funded;
- Overseeing the formulation each year of the youth justice plan;
- Agreeing measurable objectives linked to key performance indicators as part of the youth justice plan;
- Ensuring delivery of the statutory aim to prevent offending by children and children;
- Giving strategic direction to Youth Justice Service Manager and Youth Justice Service Team;
- Providing performance management of the prevention of youth crime and periodically report this to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership;
- Ensuring that Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019 and the Child First ethos are embedded across the whole service and audits are completed within required timescales;
- Promoting the key role played by the Youth Justice Service within local integrated offender management arrangements;
- Advocate on behalf of the YJS within their own service areas and beyond, specifically supporting the YJS to overcome barriers to effective Multi-Agency working;
- Oversight of all data submissions to the YJB ensuring timeliness, especially conditions set out in the YJB grant;
- Ensuring the recommendations outlined in YJB papers and HMIP inspection reports/thematic reviews are addressed and monitored at board meetings

The Management Board is clear about the priority areas for improvement, and monitors the delivery of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan, performance and prevention/diversion work. It is well attended and receives comprehensive reports relating to performance, finance and specific areas of service delivery.

Members of the Board are knowledgeable, participate well in discussions and are members of other related boards, such as the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Safer Hartlepool Partnership and Health and Wellbeing partnerships as well as the Cleveland Criminal Justice Board, all which contribute to effective partnership working at a strategic level. Board meetings are well structured and members are held accountable.

During 2022/23 board members attended a YJS Board Induction and interactive bite size sessions on the recently published Management Board guidance and Child First/Voice of the Child. These sessions will be reviewed and updated for delivery again this year alongside any further updates.

Leadership/Structure

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service has a staff team of 22 people, which includes 3 seconded staff, and 4 sessional workers (**Staffing structure attached at Appendix 1**). The service also benefits from a team of 3 active volunteers who are Referral Order Panel members. All staff and volunteers are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks which are renewed every three years.

There are also 2 external staff commissioned into the service 1 x PT Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) (funded by the YJS) and 1 x PT Clinical Psychologist (funded by the ICB). Discussions and plans are underway to commission time from an Educational Psychologist (start date -Sept 23).

Via the recently implemented Violence Reduction Unit (CURV) 4 x Custody Navigators have been employed, they will be located in the central Custody Suite (Middlesbrough) and will engage all children entering the Custody Suite, with a view to support, guidance and directing them to further support and the relevant YJS (Due to go live in July 23).

At the time of writing this report all statutory partners have seconded staff within the YJS or have provided direct pathways i.e. Health, Education, Police and Social Care.

The YJS delivery model has been reconfigured and restructured during the last year to ensure the service remains sufficiently flexible to address future challenges. This will continue to be achieved through a generic case management and intervention delivery model, across pre and post court functions. This will ensure maximum resilience, capacity and flexibility to meet the needs of children and children and the service as a whole.

The current YJS structure aims to consolidate areas of strong performance and effective practice, whilst also providing a dynamic framework to respond to emerging priorities, recognised both by the Local Authority and key partners.

This model (alongside the YJS strategic plan) allows the organisation and the wider YJS partnership to action the priorities for service delivery and to achieve best outcomes for children and children across the range of statutory and preventative services.

The Assistant Director (AD), Children & Families is also the designated Head of Service for the Youth Justice Service with a service manager having responsibility and oversight for all elements of service delivery. The AD reports directly to the Director of Children's Services (DCS).

Partnership Arrangements

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service is a statutory partnership which includes, but also extends beyond, the direct delivery of youth justice services. In order to deliver youth justice outcomes it must be able to function effectively in both of the two key sectors within which it operates, namely:

- Criminal justice services.

- Services for children and their families.

The Youth Justice Service contributes both to improving community safety and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and in particular protecting them from significant harm.

Many of the children involved with the Youth Justice Service are amongst the most vulnerable children in the Borough and are at greatest risk of social exclusion. The Youth Justice Service's Multi-Agency approach ensures that it plays a significant role in meeting the safeguarding needs of these children. This is achieved through the effective assessment and management of safety & wellbeing and risk, through working in partnership with other services, for example, Children's Services, Health, Education, Secure Estate and Police to ensure children's wellbeing is promoted and they are protected from harm. Regular ongoing communication, meetings, joint training opportunities and speedy information/intelligence sharing ensure ongoing strong links and relationships.

All high-risk cases can be escalated to either one or both of the Multi Agency Child Exploitation team (MACE) or the Strategic Risk Management Group, the Youth Justice Service has representation on both groups which meet monthly.

Discussions around serious youth violence, criminal exploitation and county lines are conducted within these forums ensuring tight plans are implemented and strategic management oversight is afforded

The YJS has both operational and strategic representation on the following forums that all contribute to the support of children in the justice system.



5. Board development

As highlighted in Section 5 above Effective integrated strategic partnership working and clear oversight by the Management Board are critical to the success and effective delivery of youth justice services in Hartlepool.

In line with the guidance provided by the YJB in 2021 “Youth Justice Service governance and Leadership” the following training was undertaken with all board members. This training is being reviewed and will be delivered again in 2023/24.

	Board Development	Action Taken/Planned	Owner	Target Date/Completed
1	Management Board TOR rewritten	The board TOR to be consulted with the board, agreed and re written	Management Board	Completed Sept 2021

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2	Board induction for all members	Board induction to be undertaken with all board members, utilising the template shared by the AYM	YJS Manager/Board chair	Completed Sept 22
3	Update all board members on YJ service governance and leadership	Utilising the YJB - YJ service governance and leadership document, Sessions designed for all board members to attend and actively engage	YJS Manager/Board Chair	Completed over 4 sessions Apr – Oct 22
4	Child First/Voice of the Child	Sessions developed for all board members to attend and participate in Child First ethos/Voice of the child	YJS Manager/Board Chair	Completed over 4 sessions Apr – Oct 22
5	Key Performance Indicators	Power Point (YJB) presented to all board members updating on new KPIs	YJS Manager	Initial documentation and board discussion held. Power Point to be delivered July 23
6	Serious Youth Violence & Exploitation	Presentation & Discussion with Director of CURV	CURV Director	Initial Presentation and Discussion held in Feb 23 Management Board – Further presentations planned for Sept 23

Spotlight sessions have also been introduced into Management Board meetings and presented by YJS staff, this gives all partners and board members a better insight into daily delivery within the service. To date the following have been presented and discussed:

- Out of Court Disposals (OOCd)
- Reparation
- Restorative Justice
- YJS Health Offer
- Court & Post Court offer (to be presented at Sept 23 board)

There is a proposal for board members to also deliver spotlight sessions on their role/service and how they link, support and advocate on behalf of the YJS and its cohort of children.

Added to the above all statutory partners and board members are invited to attend all YJS internal training and are offered shadowing opportunities.

6. Progress on previous plan

Youth Justice Strategic Priorities 2022/23

Re-offending - reduce further offending by children who have committed crime with a particular emphasis continuing on the development of Service interventions that are structured, responsive and tailored to meet identified individual need and evaluated. (Both within Youth Justice Services and provided by external agencies).

Key Actions

- Undertake quality assessments of children at risk of re-offending, ensuring risks, desistance factors and needs are identified which inform effective intervention planning
- Continue to improve interventions delivered, through innovation and collaboration where appropriate
- Improve intelligence and timely information sharing relating to those children who are at risk of offending, to inform service-wide improvement activity or targeted work
- Continue to improve the 'Child First' approach and Health offer within the service and with partners
- Continue to undertake scoping activities in relation to retaining both the Speech & Language Therapist, Trauma Informed Care Pathway and Emotional Wellbeing pathways within the YJS beyond March 2023

Update

- All of the above actions have been achieved.
- Hartlepool YJS are now in a position to run a Reoffending report from Child View and are utilising the tracker available. The information being provided is more timely and allows us to update Leadership meetings and Management boards much quicker with data and analysis
- Senior representation at the regional Reoffending Group chaired by the OPCC
- Since the inception of the Multi Agency Child Exploitation team (MACE) there are now far greater sources of intelligence alongside the Police and partners which aids service wide improvements and targeted work.
- Reoffending figures do however continue to fluctuate and there has been some considerable increase in time between charge and outcome for those children open under the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

Concerns

- As indicated above the length of time children and courts are waiting for NRM outcomes, this has a considerable effect on the number of adjournments with minimal oversight of these children during this period – There are ongoing discussions with the SCA and within the local authority.

Early & Targeted Intervention/Diversion – Continue to prioritise a reduction in first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that creative strategies and services remain in place locally to prevent children and children from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Key Actions

- Maintain and enhance the YJS Early & Targeted Intervention programme "CHOICES" across Children's Services and the partnership
- Operate a targeted approach to supporting individuals and groups of children at risk of offending - based on intelligence and collaborative working with key partners (Police, ASB, Early Help, Voluntary Community Sector, Schools, etc.)
- Work with the Multi Agency Child Exploitation team (MACE) and partners to reduce and respond to Child exploitation

- Ongoing trend analysis of past and current FTE's to identify key themes and responses
- Ongoing briefings to key partners (such as Police and Social Care) to emphasise and promote the Prevention and Diversion agenda
- Continue to review and deliver our point of arrest diversion as a distinct and substantially different response to formal out of court disposals
- Continue to review the Diversion & Prevention strategy in place ensuring it includes how children are identified for diversion/prevention, how the services are delivered, by whom and how success is evaluated.

Update:

- All of the above actions were achieved
- Early & Targeted Intervention programme, CHOICES is continuing to receive referrals from within Children's Services.
- The service continues to work directly with children through our diversionary offer of Restorative Intervention and both Triage 1 and 2, all referrals are via the Police and Courts.
- The Turnaround programme is now up and running and adding a further offer alongside Preventions & Diversion
- Hartlepool YJS alongside South Tees YJS and Stockton YJS are in discussion with the OPCC re the "Immediate Justice" element of the very recently published Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan

Concerns

- There have been a significant amount of changes and increased workload placed on YJSs nationally with the introduction of Turnaround the added KPIs. These changes and developments will take time to establish and within day to day operational delivery.

Remand and Custody & Resettlement – demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody and the YJS Resettlement Policy is reviewed and evaluated.

Key Actions

- Monitor and maintain the use of Compliance Panels to ensure continued effectiveness
- Ensure the Service provides intensive packages of supervision and support to high intensity orders and bail arrangements
- Ensure that the needs of children in custody and the factors relating to their offending behaviour are addressed in the secure estate to prevent further offending upon release
- Continue to review and evaluate the Resettlement Policy in place for children upon release from the secure estate (HMIP Youth Justice inspection framework, standard 4.1 Resettlement, May 2021)
- Regularly review capacity to deliver ISS, and resource appropriately, through a multi-agency approach

Update

- All of the above was achieved
- We continue to utilise and review our current Resettlement Policy
- We continue to be without a seconded Probation Officer since Nov 2021, discussions continue with the Probation Service.
- We have seen an increase in children remanded to local authority care in line with the Remand Framework and continue to work closely with the courts and partners to ensure all children receive the best support available
- Hartlepool YJS will be a part of the upcoming YRO (ISS) pilot commencing on the 3rd July 23.

Concerns

- There is a national shortage of suitable regulated local placements for children remanded to local authority accommodation.

Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus) – ensure all children and children entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management.

Key Actions

- Continued Asset Plus refresher training, ensuring robust assessment of a child's needs
- Work in partnership with other agencies to ensure there is a co-ordinated assessment and plan relating to a child's risk and safety & wellbeing
- Implement an audit cycle/performance clinic to ensure assessment and plans are meeting the appropriate quality standards through robust and transparent quality assurance and feedback.
- Ensure that desistance factors are identified and analysed in all assessments of every child subject to YJS supervision through quality assurance and staff supervision.
- Attendance and contribution to YJB Regional Effective Practice groups and peer collaboration with Tees Valley and North East YJS colleagues
- Ongoing internal staff training and workshops to benchmark quality standards in the management of risk and safety & wellbeing
- Continue to work alongside the partnership to identify suitable interventions and pathways for children and children criminally exploited and potentially being drawn into County Lines activity
- Undertake 'Practice Week', this consists of a team of independent auditors to carry out case work audits, undertake practice observations and gain feedback from children and their families. The evaluation of practice week will inform the service development plan.

Updates

- All above achieved and continuing throughout 2023/24

Restorative Justice & Victims – ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is incorporated in to the work undertaken with children who offend.

Key Actions

- Ensure that victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches leading to improved outcomes for victims
- Continue to use restorative practice across all aspects of the Youth Justice Service
- Regularly re-visit, review and develop practice and process around Referral Order panels to ensure increased involvement from victims, panel members, children and their families
- Continue to develop the in-house RJ 'offer' to consolidate and embed current and better integrated working practices – including the victim's evaluation

Updates

- RJ continues to be a priority area across all service delivery
- We are seeing an increase in Victim participation
- Victim evaluation & feedback is improving
- We continue to provide a suite of suitable reparation projects and will aim to source projects in line with the child's voice.

Effective Governance – ensure that the Youth Justice Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Justice Service performance.

Key Actions

- The Youth Justice Management Board will provide oversight and scrutiny of the service action plan and performance
- Ensure Management Board members attend regular development and shadowing opportunities as provided by the YJS Manager.
- Continue to review the Terms of Reference for the YJS board to ensure it is fit for purpose and includes appropriate representation and contribution of all statutory partners.
- Attendance and representation at YJB Regional executive meetings with colleague YJS Managers from the North East – to share learning and Governance issues to improve wider regional service delivery

Update

- All of the above was achieved
- There is a continued programme in place for all board members
- Board members will be offered a number of bite size sessions to upskill and aid their knowledge of the service, service delivery and requirements etc.

