

Youth Justice Plan 2019/20



The Youth Justice Plan is a description of the strategic priorities for the year set in the context of current and projected performance against the national outcomes



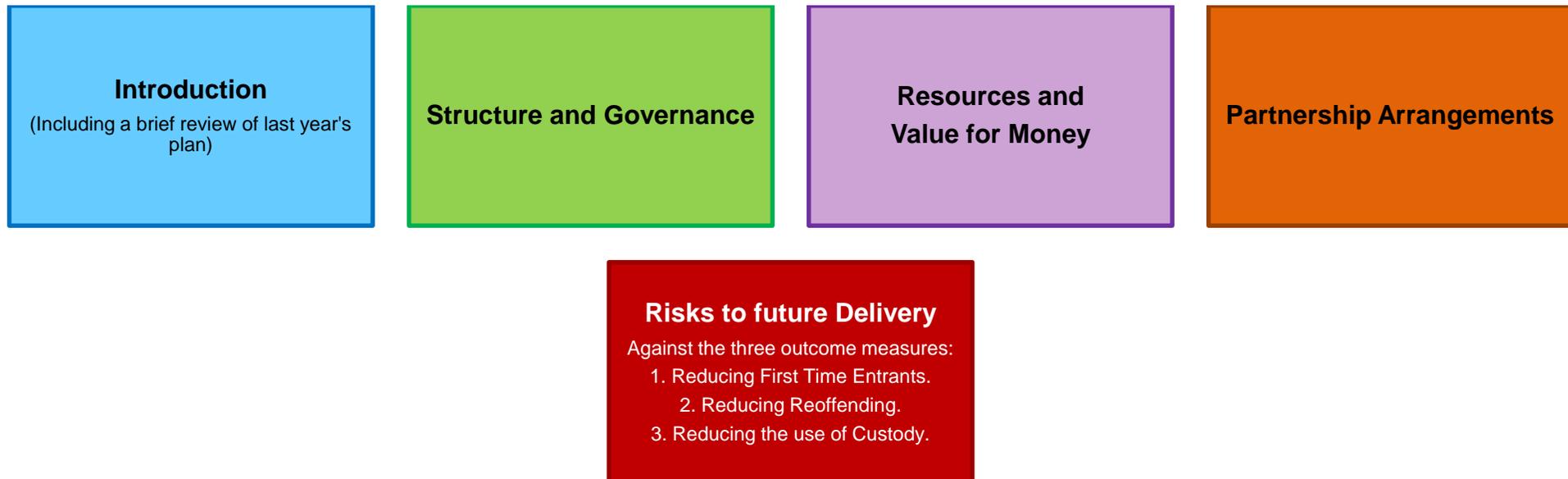
ON 4 April 2019 MK YOT jointly hosted, with Public Health, an Adverse Childhood Experience training event that supported evidence in practice, looked at work through an ACE lens and provided an opportunity to share good practice. MK YOT and regional YOT teams were invited with a range of other stakeholders.

Legal Context

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 40) sets out responsibilities placed upon the local youth justice partnership in relation to the production of an annual Youth Justice Plan. It states that it is the statutory duty for each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan setting out:

- **How youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded;**
- **How the Youth Offending Team (YOT) will be composed and funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.**

Guidance issued in 2019 by the Youth Justice Board confirms expectations regarding content based around the following five themes:



Introduction

The 2019/20 Youth Justice Plan has been prepared in consultation with the Youth Offending Strategic Board, the local community safety partnership (SaferMK), staff from the Youth Offending Team and young people.

MK YOT and its partners have made good progress against the actions and targets set out in the 2018/19 Youth Justice Plan notably:

- Strengthened the Youth Offending Strategic Board with new members representing key partners.
- MK YOT is consistently in the top quartile of local authority areas for the re-offending rate.
- Continued low use of custody for sentenced and remanded young people.
- Effective partnership working in supporting efforts to tackle exploitation, particularly around gangs and County Lines.
- Developed outreach work, in collaboration with the Education Psychology Service, in highlighting specific risks around children being drawn into offending and criminal exploitation linked to unrecognised speech and language and SEND needs.
- Secured additional resources to fund the 'Early Support Project' supporting targeted work around prevention and our outreach project in secondary schools known as 'Promoting Reintegration, Reducing Exclusions'.
- Carried out a multi-agency review of the work of the MK YOT.
- Reviewed and strengthened the out of court disposal joint decision making process with the police.
- Improved the oversight and joint working practices related to young people transitioning from the YOT to probation services.

