South Tyneside Youth Justice Plan

2023





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Foreword

As chair of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) I welcome the opportunity to introduce our annual Youth Justice plan 2023-2024. As with previous years, it demonstrates the range of work taking place and the continued determination of youth justice staff and partners to making a positive difference to children, young people and families.

At the time of setting out our plan, there has been a strengthening of our partnerships with services effectively working together across our newly restructured and remodelled Family Help and Adolescent Service provision, maximising resources and support.

Our plan sets out our areas of focus for the next 12 months and highlights our sense of ambition and determination to move towards delivering the highest quality of service with the best outcomes for children, young people and families.

The plan gives an overview of the work of the Youth Justice Service (YJS) in South Tyneside and lays out details of performance over the past year, and our priorities for the coming year.

2023-24 will see us continue to focus on improving our performance, delivering against our key priorities and further developing a multi-agency Child First approach, keeping children and young people central to the process. Collectively we will ensure needs led focused support and continue to recognise the issues facing children and young people in our Borough, such as the increase in children's mental health concerns and SEND.

We have worked hard to improve our service delivery, listening to service user voices and responses to children and young people that encounter the Youth Justice System. We are also addressing wider risks such as contextual safeguarding and exploitation. As a service we will continue to embed our Child First approach seeing 'children' and not 'offenders' who require extra care and commitment using their voices to inform strategic planning.

Whatever challenges lie ahead, as a partnership, we are committed to reducing offending and re-offending, improving future outcomes for children and young people, and engaging victims in restorative approaches. We are clear in our ambition and aspirations for service delivery in the coming year ahead and continue to drive transformational changes that arise from key policy reform.



Steve Reddy Director of Children's Services (Interim)

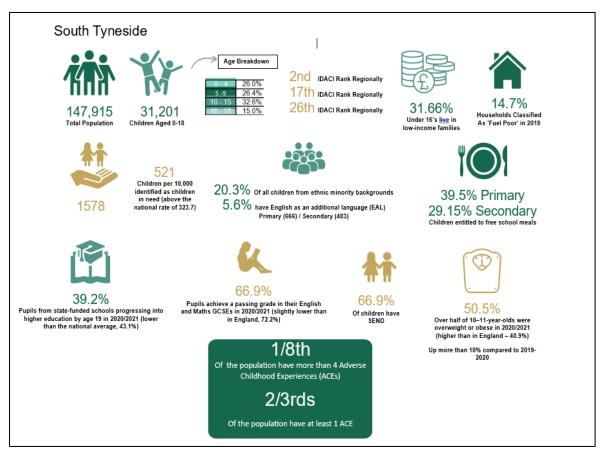
June 2023

Introduction, Vision and Strategy

As a North East coastal area, South Tyneside is a special and unique place, where there is a keen sense of civic pride and community connection. However, the Borough has significant challenges, including areas of high deprivation, and a strong legacy of intergenerational skills and health challenges within our communities.

As one of six local authorities in the Northumbria police force area, South Tyneside is the smallest in terms of population size and is significantly impacted by deprivation and poverty.

The income Deprivation Affecting Children (IDACI) indicates that South Tyneside is the 17th most deprived area nationally and the 2nd most deprived in the region in terms of child income deprivation affecting children, with other local factors such as substance misuse, child poverty and youth unemployment that impact on youth crime and desistance.



South Tyneside Demographics

The economic consequences of the Covid pandemic continue to be felt in South Tyneside as a coastal community, has been particularly affected by the structural economic and labour market challenges that existed before the pandemic, and inequalities in the Borough have been exacerbated as a result.

Our rates of youth unemployment are nearly double the national average at 8.4% compared to 4.4%, and 17,000 residents are claiming Universal Credit, with over 40% in work suggesting high levels of in work poverty. The rising cost of living is significantly impacting with tougher economic times ahead, which affect many of the children and families we work with, in addition to our young people cared for and care leavers.

South Tyneside YJS coordinates the provision and delivery of interventions and partnership working that are underpinned by the principle aim of the youth justice system. The aim of the Youth Justice system is to prevent offending by children and young people and prevent reoffending (Crime and disorder act 1998).

South Tyneside YJS works in partnership to achieve the national youth justice strategic objectives, which are to:

- reduce the number of children in the youth justice system
- reduce re-offending by children in the youth justice system
- improve the safety and wellbeing of children in the youth justice system
- improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system

The YJS plays a vital role in improving community safety and safeguarding, promoting the welfare of children, and protecting them from significant harm. Many of the children and young people involved with the YJS are among the most vulnerable in society and are at greatest risk of social exclusion. Our multi-agency partnership approach ensures that we play a significant role in contributing to addressing those needs.

The YJS is a partnership between the Local Authority, Northumbria Police, Probation and Health services, each of which holds a statutory responsibility for resourcing and supporting the partnership. However, we also recognise the strength of the wider partnership and achieve much more by working with other services and organisations too, such the voluntary sector.

Success is measured through the key performance indicators and outcome targets of the number of children entering the youth justice system and the number of children re-offending. The three impact indicators that the youth offending service is measured against are:

- First time entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system aged 10 to 17
- Rate of proven re-offending by children in the youth justice system
- The use of custody

We are progressing with the new suite of key performance indicators (KPI's) agreed by Justice Ministers and The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and implemented in April 2023. The indicators will also give improved insight into performance and will allow, in time, a greater depth and span of oversight information and intelligence regarding performance and outcomes.

Legal Framework

The South Tyneside YJS has a statutory duty to submit the local Youth Justice Annual Plan setting out service delivery and priorities. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the Management Board's responsibilities in the production of the plan and the duty of the Local Authority. The plan sets out how our YJS will be composed and funded, how it will operate and what functions it will carry out.

Section 39(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act requires the cooperation of named statutory partners and places a duty on them to secure Youth Justice Services appropriate to the needs of the local area.

Statutory partners include:

- The Local Authority (inclusive of Children's Social Care and Education)
- Police
- Probation Service
- Health

The YJS Annual Plan will be submitted to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) for England and Wales and published in accordance with the direction of the Secretary of State. In South Tyneside the plan will be fully contributed to and reviewed by South Tyneside's YJS Management Board and submitted to the YJB by 30th June 2023.

Vision and Values

The YJS vision for a Child First approach in everything we say and do to ensure that children and young people achieve their full potential.

This is aligned to our councils overarching vision for 'Our South Tyneside' being a place where people lead healthy, happy and fulfilled lives.

Our PROUD Values are embedded into the heart of the workplace and are the core principle of how we conduct our business:

- Professional
- 2) Respectful
- 3) Open and Honest
- 4) Understanding and engaging
- 5) Deliver what we say we will

We display communication and behaviour that promotes a positive Local Authority identity in connecting with children young people, families, colleagues and other stakeholders ensuring a partnership approach to delivering our vision.