Voice of the Children – ensure that all children are actively involved in developing their own plans having the opportunity to develop and inform current and future service delivery

Key Actions

- Ensure children's involvement in relation to their assessment and plans is clearly evidenced within the records.
- Children to be actively involved in developing their own plans and their comments are captured at implementation, review and closure of all plans
- The service will ensure children are provided with opportunities to influence and shape service delivery – through access to, and completion of, Survey Monkey feedback, session evaluations, closure summaries and SAQ
- YJS leadership team to hold regular evaluation/feedback meetings to ensure all comments are seen and actioned where required and findings shared at quarterly management board meetings

Update

- Considerable work has been undertaken across the service with all staff, the implementation of a Child First operational guidance includes how we capture the voice of the child and more importantly what we do with the findings. The Voice of the Child continues to be captured via SAQ, sessional feedback sheets, Survey Monkey and Closure Summaries, all findings are analysed at Leadership meetings and produced at board meetings for further scrutiny and action.

'Child First' – ensure that the Child First principles are regularly reviewed and embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and make a positive contribution to society.

Key Actions

- Prioritise the best interests of children, recognising their needs, capacities, rights and potential.
- Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion.
- Ensure that all work carried out by the service is a meaningful collaboration with children and their parents/carers.
- The YJS will promote a childhood that is removed from the Justice System, using prevention, diversion and minimal intervention and that all work minimises stigma.

Update

- We continue to advocate strongly on the "Child First" ethos embedded with the YJS

- Guidance clearly highlights what is expected throughout Assessment, planning, interventions, reviews and closures for all children within the YJS.
- The above is monitored by way of children feedback and evaluation as well as via supervision, QA, case audits and direct 1:1 with the child.

Education, Training, Employment – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Schools, Virtual School, One Stop Shop etc. to ensure all Children open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers and increasing attendance.

Key Actions

- Ensure Education is suitably represented on the Strategic Management Board
- Education reports are submitted by partners for each Strategic Management Board meeting and contain as a minimum, how many children are not receiving their education entitlement, how many are excluded, on part time timetables or electively home educated. This data should be analysed to identify any disproportionality and care status of the child. The number of children who have Education and Health Care plans (EHCP) who are open to the service should be provided.
- Encourage children's active engagement with their respective education provider
- Continue to build upon the monthly Education meetings with all education partners
- Continue working in collaboration regarding children with EHCP/SEN

Update

- Education reports are now presented at every quarterly management board meeting, data is provided on how many children are not receiving their education entitlement, how many are excluded, on part time timetables or electively home educated. This data is analysed to identify any disproportionality and care status of the child. The number of children who have Education and Health Care plans (EHCP) who are open to the service is also provided, analysed and discussed.
- Our education support is growing and our communication and challenge with education providers is vastly improving.

Serious Youth Violence & Exploitation – Working in collaboration with the MACE, Police and all other partners to ensure that all forms of serious youth violence and exploitation are identified and suitable plans implemented to reduce the risks.

Key Actions

- Continue to have representation at all MACE meetings
- Ensure any identification of potential exploitation via assessment and ongoing work is referred into the MACE straight away
- Alongside partners ensure NRM referrals are completed for all relevant children and followed up
- Build upon the risk management meetings (RMM) convened by the YJS ensuring all actions are completed, safety plans are in place and suitable contingency plans are identified
- Continue to ensure senior YJS representation at all relevant strategies/complex case discussions and mapping meetings
- Continue to have senior representation at all PREVENT meetings
- Continue to work alongside the OPCC/Police and all partners in implementing and sustaining the Violence Reduction Unit (funding recently received in Cleveland for implementation)

Update

- The YJS have senior representation at all MACE meetings
- All ongoing NRM and potential NRM are discussed and scrutinised at the MACE meetings

- The YJS attend monthly Police Tactical Control Group and Multi Agency Risk of Serious and Organised Crime meetings to discuss in depth Organised Crime Groups, Criminal Peer Groups and any children potentially linked to these
- Regular staff training is made available by the LA re exploitation, County Lines and all forms of Modern Day Slavery
- RUI continue to be analysed in monthly leadership meetings and scrutinised alongside serious youth violence offences with the Police and CPS, daily data spreadsheets are produced by the seconded Police Officer giving live updates on all cases.
- The 3 Cleveland YOTs have strategic representation across all tiers of the VRU (CURV)
- Via CURV and with management oversight by the Cleveland YJSs we have 4 x Custody Navigators in post due to go live in July 2023, this will ensure earlier engagement with all children entering the Custody Suite.

Substance Misuse – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of children open to the YJS within substance misuse services.

Key Actions

- Ensure Substance Misuse providers are suitably represented on the Strategic Management Board
- Regular reports/updates submitted to the Strategic Management Board by Substance Misuse providers
- Ensure the continued working arrangements/pathways are embedded between the YJS and Substance Misuse partners
- All children and children identified as needing support are actively encouraged to engage with appropriate Substance Misuse services

Updates

- All of the above has been achieved
- Pathways into SM services are maintained with regular communication and their representation at board meetings
- All children entering the YJS are actively encouraged to engage with SM services as required

Over represented children – Identify and address any areas of over representation within the YJS cohort alongside the management board and partners

Key Actions

- Ensure a quarterly Needs Analysis of the YJS cohort continues to be presented at each Management Board for analysis of over representation and ongoing needs/gaps within service delivery
- Continue to scrutinise all HMIP Thematic report findings i.e. the over representation of BCIOCK and Mixed Heritage boys, Looked After Children etc and ensure discussions and any potential actions are agreed and implemented by the management board

Update

- Disproportionality is now an agenda item with the YJS managers report to quarterly management boards.
- A service needs analysis to be presented at each management board meeting highlighting over representation, discussion and actions are formulated and monitored.
- Regular ongoing discussions with all partners including Police and Social Care are undertaken to address and look at potential actions for any areas of over representation within the service.

7. Resources and Services

The Youth Justice Service budget is mainly resourced by a combination of Local Authority funding and Youth Justice Board grant.

****2023/24 budget costs and contributions are attached at Appendix 2**

As we write and produce this plan we are unfortunately still unaware of the amount of YJB grant we will be receiving for 2023-24, the figures indicated in Appendix 2 have been based on last year's YJB grant amount without the uplift.

The National Probation Service continue to provide funding (£5k) as well as their staffing contribution which is 0.5 FTE, this post is currently vacant and ongoing discussions are underway with the Probation Service to resolve this. The ICB contribution is a non-cash contribution via the commissioning of the Trauma Informed Care Pathway and the YJS Nurse Specialist is funded from Public Health.

Cleveland Police still provide a full time seconded Police Officer. Funding once again has been secured from the Police and Crime Commissioner towards the delivery of Triage, this is secured until 2025.

We use our grant, partner contributions and available resources to deliver the below services to all children. In 2023/24 we aim to improve and maintain our performance across all areas of delivery ensuring a child first ethos is embedded throughout.

- Early/Targeted Intervention
- Prevention & Diversion
- O OCD
- All Post Court orders

8. Performance & National Key Performance Indicators

Existing key performance indicators

Binary reoffending rate

Work has now been completed by the Data team, YJS leadership team and Business support to set up the reoffending toolkit within our management information system Child View, this data is very useful and informative for management boards and any reports requested.

Unfortunately the Youth Data Summary from the MoJ/YJB isn't always timely with some significant waiting at times and discrepancies in the data. There have been discussions nationally with MoJ and YJB regarding this and plans are afoot to look at better and easier ways to capture this data.

We continue to establish and embed a collaborative Multi-Agency solution and response to reoffending. Strong communication across Children's Services and Cleveland Police ensures regular discussions/mapping meetings are being undertaken with clear accountable actions for

everyone. Alongside this the YJS puts a great deal of focus on their Multi-Agency risk management meetings for those small numbers of cases posing the highest risk of reoffending.

The YJS have representation on the Cleveland Reducing Reoffending Group which feeds into the Cleveland and Durham Local Criminal Justice Partnership. There is also representation on the Cleveland Prevention and Diversion, and Youth Offending sub-groups.

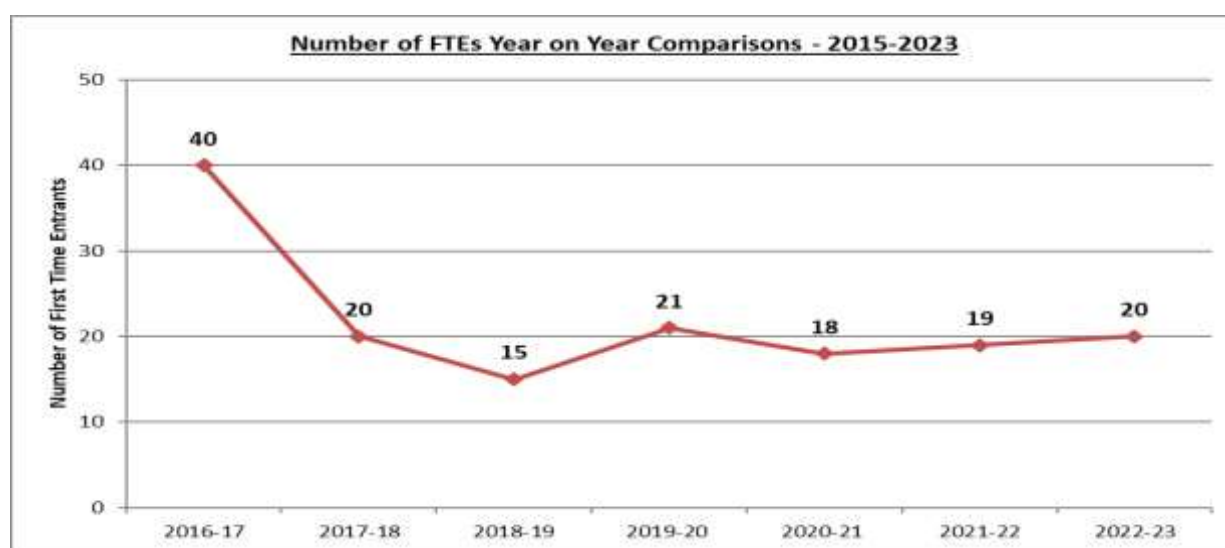
Latest data provided by YDS – Reoffending rates after 12 months, yearly cohorts

- Binary rate - Jul 20 - Jun 21 cohort (latest period) – **26.7%**
- Binary rate - Jul 19 - Jun 20 cohort – **47.8%**
- Percentage point change from selected baseline is **minus 21.16%**

This is lower than the regional and national percentages, however our reoffending binary rates do fluctuate. It is an area of priority for the YJS and partners to identify these YP earlier and offer suitable packages of support.

First time entrants

Hartlepool YJS continue to work hard in reducing and sustaining those reductions in FTE, the last 3 years have seen a levelling off of FTE and numbers have fluctuated minimally. Our recently implemented Early and Targeted Intervention programme – Choices, alongside Turnaround and our diversionary offer of Restorative Intervention (RI) and both Triage 1 & 2 ensure we have robust offers in place to intervene and divert children away from the criminal justice system. Furthermore we worked directly with 50 children last year across Triage (39), Triage 2 (3) and RI (8) who may have become FTE.



Use of custody

There have been 2 remands in 2022/23 and 2 custodial sentences, these are both increases on 2021/22. 1 child was initially remanded and then received a custodial sentence.

Hartlepool YJS have a clear process for alternatives to custody through the offer of ISS packages and utilisation of pre-breach compliance meetings for those at risk of custody via non-compliance. Hartlepool YJS alongside other North East colleagues will be participating in the YRO (ISS) Pilot due to commence on the 3 July 23

Year	Remands	Custody
2019-20	1	2
2020-21	0	2

2021-22	0	1
2022-23	2	2

Additional key performance indicators (from April 2023)

It is a now a requirement of the service to report on the following new key performance indicators from April 2023, with the first submission due August 2023.

There will be an increased workload placed upon business support, especially whilst carrying out quarterly data cleansing, although over time it is hoped the process becomes seamless and that everyone benefits from the data and information that can be gathered from these added KPIs. Currently we don't perceive any issues or risks other than the increased workload on business support staff.

- **Suitable accommodation** – The YJS have senior representation on the local authority housing and accommodation panel. Attendance at all relevant Social Care meetings and ongoing communication will ensure we are able to identify suitable/unsuitable accommodation and challenge/address where needed.
- **Education, training and employment** – There is senior representation from the Virtual School and Post 16 service at management boards and a consolidated report is produced quarterly. There are also monthly internal education meetings.
- **Special educational needs and disabilities/additional learning needs** – Via the Virtual School pathways have been implemented with the SEND team. Regular ongoing communication, attendance at meetings and suitable challenge should ensure we are able to monitor and record sufficiently.
- **Mental health care and emotional wellbeing** – The YJS have a very good health offer via the YJS nurse specialist, Speech and Language therapist and Clinical Psychologist for the Trauma Informed Care Pathway (TICP). All have access to their own service systems and information and speedier (at times) processes for further referrals
- **Substance misuse** – The HOS Substance Misuse attends the management boards and produces a quarterly report. There are pathways/referral routes in place to ensure a speedy process and regular information sharing.
- **Out-of-Court Disposals** – We have a considerable amount of data and information available on all children engaging with the service via an OOC as well early/targeted intervention and Turnaround.
- **Links to wider services** – The YJS are in a position to clearly highlight and indicate the links to wider services and outward referrals made
- **Management board attendance** – This will be monitored on a quarterly basis and board members politely reminded of attendance on an ongoing basis.
- **Serious violence** – The YJS is well represented within the CURV and regular ongoing meetings are held to identify, discuss and analyse all elements of Serious Violence. The YJS manager was also part of the AYM consultation process with the Serious Violence Duty.
- **Victims** – A lot of work is carried out with victims of crime, the YJS RJ worker contacts all victims ascertains their willingness to engage and follows the process from there. All data is collected and stored securely on the MIS.