South Tyneside YJS actively promotes a Child First approach. To be Child First we promote 'Think Family' and strengths based whole family practice, recognising that working with children and young people in isolation misses opportunity to engage those who have the most enduring ties and influences.

We contribute to making South Tyneside a place where children and young people are safe from harm, do well in learning the skills for life and who feel they have voice and influence.

We are committed in delivering on service priorities, focusing on service improvement and ensuring our children and young people are safe from risk and harms to self and other's. We strive to seek the best aspirations, achievements and attainment for children and young people.

We utilise community strength and work with partners to ensure that we provide a high-quality service to children and young people, and their families, maintaining the levels of supervision, risk management and safeguarding required.

Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities aim to deliver an effective youth justice system, through a strong partnership approach, with a focus on reducing re-offending and custody rates, and building on an evidence-based approach.

Through effective use of performance data and intelligence we optimise our effectiveness and we will continue to do this. Additionally, we will maximise our achievements through collaboration and take the learning from best practice, both regionally and nationally.

Our YJS Management Board collectively determines the strategic priorities that we work towards and uphold in our respective agencies and roles. These link to our vision and our operational planning and delivery influenced by these priorities:

- Preventing offending/re-offending high quality delivery and strength-based trauma informed interventions developing approaches to desistance
- Child First listening to our children and young people to ensure we understand and respond to their individual needs
- Continually reviewing and improving our services to ensure they meet the needs of our children, young people and local communities
- Reducing inequality and minimising the impact of custody and the wider Criminal Justice System
- Reducing the harm caused by violent crime, criminal and sexual exploitation and association to gang culture
- Focusing on identity development in approaches to desistance
- Tackling disproportionality
- Reducing serious youth violence and child criminal exploitation.

Over the duration of this plan, the YJS Management Board will develop a sharper focus on understanding and scrutinising local data to ensure that the partnership is appropriately challenged and supported to address the strategic priorities.

Child First

South Tyneside YJS takes its commitment to a Child First approach seriously and has worked extensively to embed this principle into every aspect of the work we do. Through this approach we recognise that children and young people have different needs and unique circumstances which requires early intervention, diversion, and rehabilitation in order to best achieve the ultimate aim of the service in preventing offending and re-offending.

The YJS Management Board advocate strongly for the 4 child first tenants identified by the YJB:

Seeing children as children

Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.

Building pro-social identity

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.

Collaborating with children

Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.

Diverting from stigma

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.

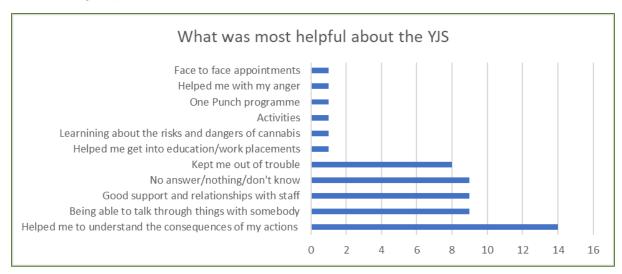
All staff at South Tyneside YJS are introduced to the Child First principle as part of a staff induction and to further embed this in practice. By the end of 2023 all staff will have completed the Child First Effective Practice Award programme. The theoretical knowledge and learning gained through completing this Award will be utilised in all work undertaken with children and young people.

Voice of the Child

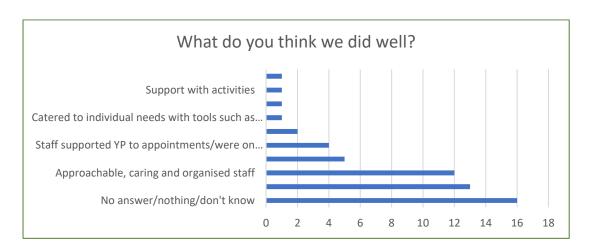
Recognising we need to ensure the voices of children are present in all aspects of our work, we strongly advocate and make opportunities for participation and empowerment and uphold the rights of children and young people to express their thoughts and feelings on matters that affect their lives. The YJS employ a number of methods to ensure that children's voices are heard at every stage of their involvement with our service. This includes:

- Self-assessment questionnaires at every stage of intervention
- The introduction of self-defined diversity questionnaires which gives the opportunity for young people to express, in a safe way, any diversity considerations we need to be aware of
- Completion of a child friendly 'My Plan' which enables them to have direct input into their plan of interventions and support
- The use of compliance meetings to address any barriers to engagement and give them the best possible opportunity to complete the identified plan
- Service user feedback forms to capture both the child and parent/carer's experience of their involvement with the service
- Quarterly service user feedback group to allow for a more in-depth and qualitative understanding of how children and young people experience the Youth Justice system and identify ways in which we can improve.

The 56-service user feedback forms we collected over the past 12 months have produced the following responses:



The responses from the service user feedback forms were, overall, positive and indicate staff were able to forge good relationships with children and young people and help them develop a better understanding of their behaviour:





Some young people, perhaps understandably given the reason for their involvement, thought that having to attend appointments and complete intervention work was unhelpful. We recognise that there can be resistance and hesitancy in working with the YJS, but we continue to work hard at engaging young people effectively.

The more in-depth information from the service user feedback groups has been helpful in understanding the experiences of children and young people accessing the service. Some of the more tangible suggestions to come from this include making the building more colourful and child friendly, as they currently viewed it as bland and uninteresting.

In relation to child friendly language, it was apparent from the feedback group that a number of the children and young people did not understand some of the language contained within their intervention plans.

In response to feedback, we have put plans in place to re-decorate the YJS building following planned structural work in July /August 2023. This will involve the commissioning of a local artist to work with service users to create a more child friendly and relaxing environment. We have also worked with children and young people to re-design the young person's plan to use more child friendly language and will consult with children and young people on the updates.



Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

The YJS sits within the Children's Services Directorate as part of Family Help and Adolescent Services (FHAS), which is based within Learning and Early Help. The Service Manager for FHAS has a broad portfolio and the service is well placed to ensure the wider connectivity with Family Help, Social Work, Education, Connexions, Youth Service and Substance Misuse provision. The YJS Team Manager reports to the Operational Manager for Adolescent Services who is directly managed by the Service Manager (See Appendix 1 for Staffing Structure).

The primary duty of the YJS Management Board is to ensure appropriate Youth Justice services are in place within South Tyneside with local arrangements that help us to ensure appropriate governance and oversight. The Board monitors quarterly updates on performance against key targets and initiatives as well as improvement planning interrogating the data and requesting thematic analysis to deepen our learning.