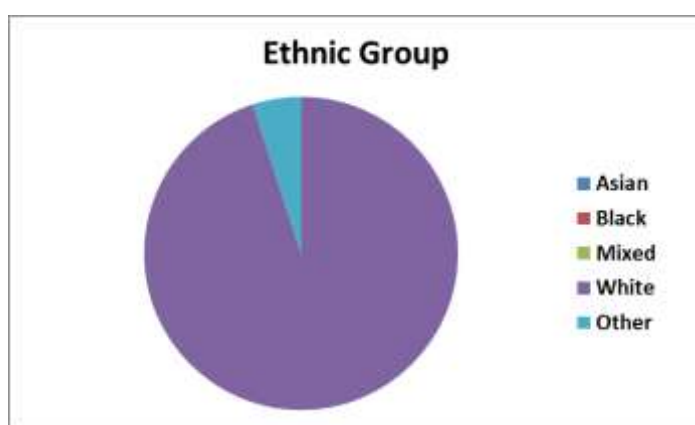
9. Local performance

4.1 APPENDIX 1

The service is dealing with smaller caseloads consisting of very complex individuals with multiple risks and vulnerabilities. Hartlepool YJS carry out a quarterly Needs Analysis of all children open to the service to ensure we thoroughly understand the collective needs of the children and ensure the service is able to respond to this. The Needs Analysis enables the service and partnership via Management Board meetings to have a good snap shot of the current cohort's complexities and potential gaps within delivery, services and areas of concern as well as any areas of over representation. Recent analysis reveals a cohort with many having very difficult home lives, they display much broader lifestyle choices i.e. substance misuse and the need to generate income to maintain this. This also reflects the national and regional picture in terms of caseload composition.

The information below was taken from the latest YJS Needs Analysis on the 04 05 23 and discussed at the management board on the 09 05 23.

The analysis was undertaken on 21 completed assessments.

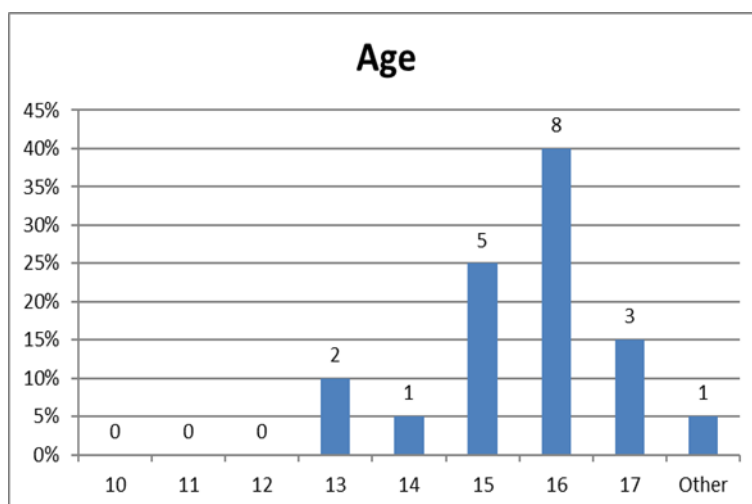


Of the 21 CYP 1 is a Traveller and the remainder White

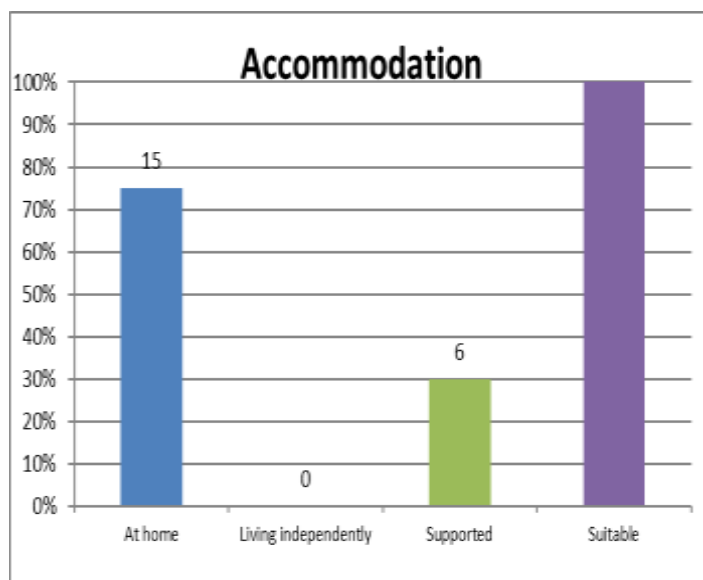
Ages are spread across the spectrum, however currently the youngest being 13.

15, 16 & 17 are generally our busiest age range

This cohort includes 2 females 15 & 17



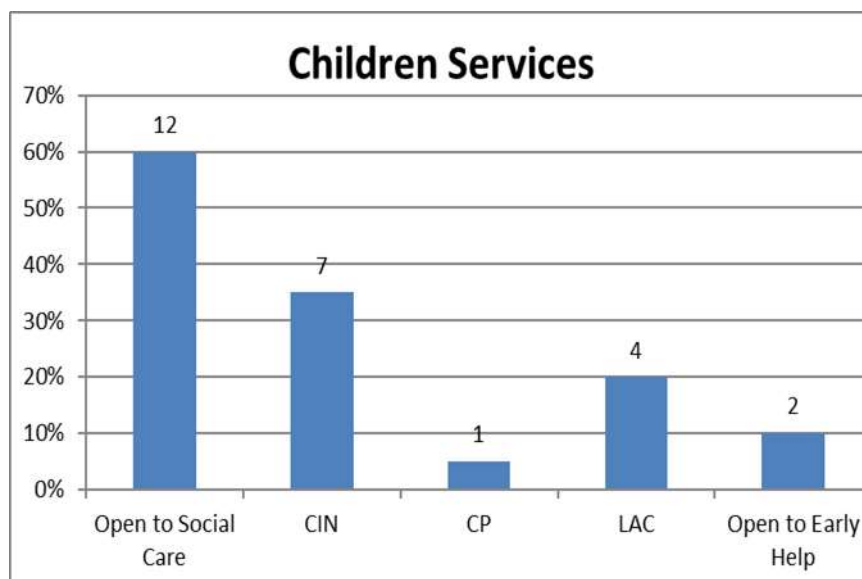
4.1 APPENDIX 1



17 CYP are classed as living at home, this is either with parents or an extended family member i.e. Auntie/Uncle, Grandparents etc.

6 x YP are classed as living in Supported accommodation, 2 of these are currently in HMYOI Wetherby, 2 are placed out of area and 2 placed in Hartlepool.

All accommodation is currently deemed suitable



Of the 21 YP 12 are currently open to Social Care – 7 are CiN, 1 CP and 4 are CIC

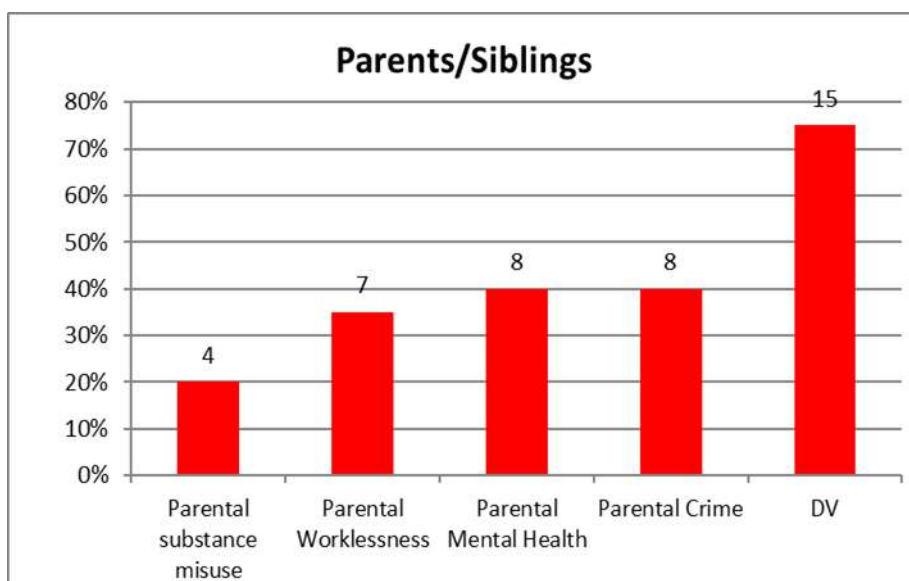
There are also 2 YP open to Early Help.

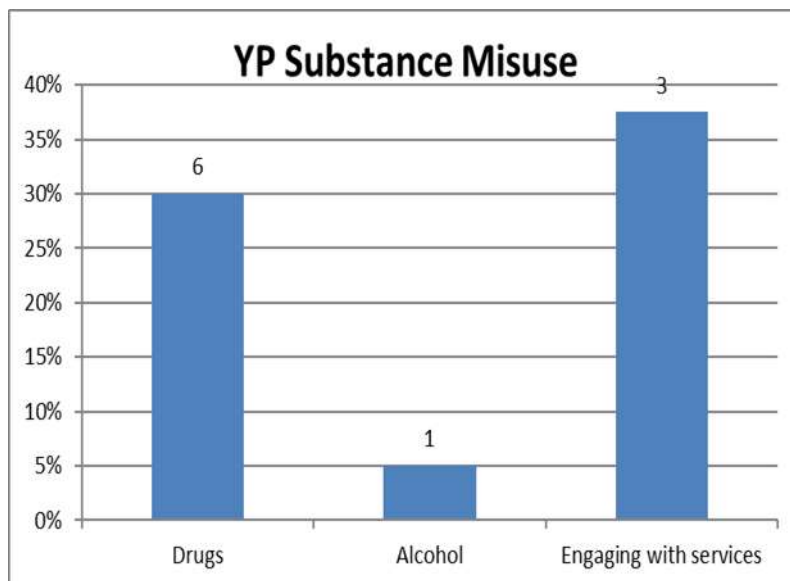
These figures equate to 15 of the 21 YP in this analysis.

Of the 4 parents identified as using substances 3 are engaging with services

Of the 8 identified as having MH issues 4 are engaging with services

DV – 15 CYP have witnessed DV





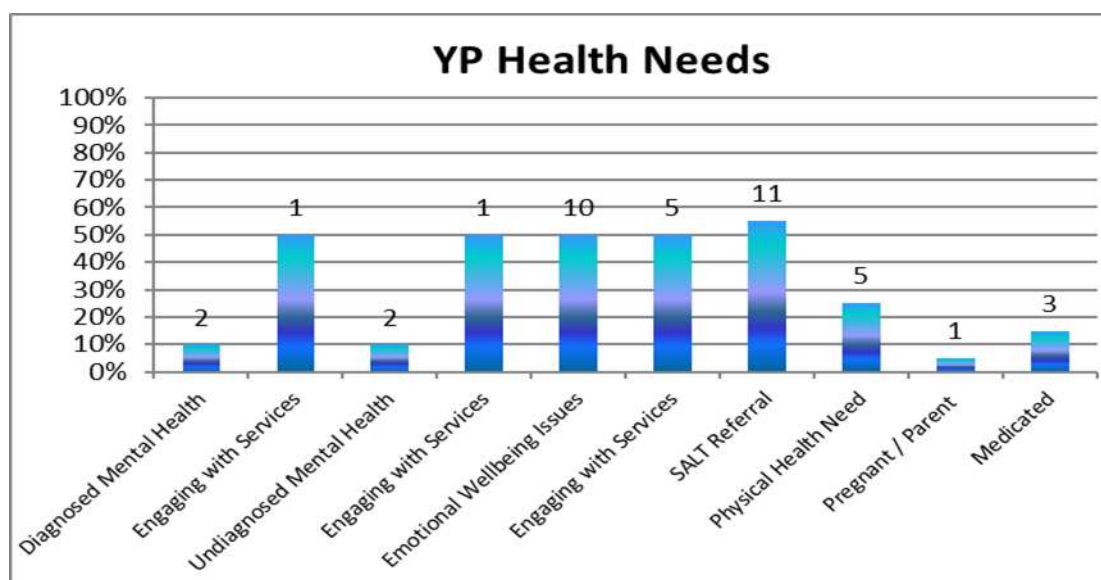
7 YP have been assessed as using substances/Alcohol

6 Drugs only

1 Alcohol only

4 referrals have been made by either the YJS or other services

3 is currently engaging or have engaged



2 CYP have a MH diagnosis, of those 1 is actively engaging with support

2 CYP have undiagnosed MH with 1 currently engaging in support

10 CYP have been identified as needing some form of emotional wellbeing support, of those 5 are engaging with services

11 CYP have been referred for a SLCN assessment and have or are engaging in the process

5 CYP have an identified/diagnosed physical health need

1 CYP is pregnant

3 CYP are medicated

****These graphs highlight a small snap shot of the Needs Analysis completed – May 2023**

****Education, attendance, SEND status i.e.EHCP and SEN need is captured in the Education report presented by the Virtual School Head teacher at all board meetings.**

10. Priorities

Children from groups which are over-represented

It is widely known that children from a range of backgrounds are over-represented in the youth justice system. Nationally it is known that Black and Mixed ethnicity boys are over-represented and a recent HMIP thematic report made a number of recommendations for local authorities, YJS partnerships and YJS managers in relation to these children.

However, it is not only Black and Mixed ethnicity children that are over-represented, and the YJS are aware and respond to any local concerns about all children from over-represented groups. This includes but is not limited to children known to social care services, children excluded from school and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.

There is no data to indicate that black and mixed ethnicity children are over-represented within Hartlepool YJS as well as Gypsy, Roma and traveller children. However the number of children within our care does fluctuate and at times there can be an over-representation as well as children excluded from school.

Disproportionality is covered within the YJS managers' report at the quarterly management board meetings. The following information was presented and discussed at the board meeting held in May 2023.

Children in our Care (CIOC)

- As at 02 05 23 there were **4** CYP who were CIOC open to the YJS, 2 on Statutory Referral Orders, 1 due to a remand episode with an ISS package and 1 for a Pre-Sentence Report (PSR)
- That equated to **11%** of the current YJS cohort
- Of the **4** CYP 2 were CIOC before becoming open to the service, **1** became a CIOC after entering the YJS and **1** became a CIOC due to their current remand episode, all are male.
- **3** of the CYP offences were committed out of placement, however **1** assaulted emergency workers at the point of arrest within their placement.
- We were also working with a further 3 CIOC on voluntary arrangements, 2 via the Choices programme and 1 via an AIM 3 assessment.
- As at the 02 05 23 in Hartlepool there were **203** CIOC 10-17 year old.
- **2%** of the overall 10-17 CIOC are currently open to the YJS on a statutory order/bail programme.

The YJS works very closely with Cleveland Police, CPS and the Courts to ensure protocol has been followed (10 point check) and there is clear transparent decision making. We also work alongside Social Care and the Through Care teams to ensure a good robust package of multi-agency support is afforded to each child. RJ training is also available and delivered to Care Home staff as required by the YJS RJ officer.

Prevention

Hartlepool YJSs recently implemented early and/or targeted prevention programme is known locally as "The Choices Programme"

Referrals are received from within Children's Services i.e. Social Care/Early Help for all children 10-17 displaying behaviours associated with offending, antisocial behaviour, or other vulnerabilities. All referrals are screened and discussed at management meetings

A worker is allocated from the Pre Court team who will undertake a further YJS screening tool, gain consent and implement an intervention plan alongside the child, parent/carer.

To date and in a short space of time we have engaged **18** children fully through a programme of interventions including positive activities, none of these children have had any further involvement with the YJS currently.

******This is a voluntary programme and children will and do decline to consent or disengage during interventions, we make every effort to keep all children engaged in the process which to date has proven effective.

Diversion

Hartlepool YJS as with the majority of YJSs has a strong diversionary offer to steer children out of the criminal justice system and avoid criminal records.

Our direct diversionary offer delivered directly by YJS staff consists of:

- Restorative Intervention (RI)
- Triage1 & 2
- (Turnaround)

Referrals are received via the Police (G26) and screened within our weekly OOC decision making panel, discussed in depth and decisions agreed as to the most suitable programme for the child. Mitigation, Gravity Scores and historical factors are taken into account prior to any decisions being made. Attendance at the panels will be a YJS manager, YJS Police Officer, RJ Officer, YJS nurse, SW/EHW (if open to other services) and education etc if required. At times referrals can also be sent from the court for consideration of an OOC and undergo the same process.

The child is allocated a worker who will gain consent and carry out a screening tool/assessment prior to jointly creating an intervention plan alongside the child, parent/carer. If the child fully engages with either RI, Triage or Triage 2 the initial offence is closed under Outcome 22. If however the child disengages or further offends it may be returned to the Police where a Youth Caution etc can be imposed.

The YJS has senior representation on the Durham/Cleveland OOC Scrutiny Panel where cases are looked at scrutinised/analysed i.e. was diversion the right offer, and all actions and future recommendations highlighted.

In 2022/23 Hartlepool YJS worked with **50** children via Triage **(39)**, Triage 2 **(3)** and RI **(8)**

******From April 2021 to March 2022 Hartlepool YJS worked with **34** children across the diversionary offer as at 31 03 23 **5** of those children had reoffended – this equates to a binary reoffending rate of **16%**, however more importantly **84%** hadn't reoffended.

Turnaround

School aged young people- School type

All YJSs nationally also have the Turnaround programme up and running. This programme has been very recently implemented and YJSs report directly to the MOJ with all returns, data and reports. This programme offers (voluntary) support via evidenced based interventions to all children who are currently Released Under Investigation (RUI), have been No Further Actioned (NFA) by the Police for an offence, at court may have received a Fine, been acquitted, had the case withdrawn or received a Conditional Discharge. Children having committed ASB and sign an Acceptable Behaviour Contract can also receive the support.

Children become ineligible for the programme if they are open to Social Care as Child Protection or a child in our care or are open to Early Help services – however children open as Child in Need can participate. A child can only participate with the programme once and can't be open to the YJS on a statutory order.

It's far too early in the life of the programme to create any meaningful data or be able to prove effectiveness, however in time the data will be valuable. The programme is funded until March 31st 2025.

Education

All YJS staff have direct access to a named Education worker within the Virtual School and a named worker within the One Stop Shop for all Post 16 children. The YJS will be commissioning time from an Educational Psychologist from Sept 23 who will significantly add to our education support offer.

There are monthly education meetings held within the YJS with all partners in attendance where every child is discussed, actions raised and the education database updated. The YJS also have senior representation on the monthly Inclusion partnership meetings. The Virtual School Head Teacher and One Stop Shop manager attend and produce reports for all management board meetings

**The following data is taken from the Education report produced for the Management board meetings

No of moves	No of Young people
0	6
1	8
2	4
3	1
4	3
5	0
6	0
7	1

Attendance Band	No of Young People
-----------------	--------------------

Number of days suspension	
Child 1	5
Child 2	18
Child 3	5
Child 4	2
Child 5	20.5
Child 6	26
Child 7	10
Child 8	33.5
Child 9	16
Child 10	2
Child 11	1.5
Child 12	2.5
Child 13	15.5

%	
100-95	1
94-90	5
89-85	3
84-80	1
79-75	1
74-70	1
69-65	0
64-60	1
59-55	0
54-50	1
49-45	0
44-40	2
Under 40%	6

The data proved is invaluable and provides excellent discussion, challenges and clear actions moving forward.

Restorative approaches and victims

Whilst crime rates in Hartlepool have fallen, the likelihood of being a victim of crime still remains a reality, especially in our most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. The YJS and broader Youth Justice Partnership are working hard to reduce the numbers of victims of crime, by incorporating the use of restorative justice practices. Restorative Justice (RJ) provides opportunities for those directly affected by an offence (victim, offender and members of the community) to communicate and ensure victims of youth crime have a voice.

In addition victims of youth crime are helped to access appropriate support pathways that enable them to move on from the impact of crime.

A personalised approach is taken to ensure that victims of crime in Hartlepool are placed at the centre. This includes ensuring that individual needs and wishes are fully taken into account. As a result we aim to visit all victims of crime so they are able to access pathways to support, including the option to participate in restorative justice. Across 2022/23 there were **52** contacts with direct victims of crime and where consented, a Victim Impact Statement carried out.

RJ is an important underlying principle of all disposals for children on YJS caseload, from Diversion to Detention & Training Orders.

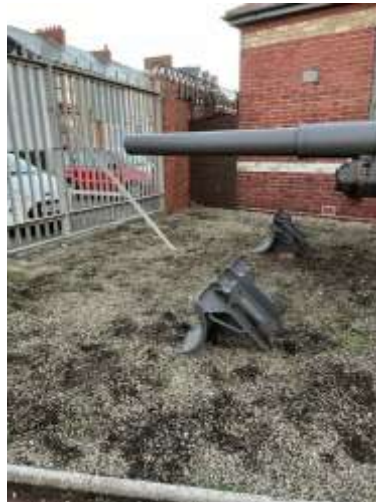
Whilst restorative processes technically result in practical reparation, for example participating in a task that benefits the community, the communication between victim and the child who has committed a crime, as part of this process, can also produce powerful emotional responses leading to mutual satisfaction and socially inclusive outcomes.

All YJS staff have undertaken service-wide RJ training, many to level 3 and the RJ/Victim lead to Level 4. The previous decision to bring RJ and victim work in house has enabled Hartlepool YJS to have direct control and influence in shaping the direction and quality of this work, including the establishment of updated working policies, practices and procedures. In turn, this has already begun to result in better outcomes for both victims and children and is much more responsive to local need.

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There is considerable evidence that RJ practice is much more integrated across all areas of the service. In particular, there is a closer link between those workers with additional RJ responsibility and case managers in relation to the needs and wishes of victims.

During the last couple of years direct and indirect reparative projects were difficult to deliver, however we are now introducing suitably risk assessed small group reparation projects. These are individual bespoke projects and are planned to take place involving furniture restoration, bird boxes for distribution to local groups, working alongside the RSPB, Heugh Gun Battery and local community projects at well-known land marks/venues across the town.



Reparation completed at the Heugh Gun Battery



Community reparation completed in a community allotment

Serious violence and exploitation

All 3 Cleveland YJS` have strategic representation within the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV). There are a number of meetings, boards and training events organised via CURV that the YJS attends. Improved data sharing and intelligence is evident and will continue to improve as the CURV takes shape and partner input begins to grow. There are also much clear links across the local authority and wider partners regarding Serious Violence. The YJS manager within his role as North East regional rep on the Association of YJS Managers (AYM) executive board led and produced the AYM national response for the consultation regarding the Serious Violence Duty.

The YJS Manager also has serious incidents within his report to the board and these are discussed and analysed for any lessons learned etc. During 2022/23 Hartlepool YJS reported 2 Serious Incidents to the YJB, all children involved were not known to the YJS previously.

There is ever improving partnership work across Hartlepool to address child criminal exploitation and interaction with the NRM. Hartlepool Multi Agency Child Exploitation team (MACE) lead on all matters regarding exploitation. There are regular case discussions and People/Areas of interest meetings which the YJS has senior representation at. The YJS has very good communication and information/intelligence sharing with the MACE team and co work many complex cases. A lot of work is ongoing with the SCA re NRM and regular liaison with the Police, CPS and Courts ensures everyone is as updated as can be. All YJS staff have attending various training events organised by the MACE re exploitation.

All YJS staff have carried out up to date Prevent training in line with local authority requirements.

The majority of children RUI who meet the criteria will be offered Turnaround, more up to date and current data will be made available as the programme progresses. As part of the YJS managers' report to management board meetings all RUI and bail figures are shared and discussed to measure the time from arrest to outcome. Suitable challenge is made where required.

Detention in police custody

A significant amount of work has been undertaken across Cleveland re children detained in Police custody. There is a monthly "Children in Custody" meeting where we discuss all children who have been held in custody 12 hours or more in the previous month. The meeting is attended by senior representation from the 3 Cleveland YJS`, Police Custody Management, EDT, Social Care, Custody health team and L&D. Every child is discussed to ascertain the reasons behind their length of stay in custody and suitable actions highlighted where required. The meeting is well attended and a lot of valuable information is shared.

This meeting has prompted further discussions and meetings such as, SCH Newton Aycliffe re the availability of PACE beds, discussions are underway.

The CURV has also recently funded 4 x Custody Navigators to engage, liaise and where needed support all children entering the custody suite. Management oversight is via South Tees YJS, however the Custody Navigators will engage all children and liaise directly with the home YJS, working across all 3 YJSs. This should hopefully speed up the process for children in the custody suite as the Navigators will also take on the role of Appropriate Adult as and when required.

Excitingly an area of the custody suite is being set aside for children only and a plan of works is in place to transform this into a Trauma informed space. There will be a separate entrance and exit, there will only be children allowed in this area and areas are being prepared with suitable

reading materials, fidget objects, painted walls etc. We are very much looking forward to this being completed. The Custody Navigators are due to go live in early July.

The following data is correct as at June 23 regarding outstanding Police investigations/enquiries

- **39** Offences currently being investigated
- Of those **18** offences are currently Released Under Investigation (RUI)
- The remaining **21** are Conditional/Unconditional Bail
- **7** of the 39 are with CPS for charging decisions
- **16** are currently Out of Court disposals or awaiting referrals via the Police
- **14** ongoing investigations continue (most recent offences)
- **2** will be ready to charge within 6 weeks

The YJS monitors time from offence to outcome and updates all data via the quarterly YJS management board meetings and challenges the Police/CPS as required.

Remands

There has been an increase in remands to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) and a small increase in the use of Remands to Local Authority Accommodation (RLAA). There are ongoing strategic discussions looking at suitable alternatives and plans for future RLAA.

In 2022/23 we had 2 very short remands to YDA, however 2 lengthy RLAA.

As a service we are constantly offering creative alternatives to the use of remands and custody. The changes to ISS and the impending YRO (ISS) pilot with trail monitoring will enhance this offer and allow us the opportunity to offer a more creative and potentially robust alternative to custody with an improved process of oversight and management.

Use of custody

Nationally the use of custody has decreased significantly over the past ten years and this is rightly a success in the youth justice system. When children do go to custody it can have a damaging effect on their lives, disrupting education and straining family relationships. Children in custody are likely to be amongst the most complex and vulnerable children in society.

Hartlepool YJS generally has relatively low numbers of children with custodial sentences, and every effort is made by the service to offer creative alternatives to a custodial sentence.