The YJS Management Board is chaired by the Director of Childrens Services with attendance from senior management across partner agencies, these include:

- Head of Service Learning and Early Help
- Service Manager Family Help and Adolescent Services
- Head of Service Children and Families Social Care
- Operational Manager Adolescent Services
- Police
- National Probation Service Gateshead and South Tyneside
- Education
- Court
- · Director of Public health
- Violence Reduction Unit Coordinator
- Community Safety Tenancy Enforcement Manager
- Head of South Tyneside Homes
- Lead Member for Children and Families Social Care (including FHAS)
- Lead Member Housing and Community Safety
- Performance and Information Service
- ICB Health Commissioning Lead for Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and CYPS

The NHS Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism All Age Lead is an active member of the Board, with the role being to report to the Clinical Lead and ensure that there are clear links with the Learning Disabilities, CAMHS, Mental Health and Autism workstreams.

Whilst the mental health offer does not have specific services embedded within the YJS, both mental health teams have a strong partnership approach with the service, recognising that the children and young people we support may need adapted support. As part of the CAMHS Transformation plan 23/24, we have identified that further work is required to strengthen the pathway.

In addition, we acknowledge the numbers of young people known to the YJS are also known to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services, and may present with additional needs around speech and language and communication. At present the South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (STSFT) is working in collaboration with Commissioning to develop an enhanced offer for children with specific communication needs and this will include children known to the YJS. For young people who are known to the service and have an associated Learning Disability or Autism diagnosis, the new Primary Care pathway will provide additional support around ensuring that their physical and mental health needs are being met.

The Board meets on a quarterly basis and additionally, there are monthly operational performance clinics with the Service Manager and Operational Manager which provides scrutiny and governance of performance and data.

Many partners are connected to strategic boards that address key Borough issues such as child exploitation and contextual safeguarding with clear communication links with other interagency structures to support its work. The Board is part of broader partnerships and governance arrangements including:

- South Tyneside Safeguarding Children and Adults Partnership (STSCAP)
- Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Board
- Best Start in Life Alliance
- · Health and Wellbeing Board.

More widely across Northumbria, the six local YJS' meet bi-monthly in partnership with Northumbria Police, the Crown Prosecution Service and Courts Service, and are often joined by the YJB and Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). The focus of the meetings is on strategic and operational issues pertaining to youth justice business and ensures collaborative and consistent delivery across the region. This partnership approach also gives opportunity for shared learning and practice improvements for example Court Panel process and diversionary approaches.

South Tyneside is also represented at the wider quarterly forum involving all services across the North East (also includes Yorkshire and Humberside regions on a bi-annual basis). This network is supported with attendance from the YJB, HMIP, partners from the various secure estates as well as national speakers and policy makers. This allows for updates and discussions on areas of practice impacting on youth justice work on a national level.

The Service is supported by statutory partner organisations in relation to staffing requirements. We have a seconded probation officer which supports with transition to the Probation Service (NPS). This is supplemented with operational and strategic discussions to ensure there is consistency in decision making and the partnership is seen as an area of strength.

Two seconded police officers also form part of the YJS, promoting partnership work between the service and Northumbria Police particularly around the Out of Court Disposal process, which is attended by the Police. Links with investigating officers are also well established in the event of non-compliance. (Financial contributions can be found in Appendix 2) Partner representation on the Board is reflective of service requirements in meeting young people's needs. Specialist substance misuse service practitioners have a presence within the Youth Justice Service and clear consultation and referral pathways are in place. The service has access to sexual health outreach and monthly Mental Health consultation sessions are in place from both Lifecyle and Children and Young Peoples Service (CYPS). We are in the process of establishing more robust links with speech and language services with training provided to all staff planned in the coming year.

Links to Youth Services is also well established with joint working already being undertaken to ensure young people have access to constructive activities and positive use of leisure time. The recent launch of Family Hubs in South Tyneside is providing further connectivity and networks with partners, children, young people and their families, in addition to enhancing Family Help and Adolescent provision.

Board Development

Following the areas of improvement from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) inspection report 2020 and the requirement for the Management Board to improve visibility to the workforce, we have taken action to address this. We are working to ensure that meetings take place face to face at the YJS wherever possible to promote a learning environment and connectivity to the YJS, allowing opportunity for staff to meet the members informally. Sessions with the YJS have taken place with the YJS staff to ensure they have a greater understanding of the governance arrangements and the role and functions of the Board and practice improvements.

In mid-June we held a Board development session, bringing together partners with a focus on reflecting on where we are and where need to be as a Board going forward. The session has allowed us to develop learning regarding the role and function of the Board, identifying any gaps in training and knowledge, with further sessions planned as we progress. We had a formal review of the governance expectations, in addition to reinforcing connectivity with the new key performance indicators.

The Board encourages all parties to question processes, to present strategic challenge and ensure any barriers are considered and addressed that hinder the outcomes of children and young people involved in the Youth Justice system.

Management Board meetings are inclusive of staff from the YJS to talk through their role and work regarding several aspects and approaches for example Restorative Justice, Education, Training and Employment (ETE).

As we progress through our plan and priorities, the Board will develop a sharper focus on understanding and scrutinising local data to ensure that the partnership is appropriately challenged and supported to address emerging issues.

Progress on Previous Plan

The priorities identified in the 2022/23 plan were:

Priority	Progress made
Build on a Child First approach through various methods of intervention delivery - virtual reality, cooking, sport and other diversionary approaches	This has been achieved and the intervention methods remain in place. See section 2 and 12 for further information
Implement processes to address the disparity of females in the cohort	This remains a key priority and whilst progress has been made, there is more to do
Continue to work with partners to divert young people from the criminal justice system through the Out of Court Disposal process with main objectives around reducing re-offending and keeping young people out of custody, and ensure the Panel has the best representation of partners	The Out of Court Disposal Panel returned to being delivered in person following the end of Covid-19 restrictions. It is now made up of representatives from Early Help, South Tyneside's Substance Misuse Team, Matrix, Police, ETE and restorative justice specialist staff. This allows for rich case discussion, sharing of information and better outcomes for young people
Monitor patterns around first-time entrants and understand if there is an escalation in trends	YJS are supported by a data and performance team who provide analytical support. Later in 2023 we will begin using Power Bi which will further enhance our ability to effectively use, and report, on data and intelligence
Develop strategic plans in conjunction with young people and families so that they have a wider represented voice	The YJS has introduced a quarterly service user feedback group where young people have the opportunity to describe their experiences and to offer input on how to shape further service development. Further work will be done in the next 12 months to include whole families in this. Young people have shared their views and we have implemented changes as a result
Continue to support victims of crime and deliver victim awareness work to those who offend, and to work with victims to support and repair harm through either direct or indirect mediation	Supporting victims of crime and delivering victim awareness work remains a key focus in all the work we do
Develop staff training around trauma, health provision and interventions to address sexual behaviours	All staff who complete AIM assessments have received further training on delivering interventions where there has been sexually harmful behaviour. Trauma informed practice is scheduled for later in the year and all front-line staff will attend this. Health provision is one area where closer alignment with partners would be beneficial, work is ongoing to achieve this

Develop and extend the prevention offer so
that more young people at risk of offending,
exclusions and involved in anti-social
behaviour are given support at the earliest
possible stage

The prevention offer remains available and will be enhanced by the introduction of the Turnaround and Divert Programmes. The introduction of the Family Hubs core offer of evidence-based programmes for children, young people and their parents/carers also supports this

Peer review to be undertaken by another YJS in the region

Due to several factors beyond the control of the YJS this did not go ahead. We hope to reschedule a review in the near future. However, we have utilised the regional and national forum for good practice exchange and we have worked with neighbouring YJS' to reflect on the systems, processes and work we are doing.

Resources and Services

The details of income and expenditure for the period 2022/23 is contained in Appendix 2 and shows the contribution from the YJB, Local Authority and the benefits in kind from partner agencies. The YJB Grant is fully expended on staff salaries.

The Probation Service provide a seconded Probation Officer (0.8 FTE) and the YJS Team Manager provides daily oversight. To maintain strong working links with Probation Service the YJS Team Manager and the Probation Service Team Manager meet on a quarterly basis but also have ad-hoc case discussions where cases are identified as being suitable for transition to the Probation Service.

The Probation Officer manages all cases which will be transitioned to the National Probation Service to ensure consistency and to make use of knowledge and skills in managing adult offenders. They are also able to deliver specialist intervention for young people who are aged 18 years but who remain with YJS, particularly regarding offences of a sexual nature.

Northumbria Police provide two seconded Police Officers (1.5 FTE) which allows for direct partnership working between the 2 agencies. This relationship is essential in the effective delivery of services, particularly regarding Out of Court Disposals which now make up the vast majority of YJS work. Police attend the Out of Court Disposal panel each week and contribute to the agreed outcome. They subsequently deliver the disposal to the young people and are able to offer additional monitoring and oversight for young people who require a more intensive level of intervention.

Wider partnership work with Northumbria Police is in place to minimise detention in custody times for young people through the Operation Harbinger protocol and through delivering specific intervention in areas such as knife crime and motoring offences. The force also deliver area wide education work within schools across the region highlighting the dangers of knives and weapons.

One example of knife crime work Northumbria Police deliver is the Operation Divan sessions. This is a voluntary knife crime awareness session offered to every young person who has committed an offence involving a bladed article, or anyone who may be at risk of doing so. In 2022/23 10 young people from South Tyneside completed Operation Divan intervention.

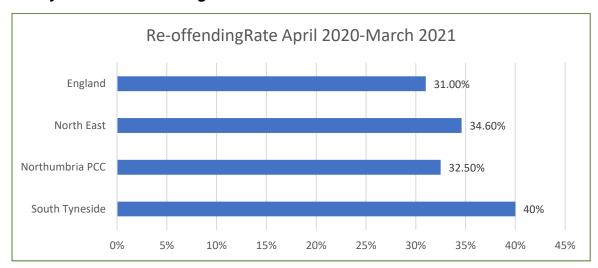
The restructure and alignment of Family Help and Adolescent Services has seen the YJS forge closer working arrangements with colleagues from Connexions, Youth Services and the South Tyneside Substance Misuse Team (Matrix). In addition to this, the YJS has developed closer links with colleagues within the broader range of whole Family Help Services. Representatives from all these services attend the weekly Out of Court Disposal Panel to ensure collaborative working.

Although there is no formal protocol in place currently, YJS benefits from monthly peer support from mental health specialists provides by colleagues from Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear (CNTW) NHS Foundation Trust. It is hoped that in time a formal agreement for partnership working can be implemented in line with the CAMHS Transformation Plan.

Performance

National Key Performance Indicators

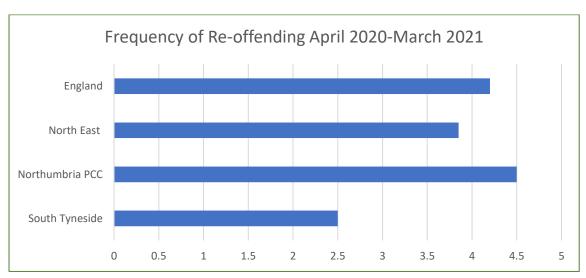
Binary Rate of Re-offending



The most recent data available for re-offending is from 2020/21 and shows that the binary rate of re-offending is higher in South Tyneside than it is regionally and nationally. Whilst numbers are low in relative terms, this remains an area of concern and something we will continue to work hard to reduce by placing more emphasis on exit planning and support needs and ensuring young people have the right levels of support in place once they complete their intervention with YJS.

Frequency of Re-offending

The frequency of re-offending in South Tyneside is significantly lower than regional and national trends. This demonstrates that young people who do re-offend are committing fewer offences than those in other areas:

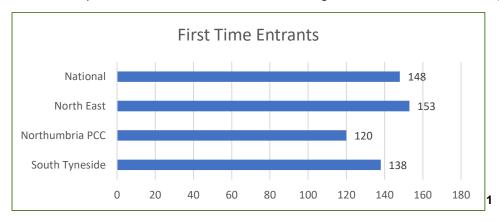


First Time Entrants (FTE)

There were 21 first time entrants in the year 2022/23. In 2021/22 there were 12, which evidences an increase, but numbers remain low. This is reflective of the continued use of Outcome 22s, the increased joined up work between YJS and Northumbria Police and also an indication that data for 2020/ 2021/2022 was anomalous due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

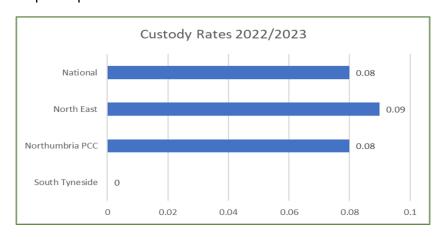
South Tyneside's FTE figures are substantially less than the region and national comparators. In the coming year we will continue to work hard to ensure young people do not unnecessarily enter the youth justice system.

This will be achieved by continued partnership working with Northumbria Police and through new developments such as the Turnaround Programme and the Divert Programme.



Custody Rates

Custody rates remain at 0, as they have done since 2019. This reflects positive working relationships between YJS and the court in identifying and using bail support, ISS and Intensive Referral Orders as an alternative to custody. The YJS will continue to work hard to prevent young people receiving custodial sentences wherever possible, whilst balancing our obligation toward public protection.