The service has very good links to the local secure estate and ensures timely communication and planning is undertaken at all times.

All relevant services are involved from outset and the 7 point plan is instigated from the beginning of every custodial sentence and followed throughout their sentence ensuring **Constructive Resettlement**.

Hartlepool have implemented a Constructive Resettlement Guidance document which all staff follow to ensure every child is supported from sentence to resettlement.

There is regular management oversight of this via meetings, supervisions and QA. The guidance also highlights processes to be undertaken prior to sentence including Pre Sentence Reports (PSR) and the need for child/family involvement throughout. Actions to be undertaken at court after sentence and also in the first 10 days of sentence and then throughout their sentence planning for constructive resettlement.

7 Point Plan:

1. Case Management and Transition: Ensure that young people serving custodial sentences receive effective, end to end service provision based on a thorough assessment of need and risk, in order to reintegrate them into the community

2. Accommodation: To ensure that all young people leaving custody can access suitable accommodation and support where appropriate.

3. Education Training and Employment: Provide all young people with suitable and sustainable Education, Training and Employment through their sentence and beyond.

4. Health: Ensure that all young people in custody have access to suitable and sustainable general and specialist healthcare services, based on individual need, so that problems are assessed and treated at the earliest opportunity and in the most appropriate manner.

5. Substance Misuse: Ensure that all young people entering custody are screened for substance misuse, with recognition of previous interventions. Those with identified needs should receive specialist assessment access to appropriate interventions and treatment services, with their aftercare needs met on return to community.

6. Families: Ensure that families of young people in custody receive timely, high quality support and information, from the point of arrest and throughout the young person's sentence.

7. Finance, Benefits and Debt: Ensure young people leaving custody and their families are provided with information and advice so that they are able to access appropriate financial support.

A multi-agency approach is embedded to ensure each area of the above plan is monitored and every child receives the best and most timely support available from all services involved. The service has direct links to all partners in relation to accommodation, health, education, finance/budget, substance misuse and children's services such as Social Care and Early Help who are brought together at the point of sentence.

10. Standards for children in the justice system

Last Judgements completed in 2019/20 from both Strategic and operational Self-Assessments:

Standard	Strategic Self-assessed results	Operational self-assessed results
N1 OOC	GOOD	OUTSTANDING
N2 At Court	GOOD	GOOD
N3 In the Community	GOOD	GOOD
N In Secure Settings	GOOD	GOOD
N5 On Transition	OUTSTANDING	GOOD

All areas identified for improvement have been included in the updated YJS improvement plans, Strategic Plans and wider YJS/Partner training. There will be a requirement to carry out another self-assessment of the National Standards again this year, however recent documentation has indicated that YJSs will be asked to concentrate on the “At Court” standard. YJSs will be updated by the YJB later in the year.

11. Workforce Development

An annual YJS training needs analysis is completed with the staff and forwarded to the local authority Workforce Development team. The YJS is constantly looking at creative and bespoke training for the staff and in line with identified needs of the children we work with.

Clinical supervision/emotional well-being is available via the Clinical Psychologist for all staff and reflective sessions are built into the YJS internal training programme.

Staff also attend all relevant local authority training as and when required.

	Workforce Development	Action Taken/Planned	Owner	Target Date/Completed
1	AIM 3 - All case managing staff to have attended AIM 3 Assessor and Intervention training	1. All staff to be booked on and complete AIM 3 Assessment/Intervention training 2. Managers to have completed AIM 3 supervisor training	YJS Manager	1. 2 members of staff left to complete AIM 3 Intervention training – Will attend during 2023 2. Operational managers have completed supervisors training
2	YJS refresher trg - All staff to attend YJS internal training sessions identified in training programme. New KPIs included for May 23	1. Internal training programme updated and circulated to all staff 2. Attendance monitored to ensure all staff are captured within the training	YJS Manager/Health team/Business Support	1. Internal training programme ongoing 2. Programme reviewed 6 monthly
3	Child View Clinic - All staff to have access to a fortnightly Child View clinic to upskill, refresh and ask questions, sort issues	1. Fortnightly Child View Clinic implemented and available for all staff to attend.	Business Support Manager	1. Fortnightly Child View clinic implemented and ongoing
4	YJS training needs analysis completed	1. YJS training needs analysis completed and shared with Workforce Development Team	Leadership Team	1. YJS Training needs analysis has been completed for 22/23 and shared with WD

Hartlepool YJS
Annual Internal Briefing/Training/Refresher Programme 2023/24

Month	Date	Briefing/Training	Delivery	Comments
Jun 23				
	15 June 1000-1130	Working with Anxiety	SC	
	29 June 1000 - 1200	SLCN refresher	K H	
July 23				
	06 July 1000-1130	Safety Planning	LH	
	13 July 1000-1100	Reflective Practice	SC	
	27 July 1000-1130	Comic strip conversations	KH	
Aug 23				
	No training			
Sept 23				
	07 Sept 1000-1100	Reflective practice	SC	
	14 Sept 1000-1130	Time concepts	KH	
Oct 23				
	05 Oct 1000-1130	Child development	Health Team	
	19 Oct 1000-1130	ADHD	SC	
Nov 23				
	16 Nov 1000-1130	Communication/Trauma	SC, KH	
	30 Nov 1000-1100	Reflective Practice	SC	
Dec 23				
	07 Dec 1000-1130	Teenagers & Hormones	YJS Nurse	
Jan 24				
	11 Jan 1000-1100	Reflective Practice	SC	
Feb 24				
	15 Feb 1000-1100	Sexual Health Refresher	YJS Nurse	
Mar 24				
	21 March 1000-1100	Reflective Practice	SC	

12. Evidence-based practice and innovation

The purpose of evidence-based practice and innovation is to promote effective practices which achieve positive outcomes for children.

This includes systems, ways of working or specific interventions which are based on the best available research, are child focused and developmentally informed.

Alongside this the YJS are constantly looking at creative ways to improve delivery and evidence effectiveness, all commissioned services deliver evidence based practice i.e. SLCN, TICP.

The following 3 recent examples of emerging practice, innovation and evidence based practice below had a very positive impact on the children, Staff and board members.

Emerging Practice – In 2022/23 the YJS began to theme the Management Board meetings and introduce spotlight sessions into these. These are short presentations given by members of the staff team/children on areas of practice within the service. To date we have delivered 4 of these sessions, Diversion & OOC, Reparation, Restorative Justice & Victims and our service Health Offer.

Where feasible we are always looking at children to help deliver these sessions and give their experiences on areas of the service delivery being discussed. We were very fortunate to have a child agree to talk to the board about their experience of Reparation, with support from the case manager the session went extremely well and the child equipped themselves excellently in what many could potentially find very daunting. Everyone at the meeting agreed that the process worked extremely well, board members learnt a lot from the child and were able to understand the process better being able to ask questions directly and listen to a child actually undertaking Reparation.

Innovation - During some recent work with a victim a request was made by the victim, they wanted direct answers to some questions from the child but didn't want to see or meet them, the victim wasn't really keen on correspondence either.

The YJS Victim worker discussed this further with their line manager and a decision was made to potentially attempt to gather the child's answers/response via audio which could be played back to victim. Discussion and clarity was sought via legal and the LA Data Protection lead regarding this, the YJS under guidance created a new consent form and prepared the child for the session.

It was agreed that the process could go ahead and once the victim had heard the child's response the recorded audio would be secured in a safe and then at a given date destroyed. This is the first time as a service we have tried something along these lines, it worked extremely well for both the child and victim and it definitely won't be the last time we use it!

Evidence Based Practice/Intervention

Sports based provision – There is a growing body of evidence ([Homepage - StreetGames](#)) to suggest engaging children and young people in sport can deter from any further involvement in crime and offending.

Child A was referred to the YJS after committing an assault and a further offence of possession of a knife. The Child was recently diagnosed with epilepsy. Following the completion of the AssetPlus assessment it was identified that Child A was spending an increased amount of time in the community and was eager to please his peers, regardless of their behaviour and the associated consequences. Child A's Case Manager referred them to a Parkour programme being delivered by the Local Authority Sports and Recreation Department. Child A engaged and quickly began to develop their personal and social skills, realising that epilepsy would not hold them back. Due to the positive attitude and engagement during sessions, Child A was offered a Junior Volunteer role, which would see them supporting and encouraging younger children. Child A also now gets free access to sessions which removed any potential financial barriers. Child A completed their GCSE's and is considering their Post-16 options, which included sports and leisure.

13. Evaluation

All areas of intervention and delivery are evaluated on a regular basis, commissioned services submit quarterly reports which are internally evaluated within the local authority Commissioning team. Speech, Language & Communication Needs (SLCN), Trauma Informed Care Pathway (TICP) and recently acquired input from ABC Therapies all deliver evidenced based interventions which are both internally and externally evaluated.

14. Service development

This Improvement Plan is presented quarterly within Management Board reports produced by the YJS Manager and discussed/monitored to ensure that relevant senior strategic oversight is in place and direction of travel remains positive.

	Service Improvement	Action taken/Planned	Owner	Target Date/Completed
1	Ensure that the identified priorities for the service correspond to the needs of the children supervised by Hartlepool YJS to ensure these needs are met.	Strategic Priorities have been amended following the findings of recent HMIP thematic inspections and the YJB Strategic plan. These will continue to be amended and discussed at all future Management Board meetings to correspond with the needs of children supervised by the YJS and in line with the up to date Needs Analysis/Data presented at all board meetings. Individual meetings to continue with the Virtual School, OSS, MACE, CURV and Substance Misuse Services to strengthen this process – all are members of the YJS Management Board and will submit updates at board meetings.	YJS Management Team Management Board Chair/Members	Ongoing and monitored/reviewed at all Management Board meetings
2	Maintain the Child First ethos across the YJS and partners	1. Produce and implement a Child First operational guidance for all staff and board members 2. Carry out bite size sessions with all staff and board members on the guidance 3. Review and update the guidance at planned regular intervals	YJS Management team Management board members All staff	1. Operational guidance produced, implemented and shared 2. Bite size sessions have been carried out with board members and all staff 3. The guidance will be reviewed in Sept 23 4. Monitoring of the process is ongoing via QA,

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		4. Audits, QA and Supervisions to monitor the progression of the Child First ethos identifying good practice and areas for improvement.		Supervision, case audits and feedback
3	Build upon and use the existing process to capture the voice of all children and their families to develop services.	1. SAQ are completed in depth for all children receiving an order 2. Intervention feedback forms are completed and handed to business support 3. Survey Monkey feedback is captured by children, parents/carers and victims of crime and shared with business support 4. Children, parents/carers are actively involved in planning and reviews, interventions and closures 5. All feedback is analysed at Leadership meetings and presented at board meetings for further discuss/service improvement.	YJS Management Team YJS Management Board Chair/Members	Process in place and all feedback and evaluation is presented at Management Board meetings for discussion
4	Maintain and where possible build upon the current service Health offer	1. Continue to establish funds annually to commission the SALT 2. Regular communication with the CCG to establish longevity and reassurance for the delivery of the TICP 3. Ensure the service retains a suitably qualified Nurse Specialist	YJS Management Board	Plans are in place via the YJS management board annually to review all commissioned services and secure future budgets as early as possible

15. Challenges, risks and issues

The key challenges, risks and issues that have the capacity to have an adverse impact on the Youth Justice Service in the coming twelve months and potentially beyond are detailed below:

Risks	Potential Impact	Control Measures
Secure Remand Costs and an increase in children remanded to Local Authority	The continued unpredictability associated with remand episodes and remand length has the potential to place significant financial pressure on the YJS and broader Local Authority.	It remains essential that the service can demonstrate to the courts that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody.