¹ Rate of 100,000. Benchmark data only available 2021-22

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Priorities

Children from Groups which are Over-Represented

In response to the HMIP 2022 thematic report on the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the Youth Justice system, South Tyneside YJS conducted its own analysis of offending and offending outcomes by those young people who identified their ethnicity as being other than white British.

The percentage of young people from a non-white British ethnicity open to YJS in 2022/23 was 6%, the same number as the previous 12 months. A detailed look at the data showed that the type of offences committed by young people from black and mixed heritage backgrounds in South Tyneside evidenced no noticeable variation from the type of offences committed by those from a white British background.

Furthermore, there was no discernible difference in the disposals received by the cohort of young people from a non-white British background which indicates no discriminatory practice, whether conscious or unconscious.

However, we remain vigilant to the issue and the percentage of young people with a non-white British ethnicity is monitored monthly to track any emerging themes. All diversity factors are also considered in the assessment, planning and quality assurance stages for each young person.

In relation to female offenders, we have identified that in 2022/23 20% of our caseload were female. This was down from 24% the previous year, showing some improvement. However, we wish to reduce this even further given that we are significantly higher than the national level of 14%. We have established several different targeted interventions, including a female only gym group, facilitated by female staff and a female only activity group, providing training to participants on nail art and beauty therapy.

A female only intervention group has also been established which aims to raise awareness of some of the vulnerabilities faced by young women and which are known to be underlying causes of offences most often committed by females. These include exploitation, domestic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour.

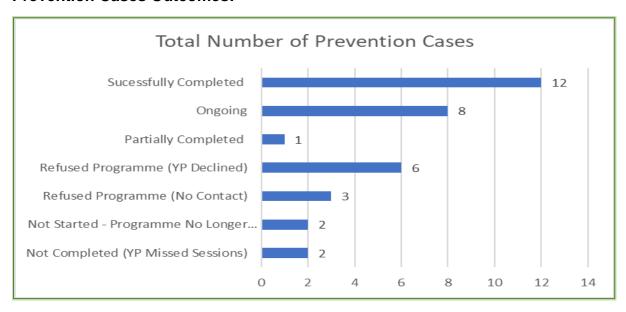
Prevention

In 2022/23 the YJS worked with 34 young people through our voluntary prevention programme. Unlike in previous years, there is no ringfenced funding for prevention work, outside of that allocated for Turnaround and Divert programmes, which have strict eligibility criteria attached.

Nonetheless, the YJS recognises the importance of early intervention in preventing young people from having any contact with the youth justice system and from going on to commit offences.

For that reason, we continue to offer a prevention service and this work is delivered by the existing YJS team and we also connect with the other prevention provision available from other services in the Borough.

Prevention Cases Outcomes:



Referrals for prevention come from a variety of sources, most notably colleagues in Social Work and Early Help, but also from schools and to a lesser extent from police.

It is anticipated that in the next 12 months and beyond, some of the work that was historically delivered as part of the prevention programme will be absorbed by the Turnaround Programme as there will naturally be some overlap, particularly where anti-social behaviour is the primary cause for concern. There is also an overlap with other services, such as the Supporting Families Programme. We work well together to pool our resources to achieve the best outcomes for children and their families.

The additional capacity will allow us to work more closely with partners in education to identify earlier, the young people who are potentially at risk of exclusion with the aim of reducing the number of exclusions in the Borough. This is one of the aims for 2023/24.

Diversion

The YJS continues to work closely with Northumbria Police to use Out of Court Disposals wherever appropriate. This includes Outcome 22 which allows a comprehensive package of support to be delivered, and which is formally recorded as a 'no further action' hence diverting young people from an escalating tier system of intervention.

In December 2022 the YJS received funding from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) to launch the 3-year Turnaround Programme, aimed at diverting a targeted number of young people who are on the cusp of the Youth Justice System, and who do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention.

The work incorporates a whole family approach, recognising that families are complex systems where each member's needs and behaviour impact the others. The whole family approach will deliver better communication between family members, increased understanding of needs and will ultimately be more likely to divert young people away from offending. The programme is now in operation with one full time member of staff in post and recruitment currently underway for an additional member of staff.

Partners in Police, Early Help, Education, Housing and ASB teams have all received briefings about the programme. In April 2023 South Tyneside's target was increased as part of the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan, with the area being identified as an ASB hotspot. We are on course to meet the year 2 and 3 targets of engaging 42 and 43 young people respectively.

A further method of diversion in operation at YJS is the Divert Programme. This is a joint initiative between the Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit and the YJS' in the Northumbria Police command area. The aim of this programme is to provide brief intervention and signposting to young people who have been identified by police as a suspect in an offence, but who have not met the threshold for statutory intervention and who are not eligible for the Turnaround Programme.

Education

The YJS is committed to ensuring young people have opportunities to participate fully, and to the best of their ability, in education, training and employment. We believe that involvement in offending should not be a barrier to achieving this and we work closely with partners to this end. We know that when a young person is invested in education, they are more likely to develop skills which enable them to live a life free of offending. All staff are committed to promoting attendance in education and where additional support is required the YJS has a specialist ETE worker who has good relationships with schools and colleges and an in depth knowledge of the education system.

The YJS Board also has representation from partners in education, including the Head of Learning and Early Help and the Head of the alternative education provider. This allows for strategic level discussions around potential barriers to young people accessing education.

Operationally, the YJS works well with services to avoid young people being missing from education, employment and training, such as with Connexions and they seek opportunities for business to assist in programmes of mentoring young people.

However, there is more to do and in 2023 we aim to work collaboratively with our Family Help Service and schools to offer earlier intervention with the aim of reducing fixed term and permanent exclusions. The new KPIs will also provide useful data in monitoring the suitability of educational provision, including the number of hours offered and attended.

Restorative Approaches and Victims

The YJS continues to prioritise the use of restorative justice approaches, recognising the importance of this for individual victims and in encouraging accountability and responsibility in young people.

In the year 2022/23 52 victim referrals were received. Of these, 50 of these related to cases where the outcome was an Out of Court Disposal, again demonstrating the shift away from Court Orders for the majority of young people involved in the Youth Justice System.

Referrals							
	Quarter 1 Apr–June 2022	Quarter 2 July-Sept 2022	Quarter 3 Oct–Dec 2022	Quarter 4 Jan-Mar 2023	Difference	YTD	
Total number of victim referrals	14	9	17	12	Û	52	
Out of Court Disposals	14	8	16	12	Û	50	
Referral Orders	0	1	1	0	ΰ	2	

Of the 52 referrals received, there were 29 individual victims consisting of 15 females and 14 male victims, providing an equal split across the year. This is consistent with data reported for 2021/2022. There were 23 corporate victims in this reporting period, largely consisting of crimes committed at the regional light rail system, The Metro, Northumbria Police and a number of shops across the South Tyneside area.

Victim Profiling								
	Quarter 1 Apr–June 2022	Quarter 2 July-Sept 2022	Quarter 3 Oct–Dec 2022	Quarter 4 Jan–Mar 2023	YTD			
Individual victim	7	5	11	6	29			
Corporate victim	7	4	6	6	23			
Average victim age	46	31	36	25	35			
Number of female victims	5	2	6	2	15			
Number of male victims	2	3	5	4	14			

There have been six direct restorative meetings over the last year, along with 40 indirect restorative justice interventions, consisting of 21 letters of explanation/apology and 19 sessions of shuttle mediation, where victim views were shared by the Restorative Justice Officer with the young person during victim awareness sessions.

Interventions							
	Quarter 1 Apr–June 2022	Quarter 2 July-Sept 2022	Quarter 3 Oct–Dec 2022	Quarter 4 Jan-Mar 2023	YTD		
Direct RJ interventions	1	3	0	2	6		
Indirect RJ interventions	8	17	4	11	40		
Shuttle mediation	3	9	2	5	19		
Letters of explanation	5	8	2	6	21		
Victim awareness sessions	60	42	28	37	167		

Case Study: Restorative Justice

A woman was the victim of criminal damage to her car after a young person had committed a range of graffiti offences using spray paint.

Contact was made with the victim who shared the impact and agreed to meet with the young person. Victim awareness sessions were completed with the young person in preparation for meeting. During discussions the young person shared how he felt really bad for the impact on the victim and wanted to meet with her to apologise.

The young person interacted well with the victim during the face-to-face meeting. He explained his behaviour and showed his understanding around the impact of what he had done, before offering an apology which the victim accepted. The victim shared how she would be disappointed if her grandson had done a similar thing to the young person, which seemed to resonate with him as he was saddened that he had caused damage to someone "like his nana".

Positively, the victim gave great credit to the young person for having the bravery to meet with her, she shook his hand and said that she "doesn't hold a grudge or hate him", and simply wants him to stay out of trouble and do well in life.

During a follow-up call with the victim a week later, she shared that she was really pleased that she had been able to meet with the young person, talk to him and shake his hand. She acknowledged that he is "just a kid" and hopes he can learn from this and have a fulfilling life ahead of him. She was very appreciative of the contact and support provided by the YJS.

The young person later commented on how meeting a victim helped him understand how there were real life consequences to his actions.





Serious Violence and Exploitation

In December 2022 the Government produced the Serious Violence Duty Guidance in accordance with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) is currently working with partners to develop our response and implementations of the Serious Violence Duty. This is to establish a regional approach to the issue of serious violence which can often involve behaviour across borders.

South Tyneside are being represented in this forum by the South Tyneside Community Safety Partnership, which YJS attend at a strategic and operational level. It is hoped that a coordinated regional approach to tackling serious violence will be more effective and allow agencies to work in partnership and cross border.

In the 12 months between April 2022 and March 2023 South Tyneside responded to 3 offences which met the definition of serious violence through having a gravity score of 5 or more. One of these offences was a section 18 assault which took place out of the area by a young person who subsequently moved to South Tyneside. The remaining 2 offences were motoring offences which indicates that currently South Tyneside does not have a significant problem with serious violence. However, we remain vigilant and aware that this situation could change, and we stand ready to work collaboratively to deliver a multi-agency response should a problem emerge.

When considering exploitation, the YJS understands the link with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and this is taken into account when completing assessments and risk assessments. To further develop this understanding, YJS staff will complete training on trauma informed practice in 2023.

We recognise that for young people who have experienced ACEs, building a trusting relationship with an adult can be a difficult and a lengthy process, with this in mind young people who successfully complete their interventions are considered for voluntary intervention beyond the statutory end date to provide additional support, particularly where risk remain to their own safety and wellbeing, or where they remain at risk of offending or causing serious harm.

The YJS continues to have representation at the Missing, Slavery, Exploited and Trafficked (MSET) forum and in 2022 we also appointed an MSET Champion to liaise with partner agencies and disseminate emerging trends and practice with the wider team.

We recognise that Police are a key agency in protecting young people from exploitation and that sharing of information in a timely manner can help prevent young people from being exploited. To that end we have a Vulnerable Young Person's (VYP) system in place which allows partners from the Police to monitor any relevant information relating to a young person assessed as being at risk of exploitation. This includes young people who are cared for as we know they are particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

Detention in Police Custody

South Tyneside YJS works closely with Police partners in custody suites across the Northumbria Police Force area to ensure that young people who are detained in police custody are responded to and released as soon as is practicable.

All YJS staff have received Appropriate Adults training, including roles and responsibilities under the Police Crime and Evidence Act 1984, and in line with national case management guidance.

The YJS has signed up to the regional Joint Protocol and provides an Appropriate Adult response Monday - Friday during office hours, with the South Tyneside Emergency Duty Team providing a response outside of office hours.

To improve the effectiveness and responsivity of Appropriate Adult provision, in 2023, we hope to agree a partnership working arrangement with another YJS who operate in the same Police Command area. This will ensure appropriate adult provision is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and is intended to eliminate any incidents where a young person may be unnecessarily detained in custody.

All cases where bail is refused, and a young person detained are reviewed with a Custody Inspector and the YJS Manager to ensure appropriate protocols were followed.

Remands

In the year 2022-23 YJS had no remands to either Youth Detention or Local Authority Accommodation. In the one case where a young person was at risk of remand, YJS presented the Court with a comprehensive Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Bail Support Programme which the Court agreed to. The young person was subsequently sentenced to a community order demonstrating the bail support was the most appropriate outcome on that occasion.

All staff at YJS have received training on the most up to date case management guidance which deals with remands and the YJS has policies and procedures in place detailing how to deal with remand cases.

Use of Custody

In the year 2022-23 YJS had no cases in custody. In the one case where a young person was at risk of custody, the YJS completed the Pre-Sentence Report and presented the option of an Intensive Referral Order as an alternative. The Court chose this option when sentencing.

All staff at YJS have received training on the most up to date case management guidance which deals with custody and are aware of the detrimental impact this can have on young people. Policies are in place to manage custody cases.

Constructive Resettlement

Whist South Tyneside YJS has had no young people in custody in the past 12 months, and therefore no cases which required resettlement, we nevertheless have a detailed policy informed by the 2018 JYB Guidance on resettlement.

Our policy recognises the importance of a holistic response, involving partnership agencies with a focus on resettlement beginning as soon as a young person receives a custodial sentence.

Though our policy we ensure that young people are at the centre of all decisions, with an emphasis on their individual strengths and circumstances. They are also directly involved in decision making processes to ensure a sense of empowerment and control over matters which directly affect them. Involving young people, as well as families or other support networks in

collaborative way, is ultimately more likely to achieve positive and sustainable resettlement and help prevent recidivism.

Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System

The most recent full national standards self- assessment was completed in June 2019 by the YJS manager and representatives from the YJS Board. Looking at all 5 domains contained within the YJB guide and at that point the service and board members gave the service an overall grade as 'requires improvement' The subsequent HMIP inspection, in October 2020, also rated the service as 'requires improvement'.

Work has been undertaken to improve performance across all 5 standards:

- 1) Out of Court Disposals
- 2) At Court
- 3) In the community
- 4) Secure settings
- 5) On transition

To ensure continuous quality assurance, in 2022 and again in 2023, the YJS Managers and completed file audits on the themes of Court and Out of Court Disposal cases to identify areas of strength but also areas where practice needed to be improved.

The findings from these audits will be shared with the wider team in Practice Improvement Workshops where an open and transparent discussion can take place. In 2023/24 the YJS will review its policy on transitions in line with the most recently published case management guidance.

The YJS anticipates that a self-assessment of national standards will be required later this year. We feel confident that the work carried out since 2020 will lead to a better grading than was previously awarded.

Workforce Development

The YJS recognises the importance of a skilled, knowledgeable, and motivated workforce and has a culture of continuous professional development. We have developed a workforce training matrix which includes mandatory and elective training for all staff and volunteers, and in 2023 we will review this and implement a workforce development strategy using the Youth Justice Boards' template for a Workforce Strategy.

Currently, all new YJS staff receive a detailed induction and mandatory training on the use of case management systems, safeguarding, Prevent and information and data management.

The wider training offer includes the South Tyneside Council corporate induction with a focus on the overall vison and strategy of the council.

Development routes for staff include the Youth Justice Effective Practice Award with 93 % of staff having completed this. Many have also gone on to complete a Degree in Youth Justice, further enhancing their development.

Additional opportunities include apprenticeship programmes, funded by South Tyneside Council, and there are currently with 3 staff members enrolled on leadership programmes. 2 of the 3 operational level managers within YJS have also completed Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership (YJSIP) Operational Manager Course, whilst the third is awaiting a start date. There is also the opportunity for 1 operational level manager to complete the Elevate Mentoring Programme at the next intake.

Annual reviews and supervision assist in supporting the strengths of staff, giving opportunities to provide constructive feedback and to identify areas where staff wish to develop and improve their practice.

All volunteers at YJS are required to undergo panel member training as well as level 2 safeguarding and restorative justice training as standard.

Evidence-Based Practice and Innovation

The YJS always seeks opportunities to embrace innovative and evidenced based practice. For example, a partnership with Youth Services to deliver sports based interventions to promote physical and emotional wellbeing in young people. Funding for this has been awarded by the Violence Reduction Unit and includes several sports such as boxing, climbing, surfing and attendance at a local gym.

Further areas of innovative practice include:

- A partnership with the Violence Reduction Unit to deliver intervention to raise awareness of the dangers of weapons, particularly bladed articles. This has been delivered 1-2-1 and in group setting using virtual reality resources to demonstrate in a hard - hitting way the potential impact of weapons. Currently the YJS and regional colleagues are in the process of developing a more comprehensive package of weapons awareness to be able to tailor the intervention at a wider range of young people in a consistent way across the region
- A summer art project led by a local artist where children and young people are able to better develop understanding of factors which affect their lives through artistic expression. As part of the voice of children and utilising their feedback, children and young people will be involved in creating artwork to decorate the YJS building
- A cohort of young people have been identified to take part in a pilot scheme whereby they will be mentored by staff from local employers with a view to improving their knowledge of the workplace and developing pathways into training and employment. This is a joint project with the Northeast Local Enterprise Partnership, and it will be externally evaluated by Eric Baumgartner from the University of West Scotland
- South Tyneside YJS has partnered with Northumbria Police to pilot the Do-it Profiler Neurodiversity Screening Tool to help identify potential areas where young people may require a formal diagnosis of a neurodiverse condition
- The Restorative Justice Officer at YJS has started delivering victim awareness sessions whilst engaging young people in cookery sessions. This has enabled young people to develop much needed life skills such as budget managing and healthy eating whilst discussing the impact their behaviour has had on victims in a non-threatening environment.



Service Development

In October 2020 South Tyneside YJS was inspected by HMIP and the report, published in February 2021 gave the rating as Requires Improvement. The key recommendations from this inspection were as follows:

- Take steps to improve planning for safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others, including contingency arrangements
- Review the risk and needs of children at regular intervals and when there is a significant change
- Provide consistent management oversight that is effective in improving practice
- Improve knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities between management Board and staff
- Review the decision-making process for out-of-court disposals to make sure safeguarding issues are identified and responded to as needed.

Much work has been done to improve overall performance and this continues at pace. An Improvement Plan (IP) was initially published in March 2021 and in March 2023 this was reviewed and updated by the Board.

In addition to Board oversight of the IP, all staff have participated in a number of Service Improvement workshops.

Progress to date includes the development of a new out-of-court assessment tool which is more aligned with AssetPlus and better captures the risks to others and includes a section on contingency planning.

Out-of-court panels are now multi-agency which allows for more collaborative working and identification of potential risk to the young person and others. The panels are formally recorded in minutes and the outcomes recorded on Childview to ensure consistency and better management oversight.

All out-of-court cases are now all reviewed at panel and include an end assessment to ensure changes in circumstances are reflected in assessments and risks amended accordingly. This also provides additional management oversight in ensuring delivery of service.

Additional training has been secured for the service in areas of risk and trauma informed practice to help staff identify better potential risks in all domains and to put plans in place to mitigate these risks.

We are currently reviewing our risk management process and intend to streamline risk management oversight to focus more on the areas of risk identified, potential types of harm, identification of victims and potential victims and ensure a multi-agency approach to risk management planning.

YJS staff have been trained on the function, composition, role and responsibilities of the YJS Management Board and Board meetings are now scheduled to take place at the YJS building in person, ensuring greater connectivity between the Board and the YJS team.

Furthermore, a Board development day took place in June 2023, where the YJB led a session to help Board members enhance their effectiveness as a governing body.

2023 sees the roll out of the Youth Justice Oversight Framework whereby the YJS will be categorised into 1 of 4 potential quadrants based on performance. The YJS welcomes this opportunity and will work closely with the YJB to improve service delivery. The initial rating is likely to be indicative, but we hope and expect initially to be given a 'satisfactory' rating with our long-term goal to improve service delivery and performance so that we can and achieve the highest possible rating of 'strong'.

The work to improve the service following the inspection findings is continuous. The YJS team and wider service colleagues are motivated and determined to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people and to have a YJS that is recognised as being high performing.