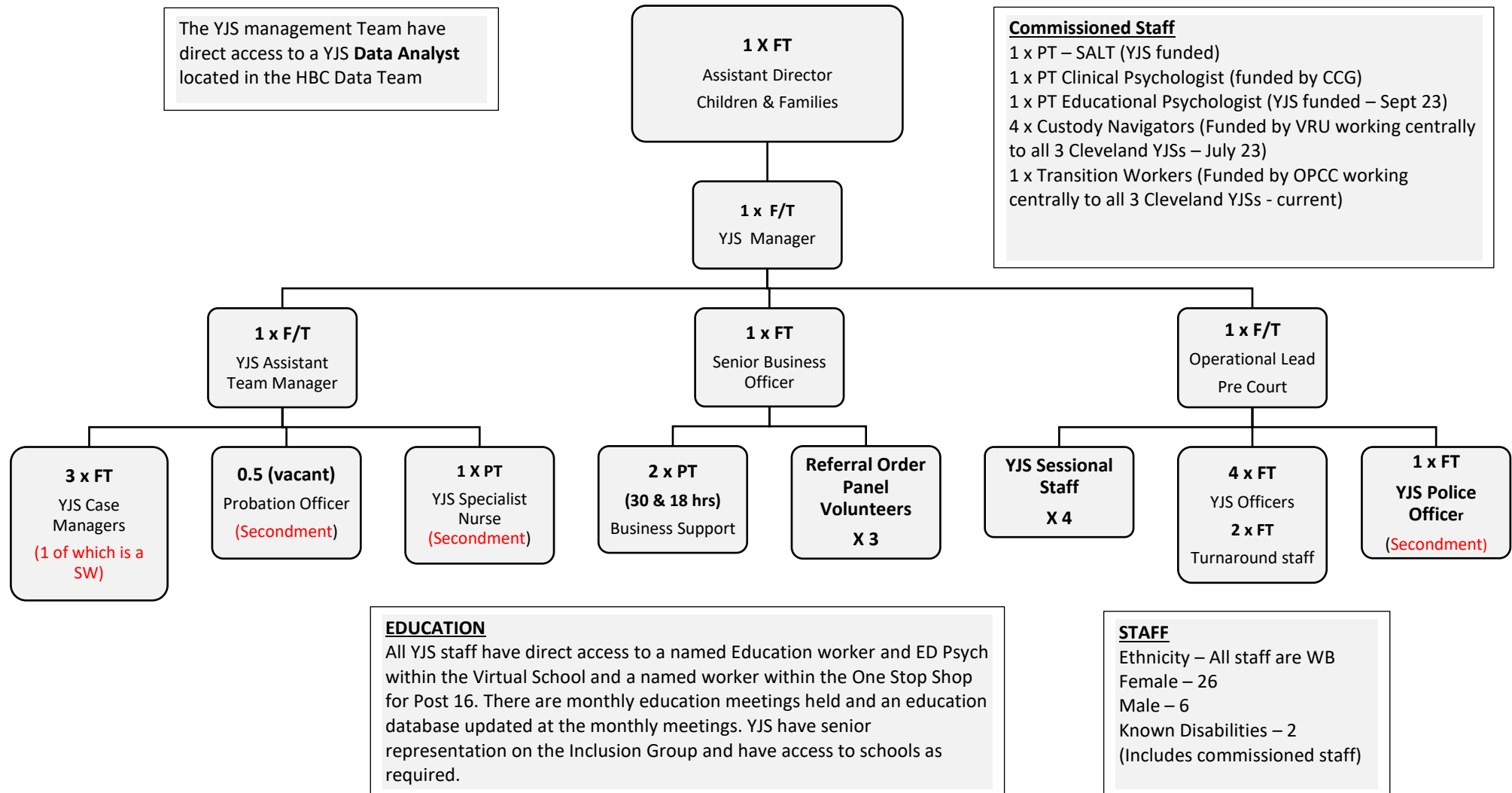
	The significant lack of suitable accommodation locally for RLAA leading to children being placed out of area with significant costs.	Coordinated Multi-Agency responses to children at risk of remand where safe and secure accommodation is the precipitating factor and is continuously monitored and further developed. Remand budget is incorporated within Wider Children's Services placement costs. North East YJSs piloting the new YRO (ISS) from 3 July 23.
Managing the potential for reduction in YJB grant and partnership financial and 'in-kind' contributions pre and post 2023/24	Consequential negative impact on performance. Reduced capacity to meet strategic and operational obligations and statutory requirements. Reduced capacity to continue to focus on early intervention and identification	Targeted resources to address need. Continue to administer and embed the current structure and practice. Regional collaboration with neighbouring YJS' such as coverage of Teesside Youth Court. Robust financial management and oversight from strategic board.
Continued concerns around Serious Youth Violence, Criminal Exploitation and County Lines	The rise in FTE, reoffending rates, serious youth violence and exploitation of vulnerable children. Ultimately leading to criminalisation and wider service involvement having an adverse impact on Looked After Children (CIOC) figures	Continued regular communication, intelligence and information sharing via MACE/CURV and across all services. Ensuring a multi-agency approach is adopted with senior strategic oversight. Ongoing joint training and regular updates on the national and local picture enabling timely and relevant interventions. Ensure clear processes and pathways (known to all staff) are implemented to work with identified children. Continue working alongside the OPCC, Cleveland Police and partners to support the VRU (CURV).
Ongoing recruitment issues within the Probation Services having a direct impact on YJS Seconded PO	The lack of Probation expertise, advice and guidance within the YJS process, especially regarding transitions and those potentially high risk transitions not getting the support they require.	It's difficult to identify any direct proposals/actions which can mitigate this ongoing issue. Financial reimbursement isn't the immediate answer as there aren't any available agency/temp PO available for YJSs to potentially employ?

Challenges & Issues	Potential Impact	Proposed Controls/actions
The implementation of the new YJB KPI	Unable to provide relevant and up to date information required due to inability within the Management Information System and the potential of added workload on business support/data analyst.	We are not due the latest upgrade until 15 August 23, which leaves a very tight turn around for our first submission on the 31 August 23. We also won't be certain that the MIS (Child View) is able to provide the information required.
The continued delay in receipt of the YJB grant (as at 26 June 23 we are still unsure as to the actual amount)	Slows down the process of budget planning/commissioning for the forthcoming year, services not in a position to implement a robust budget but having to plan on the previous year's amount. Restricts service creativity.	Communication is received early from the YJB highlighting the delays and at times we are informed that there won't be a reduction. This process needs to be smoother and more streamlined to allow YJSs to plan more robustly.

16. Sign off, submission and approval

Chair of YJS Board	Jo Heaney
Signature	
Date	28/6/2023

Appendix 1 – YJS Service Structure



Appendix 2 – Budget costs & Contributions 2023/24

B5: YOT budget Costs and Contributions

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board	302,160		152,991	455,151
Local Authority	252,928	131,207	36,209	420,344
Police		50,000		50,000
Police and Crime Commissioner			32,000	32,000
Probation		29,609		29,609
Health		5,500		5,500
* Welsh Government				0
Other			4,000	4,000
Total	555,088	216,316	225,200	996,604

* Welsh YOTs only

Common youth justice terms

ACE	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
AIM 2 and 3	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
AssetPlus	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services
CCE	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
Children	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
Child First	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
Child looked-after	Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority
CME	Child Missing Education
Constructive resettlement	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety

Community resolution	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
EHCP	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs
ETE	Education, training or employment
EHE	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
EOTAS	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting
FTE	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
HMIP	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
HSB	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
JAC	Junior Attendance Centre
MAPPA	Multi-agency public protection arrangements
MFH	Missing from Home
NRM	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
OOCD	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
Outcome 22/21	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
Over-represented children	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average

RHI	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
SLCN	Speech, Language and communication needs
STC	Secure training centre
SCH	Secure children's home
Young adult	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
YJS	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
YOI	Young offender institution

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

14 NOVEMBER 2023



Subject: DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (FORMER EDUCATION SERVICES GRANT RATE PER PUPIL) –DISAPPLICATION REQUEST

Report of: Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services and Director of Finance, IT and Digital Services

Decision Type: Key Decision – CJCS 138/23 tests (i) and (ii) applies.

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:
- Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.
- Where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.
- Of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.
- That is sustainable, clean, safe and green.
- That has an inclusive and growing economy.
- With a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To inform members of the outcome of Schools' Forum held on the 18 October 2023 and their decision in relation to the 2024/25 Education Services General Duties Rates.

- 2.2 To agree that the local authority should present a disapplication request to the Secretary of State in order to ensure that the local authority can discharge its statutory responsibilities.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 New national funding arrangements introduced in 2017/18 shifted responsibility for funding statutory duties from a specific grant to the Dedicated Schools Grant. The government provided no additional funding to schools to cover this cost shift. Members will recall that since 2017/18 the Council has had to apply for disapplication, in order to secure this funding.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 For the financial year 2024/25, the local authority proposed a rate of £60 per pupil. The rate is unchanged from 2017/18, which means the rate will have remained the same for eight years.
- 4.2 Schools' Forum considered this proposal and did not agree to transfer the funding to the local authority. Schools were clear that it was **not** because of concerns about the quality of services provided by the local authority, but they considered that funding statutory duties from school budgets is a budget cut and this funding should be provided by the government. Regulations state that if agreement cannot be reached with maintained schools the matter would need referring to the Secretary of State for a decision.
- 4.3 This has been the consistent view of Schools' Forum for the past seven financial years – from 2017/18 to 2023/24 inclusive. In each of these financial years, the local authority has successfully applied to the Secretary of State for disapplication of the Regulations. This means that the local authority is able to remove the required element of funding to ensure that statutory responsibilities are discharged.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In relation to the 2024/25 rate, should the Secretary of State not agree to the request of £60 per pupil/place, the local authority would not have enough funding to discharge essential statutory services to schools. This is considered low risk as applications by the Council have been approved for the previous seven financial years.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 If the Secretary of State does not agree to the request of £60 per pupil/place, the local authority would not have enough funding to discharge essential statutory services to schools.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Schools Revenue Funding 2024 to 2025 Operational Guide states that local authorities should set a single rate for the Education Services General Duties for 5 to 16 year olds. Local authorities may choose to establish differential rates for Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	There are no specific equality and diversity considerations.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	There are no specific equality and diversity considerations.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	There are no staff considerations.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	There are no asset management considerations.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	There are none.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 At their of the 18 October 2023, the maintained schools members of Schools' Forum were consulted on the rate of £60 per pupil/place.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The maintained schools members of Schools' Forum at the meeting on 18 October 2023 did not agree to the transfer of £60 per pupil/place to the local authority for the provision of statutory duties. Regulations state that if

agreement could not be reached with maintained schools, the matter would need referring to the Secretary of State for a decision.

- 10.2 Based on the decision made by the Secretary of State in relation to the 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 ESG rates, the Council has demonstrated the case for the funding required to discharge statutory responsibilities. Therefore, this provides a good basis for seeking approval for the 2024/25 rates, which it is proposed is maintained at £60 for the eighth consecutive year.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 It is recommended that Members:
- a) Agree the 2024/25 funding rate at £60 per pupil/place.
 - b) Agree to submit the disapplication request to the Secretary of State to set the Education Services General Duties rate at £60 per pupil/place for 2024/25.
 - c) Note this will be the eighth consecutive year the local authority has applied for disapplication and that the previous seven applications have been successful.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 Without this element of funding the local authority would not be able to discharge some of its statutory responsibilities in respect of schools.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 Schools' Forum Report 21 September 2023 and Schools' Forum Minutes 18 October 2023.

14. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 18 October 2023
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 18 October 2023
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 18 October 2023

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

14TH NOVEMBER 2023



Subject: CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION – ANNUAL REPORT

Report of: Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Decision Type: For information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:

- Where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide an up to date report in relation to number of children identified and tracked as a child missing education.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Children Missing Education (CME) statutory guidance places statutory functions on Local Authorities for tracking and identifying children who are missing from or not receiving a suitable education.
- 3.2 The statutory guidance sets out the expectations and responsibilities for local authorities and schools to work collaboratively and effectively to identify, monitor, track and trace all children who are at risk of or missing from education. Schools must notify and provide the local authority with the full details and contact information of all children who they admit to the school register. In Hartlepool, children on a school roll are added to the EYES system at the point they are admitted to a school. All maintained schools and academies update the details and destination of pupils and this information is imported into this database daily. Details of pupils who are admitted to and removed from the roll of independent schools are sent directly to the Attendance Team. Local

Authorities are required to make all “reasonable” enquiries to locate children who are missing from education.

- 3.3 In line with statutory guidance, pupils can only be removed from the school roll in specific circumstances, these are listed in Annex A (see **appendix A**) There are 12 sections listed in Annex A and these cover the reason a child can be legally removed from the roll of a school. Sections 6, 8 and 11 require that two criteria within that section are met in order to satisfy the ground for removal. Removal from the school roll for any reasons not listed in Annex A is illegal.
- 3.4 The explanation of Annex A has been shared with all schools in Hartlepool and it is on the reverse of the CME referral form.
- 3.5 Ofsted has placed an increasing focus on the off rolling of pupils nationally as the off rolling of pupils and the safeguarding implications relating to children missing education alongside its relationship to children who are home educated is a government priority.
- 3.6 Key messages around CME is disseminated to school staff and governors with an increasing focus on the link between children who are electively home educated and children missing education. Information on the illegal removal from the roll is discussed with school staff during termly Targeted Support Meetings with all schools and academies. The School Attendance Officers undertake half-termly register checks for schools and academies that purchase attendance services. Advice and guidance is sought from the Attendance Team by many schools and academies when they are about to remove a child from the school roll and they are supported to ensure the removal of the child meets the criteria set out in the pupil registration regulations and they following the Children Missing Education Procedures.
- 3.7 The Attendance Team work with school attendance leads and governors to ensure schools are fully aware of their responsibilities relating to Children Missing Education by providing training, guidance and challenge where appropriate.
- 3.8 Amendments to the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance assists with the tracking of children missing education as schools should have more than one contact for children they admit on to the school roll. Schools and academies now have email addresses for the majority of families; using emails addresses to make contact with families has enhanced the tracking of some pupils, as parents and carers do not change their email addresses as frequently as they change their mobile numbers.
- 3.9 The number of children missing education referrals from schools and enquiries from other local authorities during this academic year increased slightly from 166 in 2021-22 to 168 in the academic year 2022-23
- 3.10 Once the Attendance Team has exhausted all available avenues to locate a child, their details are added to the Hartlepool Inclusion Panel (HIP) agenda,

under the category of missing. Members of the multi-agency panel share any information they may hold which might assist with track the child.

- 3.11 Following discussion at HIP, if the child's whereabouts remain unknown they are placed on the agenda for discussion at a Multi-Agency Child Exploitation meeting (MACE). If no further information comes to light which assists with tracking the child it is at this point a letter is sent to the family's last registered GP alerting them that the family are missing from education and a flag is then added to their medical notes. If the child or family member subsequently attends A & E or registers with another GP their previous practice will share the child's whereabouts with the Inclusion and Attendance Coordinator.
- 3.12 Schools and academies are required to upload the details of any child who cannot be located to the School-to-School (S2S) database. This allows a national search to be conducted if a child then subsequently registers at school out of our area the home school will be notified that the child's file has been download.

Academic Year 2022-23

Month of Referral	Total number of Referrals	Number Traced
September	35	35
October	10	9
November	9	8
December	2	2
January	13	8
February	5	5
March	17	12
April	4	3
May	12	8
June	15	13
July	7	1
Total	129	104

- 3.13 Of the 129 CME referrals made in 2022/23 104 children have been successfully traced at the time of writing this report. The 25 outstanding CME cases are subject to ongoing investigation.

CME Referrals by National Curriculum Year 2022-23

NCY	Number of Referrals	Number Traced
Pre Admission	16	13
1	10	8
2	5	4
3	10	9
4	13	9
5	4	2
6	2	0
Primary Total	60	45
7	15	14
8	13	11
9	19	15
10	6	5
11	16	14
Secondary Total	69	59
Grand Total	129	104

- 3.14 Sixty nine, referrals were made in respect of secondary aged children. Sixty, referrals were made in respect of primary aged children or pre-admission age children. The CME procedures are not statutory for non-compulsory school age (children become statutory school age the term following their fifth birthday). However, referrals are actioned when received for pre-school children to ensure the smooth transition to education and to ensure that there is no gap in the child's education. The child's details are checked on the Keys to Success Database the term following their fifth birthday when they become statutory school age.
- 3.15 25 children remained untraced:
- 20 children are believed to have returned to their country of origin and left little or no forwarding details.
 - 5 children have moved in large local authorities and are waiting to be allocated a school place.
- 3.16 The 25 outstanding cases continue to be relentlessly investigated, and CME procedures followed. For example, information has been shared with School Health, CME, and admissions officers from other local authorities where we believe that the child may be resident, and enquiries made with housing and benefits. The children have also been logged on the national School to School

(S2S) database. Annual checks will be made at HIP, MACE and Keys to Success until the child ceased to be of statutory school age.

- 3.17 There has been an increase in the number of pupils who remaining missing this academic year from 18 in the academic year 2021-22 to 25 this academic year. Tracing children who is move abroad is very difficult due to privacy laws and the lack of information sharing. As a local authority, we have to undertake reasonable enquiries to locate these children and in larger local authorities if all investigation indicate to child is abroad they cease their investigation and close. Due to our small numbers, we keep these children open and continue with our investigation until the child ceases to be of compulsory school age.
- 3.18 In addition to the CME referrals received from schools/services within Hartlepool the team received a further 39 requests for information from other local authorities in relation to children they believed had moved into Hartlepool. Of the 39 referrals received 38, became registered pupils at a Hartlepool school. One remained untraced and the referral was returned to the local authority, as we had no evidence indicating that they were residing in Hartlepool.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 The School Attendance Team continues to deliver the Local Authority statutory functions in relation to Children Missing Education.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	There are no risk implications.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	There are no financial considerations contained in this report.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	There are no legal considerations contained in this report.
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	There are no child and family poverty considerations contained in this report.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	There are no equality and diversity considerations contained in this report.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	There are no staffing considerations contained in this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	There are no asset management consideration contained in this report.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations contained in this report.
CONSULTATION	No consultation was required in the production of this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Committee is asked to note this report and the work of the School Attendance Team to deliver the Local Authority statutory functions in relation to Children Missing Education.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The recommendation is to ensure the Local Authority is compliant with statutory duties in relation to Children Missing Education.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 30 October 2023
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 31 October 2023
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 30 October 2023

Appendix A

Annex A: Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended

1	8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
2	8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
3	8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
4	8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
5	8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
6	<p>8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.

7.1 Appendix A

7	8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
8	<p>8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and —</p> <p>(i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);</p> <p>(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and</p> <p>(iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.</p>
9	8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
10	8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.
11	<p>8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and—</p> <p>(i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or</p> <p>(ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.</p>
12	8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

14TH NOVEMBER 2023



Subject: ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION
Report of: Executive Director, Children and Joint Commissioning Services
Decision Type: For information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:

- Where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide updated information in relation to Elective Home Education (EHE)

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There continues to be rising numbers of children being removed from school to receive elective home education.

The table below shows the number of children receiving EHE at the school census point on October each year.

Number EHE	Oct 19	Oct 20	Oct 21	Oct 22	Oct 23
Male	21	32	41	52	61
Female	34	47	67	80	109
Total	55	79	108	132	170

The table below shows the year groups of the children currently EHE

Year Grp	Jan 2023	Oct 23
REC	4	2
Year 1	3	9
Year 2	8	7
Year 3	2	9
Year 4	5	5
Year 5	6	10
Year 6	10	6
Year 7	10	13
Year 8	13	17
Year 9	20	28
Year 10	25	27
Year 11	21	37
Post 16	0	0

3.2 Special Educational Needs

At present 34 children receiving EHE have identified Special Educational Needs

SEN	Number children with SEN		
	Oct 2022	Jan 2023	Oct 2023
EHCP	1	2	2
SEN Support	12	16	32

Primary SEN Need (April 2023)	Number of children (EHCP)	Number of children (SEN Support)
ASD	2	3
SEMH	0	8
SLCD	0	7
MLD	0	8
Physical	0	1
SpLD	0	5

ASD Autism Spectrum
 SEMH Social, Emotional, Mental Health
 SLCD Speech, Language, Communication Difficulties
 MLD Moderate Learning Difficulties
 SpLD Specific Learning Difficulties

3.3 Social Care Involvement

There are currently 12 children open to social care receiving elective home education

Social Care Involvement	No of children
Early Help	1
Child in Need	9
Child Protection	2

The Virtual School team have excellent relationships with social care and link with the children's allocated workers regularly. Social workers are invited to EHE meetings with parents.

3.4 Reasons for Removal

Reason	Number of Children	
	Jan 2023	Oct 23
Alternative to exclusion	1	3
Attendance	3	3
Awaiting school place	0	1
Bullying	1	8
Educated in home language	0	0
General dissatisfaction with school	26	32
Health/ Mental health	18	28
Lifestyle (including GRT)	1	6
Not transferring to Primary	0	0
Not transferring to secondary	0	0
Parental Choice	50	57
Parental Choice- Covid	8	6
Parental Choice- SEND	1	2
Pregnancy	0	1
Relationship breakdown with school	2	0
Unknown	16	23

3.5 Schools Children ceased to attend due to EHE

School	Number of Children	
	Jan 2023	Oct 23
Brougham	1	1
Clavering	1	2
Eldon Grove	2	5
Eskdale	0	1
Fens	2	3
Golden Flatts	1	1
Grange	0	1
Greatham	1	1
Hart & Elwick	4	3
Jesmond Gardens	3	3
Kingsley	3	3
Lynnfield	1	1
Rossmere	7	7
Sacred Heart	2	2
St Aidan's	1	0
St Cuthbert's	1	1
St Helen's	2	2
St John Vianney	1	3
Stranton	3	4
Throston	2	1
Ward Jackson	0	1
West Park	2	4
West View	0	2
Dyke House	16	26
The English Martyrs	5	17
High Tunstall	11	11
Manor	17	22
St Hild's	17	15
Out of Authority (either in school or previously EHE)	17	22
Never attended School	4	4

3.6 Date EHE Commenced

The information below shows the date when the children who are currently EHE commenced their education at home

Date	No of children
2014	2
2015	1
2016	1
2017	0
2018	2
2019	6
2020	16
2021	16
2022	40
2023	83

3.7 Children not accessing Suitable Provision

There are currently **26** children who either we do not have information from parents or the information we have received is not sufficient to clarify whether the children are receiving a suitable, full time, appropriate education and therefore the local authority are following the School Attendance procedures which ultimately could lead to a School Attendance order being requested and the children returned to school.

3.8 Communication with Parents

The Virtual School seek to provide support, advice and guidance to parents whose make the decision to educate their children at home. The team seek to forge positive relationships with parents to ensure that the children are receiving a suitable education. It is becoming more common for parents to refuse to engage with the team and seek to have all communication in writing. There are currently **34** children where parents will have no other communication with the team other than in writing.

Hartlepool Home Education procedures seeks to engage with parents at a minimum of a bi-annual basis. There are increasing numbers of parents stating that they will not engage with this and have requested annual contact only. All home educating parents have been written to and the policy re-iterated to them that the team will continue to contact on a bi-annual basis. If parents do not engage with this the team are able to take non-engagement as the child not receiving a suitable education and the school attendance order process will commence.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 Children's Services Committee are requested to note the contents of the report

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	None.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	None.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	None.
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)	None.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)	None.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	None.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	None.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	None.
CONSULTATION	n/a

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommendation that Children's Services Committee notes the contents of the report

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 There are rising numbers of children being removed from schools to receive Elective Home Education.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 10 October 2023
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 10 October 2023
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 10 October 2023

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

14TH NOVEMBER 2023



Subject: CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS

Report of: Executive Director Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Decision Type: For information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:
- Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.
- Where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To present to members the Annual Report of Children Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2022/23

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Annual Complaints and Compliments Report provides information on the complaints for children's social care and public health. It summarises information in relation to complaints that have been received and responded to, as well as compliments received during the reporting period.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 The report is attached as **Appendix A** and provides an analysis of complaints and compliments during the reporting period. The report outlines where learning has occurred from complaints and actions implemented as a result.

4.2 The report includes:

- Complaints and compliments received in 2022/23
- Outcomes of complaints;
- Actions undertaken following findings; and
- Complaints considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in 2022/23.

5. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE COMPLIMENTS/ COMPLAINTS

5.1 During 2022/23, 49 compliments have been recorded relating to children's social care. These range from an expression of thanks and appreciation in the form of a thank-you card to written communication. The number of compliments reported to and recorded by the Quality and Review Team has increased by 20 compliments compared to 2021/22.

5.2 A total of 46 complaints were received in 2022/23. The number of complaints received has decreased by 15 from the previous year.

5.3 Of the 46 complaints received in 2022/23, 26 complaints were not considered further leaving 20 complaints for investigation.

5.4 Details of the different stages of investigation are included within the annual report (**Appendix A**)

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	None.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	None.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	None.
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	None.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	None.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	None.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	None.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	None.
CONSULTATION	Not required.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That members of Children's Services Committee note the contents of the Annual Report of Complaints and Compliments 2022/23 and note that the report will be published online.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is a requirement that an Annual Report regarding complaints is prepared and presented to the relevant Policy Committee and published on the Council's website.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 None.

10. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 17/10/2023
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 17/10/2023
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 17/10/2023



HARTLEPOOL
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Annual Complaint Report 2022-2023



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B: Examples of actions taken in complaints about children's social care services

1. Introduction

Welcome to Hartlepool Borough Council's Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Complaints, Compliments and Representations Annual Report. The report covers statutory complaints and compliments received for children's social care services and public health functions for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The report outlines:

- Details of the complaints and compliments received over the reporting period;
- Performance in relation to handling of complaints;
- Actions implemented, any lessons learned and resulting improvements following enquiry into complaints.

2. Background

Complaints and compliments are valued as an important source of feedback on the quality of services. Each complaint is investigated and, where appropriate, redress made. Equally important is the work to learn lessons to prevent a repeat of failure in service quality and continually improve services.

2.1. What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about a service that is being delivered, or the failure to deliver a service. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) define a complaint as “*an expression of dissatisfaction about a council service (whether that service is provided directly by the council or on its behalf by a contractor or partner) that requires a response.*”

A complaint can be made in person, in writing, by telephone or email or through the council's website. It can be made at any office. Every effort is made to assist people in making their complaint and any member of staff can take a complaint.

2.2. Who can complain?

A complaint can be made by:

- A child or young person
- A parent or foster carer
- Special Guardians
- Anyone who is or is likely to be affected by the actions, decisions or omissions of the service that is the subject of a complaint.

3. Children's Social Care Complaint Framework

3.1. Complaint management arrangements

The statutory complaint function for children's social care sits within Quality and Review under the management of the Head of Service (Quality and Review).

The remit of the Complaints Manager's function is:

- Managing, developing and administering the complaint procedure.
- Providing assistance and advice to those who wish to complain.
- Overseeing the investigation of complaints that cannot be managed at source.
- Supporting and training staff.
- Monitoring and reporting on complaints activity.

3.2. The complaint regulations and procedure

The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 came into force from 1 September 2006. This procedure is for all representations received from children and young people, their parents, foster carers or other qualifying adults about social care services provided or commissioned by children's social care. The full detail of the complaints procedure is available on the Council's website at:

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20004/council_and_democracy/429/complaints_comments_and_compliments

The Regulations and Statutory Guidance '*Getting the Best from Complaints*' are now fully embedded into the children's social care complaints system and

information derived from complaints is included in the annual monitoring of children's social care and made available to the public.

A child or young person who make a representation is allocated the services of an Advocate to enable their views to be effectively promoted.

There are three stages to the procedure.

» Stage 1

Local Resolution: The aim of stage 1 is to sort out the matter as quickly as possible. The complaint will be allocated to a manager who will contact the complainant to discuss the complaint. Stage 1 of the complaints procedure should be completed within 10 working days but if there are a number of issues to look into, this can be extended up to 20 working days. The complainant will receive a response to the complaint in writing.

» Stage 2

Investigation: This part of the procedure is used when the complainant remains unhappy after their complaint has been responded to at Stage 1 or the complaint is sufficiently serious enough to warrant a more formal investigation. Investigations are conducted by an Investigating Officer who must be independent of the service area and/or decision making being complained about. Sometimes, an Investigating Officer external to the Council is appointed when the issues complained about are complex, have a number of elements to them or there is sufficient justification to appoint an external Investigating Officer. An Independent Person is also appointed at Stage 2. This is a statutory role and the Independent Person (who is external to the Council) works alongside the Investigating Officer with a remit to ensure that the process is open, transparent and fair.