The new YJB Business Plan for 2023-24 has identified 4 areas of focus:

- 1. Courts
- 2. Policing
- 3. Education
- 4. Partnerships to reduce serious violence and exploitation.

South Tyneside YJS already works collaboratively with the local Court to improve experiences for young people who attend Court. There is representation at Board level from magistrates which further enhances cooperation and allows for sharing of practice and discussion on any issues arising. A goal for the coming year is to re-establish the local Court User Group which disbanded following Covid- 19.

On a local level the YJS enjoy good working relationships with Police and again there is Police representation at YJS Board which provides an opportunity for strategic development. There is also an operational level forum where the YJS Team Manager can discuss practice issues and resolve any potential difficulties. At a wider partnership level there is Police representation at the Community Safety Partnership and STSCAP.

Strengthening working relations with partners in education is a priority for the YJS and we will aim to increase referrals for prevention wok for children and young people who are at risk of being excluded. We also intend to forge better links with the Education Attendance Team to identify earlier where there may be barriers to education that we can jointly support.

Serious Violence and Exploitation - the YJS is contributing to the work being undertaken by the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to ensure we are compliant with the Serious Violence Duty. Once again there is representation from the VRU at Board level.

Challenges, Risks and Issues

In South Tyneside there has been a multi-agency focus on the development of working together to put measures in place to respond to children, young people and families. The links between serious youth violence, criminal and sexual exploitation, and any potential emerging gang culture means that we need to remain focused as a partnership to become more preventative in our responses with clear referral pathways.

Inequalities exist in South Tyneside which impacts on levels of social exclusion, disaffection and crime. Related to this is the impact cost of living and fuel poverty on families which may then be associated with a rise in acquisitive crime and / or a sense of injustice or disempowerment which is likely to impact on health, wellbeing and reduce opportunities.

The YJS continue to signpost to food banks to those in need and our staff routinely signpost families to specialist Family Help Services, and we ensure we meet young people in their own communities to reduce or eliminate transport costs. Education, training and employment are critical longer-term answers to poverty and our interventions provided through our education training and employment worker supports this.

There continues to be ongoing financial pressure on the council and other public services. Inflation and uncertainty in terms of public sector finances may create additional pressure. We have received funding for the Turnaround programme to support prevention and diversion, however, the expediency within which the funding was received has meant that it has been a challenge to recruit to posts and deliver against the mandate.

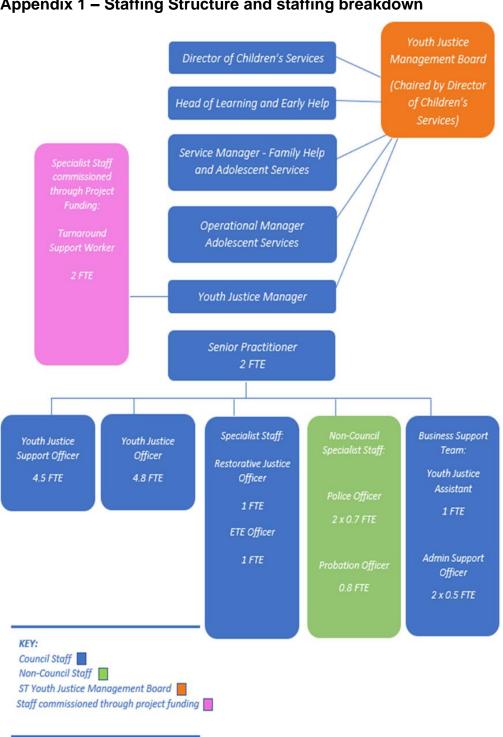
As part of our strategy to manage risks to future service delivery in an uncertain financial climate, the YJS work collectively as a Family Help and Adolescent Services portfolio to pool resources.

South Tyneside has a strong value-base for working with multi-agency partnerships and as a small Borough, there is a powerful strength is collectively doing our best for the communities we serve. There is an appetite across the partnership to innovate and improve the outcomes for children, young people and families and a drive from within the service to make a difference.

Sign off, Submission and Approval

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of the YJS Board and Director of Children's Services (interim), South Tyneside Council	Steve Reddy	Suy	29.06.23
Leader of South Tyneside Council	Councillor Tracey Dixon	y a Dason	11.07.23
Chief Executive of South Tyneside Council	Jonathan Tew	The state of the s	29.06.23
Corporate Director Business and Resources and S151 Officer, South Tyneside Council	Stuart Reid	Shleid	03.07.23

Appendices



Appendix 1 - Staffing Structure and staffing breakdown

Ethnicity	Mana Strate		Manag Operat		Case Mana		Supp Work		Busir Supp		Specialis Staff commiss through funding	sioned	Spec Staf	cialist F		ıncil cialist
	М	F	M	F	М	F	M	F	М	F	М	F	М	F	M	F
Mixed White and Black African	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	0	1	2	0	1	2	1	3	0	3	0	1	0	2	0	3

Disabilities	Mana Strate		Manag Operat		Case Mana		Supp Worl		Busii Supp		Staff commissi through p funding	oned	Specia Staff	ılist	Non- Counc Specia Staff	
	M	F	М	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	М	F	M	F
Disability	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
No Disability	0	1	2	1	1	2	1	3	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	2

Appendix 2: Budget Costs and Contributions 2023/24

Income

Income	YJB	Local authority	Police	PCC	Probation	Health	Other	Total
Cash	£444,434	£172,533			£2.654			£619.621
In kind			£83,465		£31,045			£114,510
Total income	£444,434	£172,533	£83,465	£0	£33,699	£0	£0	£734,131

Expenditure (not including Turnaround Programme)

Expenditure	YJB	Local authority	Police	PCC	Probation	Health	Other	Total
Salaries	£444,434	£136,089						£580,523
Activity costs	£0	£11,227						£11,227
Accommodation	£0	£6,073						£6,073
Overheads	£0	£21,797						£21,797
Equipment	£0							£0
Total expenditure	£444,434	£175,187	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£619,621

Appendix 3: Summary Outline of Grant Compliances

Date	Activity	Contact
31 May 2023	Submission of the signed audit certificate for the previous year's 2022/23 Youth Justice Grant	Send to: YJBGrants@YJB.GOV.UK
30 June 2023	Youth Justice Plan	Send to: CBUGrants@yjb.gov.uk And copy in relevant YJB
		lead.
30 June 2023	Submission of a signed agreement of	Send to:
	Conditions of Grant- other signatories must be copied in and state explicitly that they have agreed to the conditions	YJBGrants@YJB.gov.uk
31 July 2023	Submission of the planned overall income and workforce data for the youth justice service application framework	Contact: InformationandAnalysis@yjb.gov.uk
As per data recording requirements	Submission of quarterly case management and AssetPlus data via Connectivity.	Contact: informationandAnalysis@yjb.gov.uk