Reports completed by the Investigating Officer and Independent Person are submitted to an Adjudicating Officer (usually the Assistant Director) for response.

The investigation and adjudication process should be concluded within 65 working days.

» Stage 3

Independent Complaint Review Panel: If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, they may request that the issues are taken to a Complaint Review Panel (Stage 3). The Panel consists of an Independent Chair and two independent panel members. The Panel considers the complaint and can make recommendations to the Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services within 5 working days of the Panel meeting.

The Director is required to make a formal response to any findings and recommendations of the Review Panel within 15 working days of receiving the Panel's report.

3.3. Referral to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

If, at the end of the complaints procedure, the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome or the way in which their complaint has been handled, they may ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) to investigate their complaint. Complainants may also approach the LGSCO directly without accessing the complaints process. In these cases it is usual for the LGSCO to refer them back to the Council for their complaint to be examined through the relevant complaints process before they intervene.

4. Public Health Complaint Framework

4.1. The complaint regulations

The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities (Partnership Arrangements, Care Trusts, Public Health and Local Healthwatch) Regulations 2012 cover the statutory complaint handling arrangements relating to public health functions of a Local Authority. These regulations also cover the provision of services by a service provider where the complaint relates to public health functions for which the Local Authority Director of Public Health has responsibility for.

4.2. Complaint management arrangements

The statutory complaint function for public health also sits within the Quality and Review Service under the management of the Head of Service (Quality and Review).

5. Principles and outcomes

Good handling of complaints and representations involves:

- Keeping the complainant at the centre of the complaints process;
- Being open and accountable;
- Responding to complainants in a way that is fair;
- Being committed to try to get things right when they go wrong;
- Seeking to continually improve services.

Statutory complaints are underpinned by the following:

- A procedure that aims to be fair, clear, robust and accessible;
- Support being available to those wishing to make a complaint;
- Timely resolution following enquiry into complaints/representations;
- Lessons learnt following complaints and services improved;
- Monitoring being used as a means of improving performance.

6. Public information

Information about the complaints and representations framework is accessible via the Council's public access points and also the Council's website at: https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20004/council_and_democracy/429/complaints_comments_and_compliments

Children, young people and their carers are provided with factsheets explaining the procedure.

Information in other formats such as large print or Braille or translation in languages other than English are made available upon request.

7. Summary of representations

7.1. Compliments

Compliments are generally recognised to be an indicator of good outcomes for children, young people and their families. They also serve to provide wider lessons regarding the quality of services.

During 2022/23, 49 compliments have been received relating to children's social care. These range from an expression of thanks and appreciation in the form of a thank-you card to written communication. The number of compliments received has increased by 20 from the previous year. The increase in compliments may partly relate to the awareness raising undertaken in the past year about the importance of forwarding expressions of thanks and appreciation from children and their families on to the Quality and Review Team. Appendix A provides some examples of compliments received during the period.

7.2. Children's statutory social care complaints received in 2022/23

A total of 46 complaints were received in 2022/23. The number of complaints received has decreased by 15 from the previous year.

Actions implemented to improve services as a result of complaints are outlined in Appendix B.

There were 7 complaints carried forward to 2022/23 from 2021/22. Of these 7 complaints:

- 5 complaints concluded following the completion of Stage 2; and
- 2 complaints were heard by a Stage 3 Complaint Review Panel. A complainant has the right to progress their complaint onto the LGSCO if they remain dissatisfied following the conclusion of the Stage 3 process. At the time of writing this report, the Council has not received any contact from the LGSCO in relation to these 2 complaints.

Of the 46 complaints received in 2022/23, 26 complaints were not considered further leaving 20 complaints for investigation. Overall, there was a decrease of 16 complaints investigated in 2022/23 than the previous year.

Of the 26 complaints not considered further, this was because:

- 11 complaints related to ongoing or concluded court proceedings. Any dissatisfaction about matters before the Court cannot be considered within the complaints framework. These should be raised during the court proceedings before decisions are reached by a Judge or, in the case of disagreement with decisions made within proceedings, via the legal appeal process. In these 11 cases, the complainant was informed that their representation could not be considered under the complaints procedure and was signposted to the LGSCO if they remained unhappy with the decision not to investigate their complaint.
- 7 complaints were withdrawn by the Council when the complainants did not communicate further despite repeated efforts by the Council to engage with the complainants.
- 5 complaints received were not accepted for investigation because the person making the complaint did not meet the 'who may complain' eligibility set out in statutory guidance. The Council outlined its reason for not accepting the complaint and signposted the complainant to the LGSCO if they remained unhappy with the Council's decision.
- 2 complaints were withdrawn by the complainant who had decided they no longer wished for their dissatisfaction to be addressed within the complaints framework.
- 1 complaint received related to another organisation. The Council outlined why it could not investigate the complaint and signposted the complainant to the relevant organisation responsible for the subject matter being complained about.

Of the 20 complaints investigated:

- 15 complaints were received from a parent;
- 2 complaints were received from a connected carer;
- 1 complaint was received from a child in our care;
- 1 complaint was received from a care leaver; and
- 1 complaint was received from a representative of a parent with the parent's signed consent for the representative to make the complaint and act on the parent's behalf in the matter of the complaint.

All 20 complaints investigated were responded to at Stage 1 in the first instance. Of these:

- 18 complaints were resolved at Stage 1; and
- 2 complaints progressed to Stage 2.

Of the 2 complaints which have progressed to Stage 2:

- 1 complaint has not yet concluded the Stage 2 process; and
- 1 complaint which has concluded the Stage 2 process has progressed to Stage 3 Complaint Review Panel. At the time of writing this report, the Complaint Review Panel has not been held.

These complaints will be carried forward and their outcome reported in 2023/24.

7.3. Advocacy services

Of the 20 complaints investigated:

- 1 complainant chose to have a friend to support them during the complaint process rather than an advocate;
- 1 complainant chose to have a representative to act on their behalf in the matter of the complaint; and
- 1 complainant chose to engage an advocate part way through the complaints process.

7.4. Complaints considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) about matters being complained about under the children's statutory social care complaints procedure during 2022/23

There were 4 complaints considered by the LGSCO about matters being complained about under the children's statutory social care complaints procedure during 2022/23. Of these:

- 3 complaints were from the 26 complaints which were not considered further and related to ongoing or concluded court proceedings. In each complaint, the LGSCO decided that they have no power to investigate the complaint. The LGSCO cannot investigate what happened in Court or the content of reports before the Court; and
- 1 complaint was from the 7 complaints which were carried forward from 2021/22 to 2022/23. A complainant approached the LGSCO about a delay in dealing with the complaint at Stage 2 of the process but the LGSCO found there was insufficient evidence of fault in how the Council had dealt with the matter given the exceptional circumstances which had caused the delay.

7.5. Complaints carried forward to 2023/24

A total of 2 complaints from 2022/23 will be carried forward to 2023/24.

7.6. Complaints in 2022/23 – Public Health Functions

There were 3 complaints received in relation to public health functions during 2022/23. The number of complaints received has increased by 2 from the previous year.

Of the 3 complaints received:

- 1 complaint was not accepted for investigation. The Council outlined its reason for not investigating the complaint and signposted the complainant to the LGSCO if they remained unhappy with the Council's decision. The complainant approached the LGSCO who found that there was insufficient evidence of injustice to start an investigation;
- 1 complaint was withdrawn by the complainant who had decided they no longer wished for their dissatisfaction to be addressed within the complaints framework; and

- 1 complaint which was investigated was not upheld.

8. Actions taken following complaints

Actions implemented following the conclusion of a complaint are an important aspect of the complaints framework. Appendix B outlines the context of some actions that have been put in place to improve services as a direct result of complaints and representations received in children's social care.

9. Conclusions and way forward

9.1. Going forward

We continue to ensure that a person-centred approach is adopted for the handling and investigation of each complaint. We will continue to focus on ensuring we monitor that: complainants receive appropriate and timely feedback on complaints; appropriate apologies are offered; and any service improvement recommendations are delivered.

9.2. Action plan

Actions for 2023/24 are as follows:

- Continue to remind and encourage the workforce to inform the Quality and Review Team when expressions of thanks have been received for recording and reporting purposes. These provide an indication of satisfaction with services and should be recorded and reported.
- Continue to raise awareness of and promote the relevant statutory complaints procedure for children's social care and public health functions for children.
- Continue to raise awareness of lessons learnt from complaints to inform policy and practice.

Appendix A: Examples of compliments received across Children's Social Care Services

"I would like to say how grateful I am to have worked with X, he has gone over and beyond for A and B. He has been very responsive to the children's needs and have resolved any issues that they or their carers have had. I can't rate him high enough for the efforts he has made in ensuring that the children have remained settled and have had their voices heard."

From a foster carer about a Social Worker

"L always listens to me, she always respects me. When I was going through a really bad patch in my life she was always there for morale support. She's lovely. I wouldn't change anything about L. She always talks to me in a way I can understand her. Great, she's helped with a lot. She helps me with my mood and when I'm at a heightened way she is always there and helps me calm down. Anything I need she is always there for me. Kind, Trustworthy, she's always there for support for me – a shoulder to cry on in a way."

From a parent about a Social Worker

"Can I again just say thank you so very much for all your help. I honestly don't think I would have got here without you. It is something N will know forever, just how much you put into making this holiday happen for him and us. You are appreciated so much."

From a family about an Independent Reviewing Officer

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me this chance to parent 2 of my children and do it right. You put your faith and trust in me and that means everything and I promise not to let my children or you down."

From a parent about a Social Worker

"W's support is exceptional – she is always available no matter how trivial. Her support and care for us and R is way above and beyond the call of duty. W has kept us going through some very difficult times. W recently visited R at her new respite provision on a weekend, which she didn't have to do. But knowing she was impressed with the care R was getting, really helped us to relax much."

From a child's family about a Social Worker

"He has been extremely supportive and helpful and has built a really great relationship with us as a family ensuring that my eldest two children's needs have been met."

From a parent about a Social Worker

"It does help too that I have some amazing people around me too that I can lean on and trust. I know I don't say it often (partly cos I think you already know and it's mushy) I do appreciate everything you do for me and I do see the little things. I know I wouldn't be the carer I am if you hadn't put the work in with me. I know I wouldn't have the same level of confidence I have now (I had none left when you took over managing me) and I'm certain I wouldn't feel as comfortable in my own skin as I do. I know I still have a long way to go on that but you have made such a big difference. I think at times you don't think I acknowledge you when I talk about how lucky I've been with X but I just assume you already know how much I value you and your work above that, believe me I do know what a great blessing it's been having you in my corner."

From a foster carer about a Supervising Social Worker

"She is brilliant and explained everything really well and clear. She made us feel really comfortable, she is the best social worker we ever had and could not ask for one better. She took on board what we had to say which we really appreciated. She is amazing, understanding and compassionate."

From a parent about a Social Worker

Appendix B: Examples of actions taken in complaints about Children's Social Care Services

Details of complaint/Outcome	Actions arising from complaints
<p>The complainant was unhappy about family time arrangements and raised concerns about his future living arrangements.</p> <p>Concluded at Stage 1</p>	<p>The complainant chose to be supported by a friend in their complaint. The Team Manager telephoned the young person to discuss his unhappiness and was able to talk about safe family time and the process the Social Worker was following about living closer to family members. The young person was happy following the explanations provided.</p>
<p>The complainant expressed his dissatisfaction about not having received timely responses to his queries regarding his child's care and progress.</p> <p>Concluded at Stage 1</p>	<p>A Head of Service contacted the complainant by telephone to discuss the matters raised. An apology was provided for the lack of timely responses and an explanation provided as what had caused the delay in communication on this occasion. The Head of Service was also able to clarify that a review was being planned to which the complainant would be invited to. This was confirmed to the complainant in writing.</p>
<p>The complainant raised that the Social Worker had included a previous historic matter within a recent assessment which was incorrect.</p> <p>Concluded at Stage 1</p>	<p>An explanation was provided to the complainant that the information being complained about was gathered from historical case records and was corroborated as factual. This was confirmed in writing by the Team Manager and accepted by the complainant.</p>

Details of complaint/Outcome	Actions arising from complaints
<p>The complainant expressed that the Social Worker was undertaking unplanned home visits at school run times. The complainant was concerned that she did not want it to appear that she was not working with the Social Worker because of this.</p> <p>Concluded at Stage 1</p>	<p>The Team Manager looked into what had happened and accepted that the Social Worker, on occasion, has visited at a time which coincided with the school run. The Team Manager discussed the matter with the Social Worker to ensure she was mindful of times of unplanned visits and that they were not done at school run times. An apology was provided to the complainant for this.</p>
<p>The complainant was dissatisfied with a change of Personal Advisor and a lack of support around housing and money matters.</p> <p>Concluded at Stage 1</p>	<p>The Team Manager discussed the dissatisfaction raised with the complainant. It was explained that the change of Personal Advisor was as a result of the previous Personal Adviser leaving the Council. The Team Manager was also able to discuss the support which had been offered, and at times accepted, in relation to housing and money matters. This was confirmed by the Team Manager in writing.</p>
<p>The complainant expressed his dissatisfaction about a lack of communication and information about his children's current situation.</p> <p>Concluded at Stage 1</p>	<p>The Team Manager telephoned the complainant to discuss his concerns about his children's situation. The Team Manager was able to explain the pressing need that had arisen to ensure his family's safety which had taken priority and contact with him had regrettably been overlooked in error. An apology was provided and the complainant was accepting of this as well as the chance to discuss matters with the Team Manager.</p>