Further review and commentary on key issues can be found in the following sections of this Plan.

Inspection and YJB Monitoring

- YOTs are inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. In February 2013 MK YOT was subject to a Short Quality Screening and the resulting action plan was fully implemented.
- Late in 2017, HMIP consulted on changes they want to make to the way they inspect YOTs. YOTs will be inspected at least every four years, with some inspected more frequently based upon a targeted, intelligence-led approach. YOT inspections will be underpinned with published standards and will cover a broader range of YOT work, including organisational delivery, court disposals and out of court disposals.
- The YJB undertakes quarterly reviews of all YOTs, monitoring progress against the national indicators. There have been no significant issues raised in the last year and MK YOT is considered to be low risk.
- In October 2018 the YOT made a significant contribution to the Milton Keynes Area SEND (special educational needs and disability) inspection. Ofsted reported that the 'coordinated approach to reviewing and developing the youth offending team for young people who have SEND is achieving positive results'.
- In November 2018 a service review of the YOT in Milton Keynes was undertaken by a multi-agency group led by the Head of Safeguarding and Quality, Children's Social Care. A report of the findings was presented to the YOT Strategic Board in March 2019. Initial progress against the recommendations was noted and it was agreed to have regular review of progress.

In summary the review carried out **25** audits, **125** responses from professionals working with YOT, **14** staff questionnaires, focus groups with **12** staff and **4** volunteers, **3** questionnaires from management board representatives and **6** surveys completed by young people. The review found that the overall quality of assessments and intervention was good or very good, the YOT knows itself well and has clear direction through the Youth Justice Plan, it has strong operational leadership and team with a passionate workforce and has a strong record of innovative practice, in particular with the use speech and language therapy.

Areas for development included: developing a more collaborative approach to the annual youth justice plan; establishing a stronger connection between the Strategic Board and the operational service; reflecting work with victims in plans; addressing the gap in partnership provision and access to health assessments and information.

Governance

- Governance of local youth justice arrangements is delivered through a multi-agency partnership convened (initially) by the Chief Executive of the Local Authority and, at a minimum, comprising senior representation from the Police, Health (CCG and Public Health), Probation, Local Authority (principally children's social care and education services); with these agencies additionally being charged with financially resourcing the YOT and providing staff. In Milton Keynes the local governance group is known as the **Youth Offending Strategic Board (YOSB)**.
- Historically the quality of the governance arrangements has been independently assessed as strong. Recent wider changes to our partnership arrangements for safeguarding adults and children, community safety and promoting health and wellbeing have created a more streamlined and closer alignment of boards and work streams.
- The YOSB is chaired by the Director of Children's Services. The board receive regular performance reports and budget information.
- The Board also receives highlight reports from the Head of Service and papers, presentations and other contributions from staff, partners and service users. The forward plan for the Board ensures that sufficient space is given to items that from a youth offending perspective are required by national standards and/or conditions of grant. In the past year the Board has received updates on health provision in the YOT, partnership arrangements, consideration of exploitation issues and an evaluation of the Early Support Project.
- MK YOT also has an informal reporting line to the Community Safety Partnership - SaferMK. The Chief Executive and lead cabinet member are also briefed as required, as is the Local Police Area Commander. MK YOT is one of nine YOTs in the Thames Valley who share a Police and Crime Commissioner and reporting lines are in place with that office through the Local Criminal Justice Board.
- The current YOT Manager (Head of Service for Youth & Community) is employed by Milton Keynes Council and is managed within the Children's Services Directorate. The Head of Service reports to the Director of Children's Services.
- The Head of Service has a wide range of responsibilities including children and family centres, community learning, youth services and the local Troubled Families programme.

Resources and Value for Money

Structure of MK YOT

Currently the YOT management team consists of the Head of Service (Head of Youth and Community) and two Operational Managers and a Business Support and Information Manager. In total there are 22 practitioner and administrative staff (17.46 FTE). As well as generic YOT officers, a number of whom are qualified social workers, the team includes a seconded police officer, a mental health worker, a family support worker and an education coordinator. Staffing contributions from other partners include speech and language therapists and a youth advice and guidance worker. Recruitment issues with the National Probation Service resulted in an agreement to transfer financial resources to the YOT to ensure a suitably qualified and experienced colleague is available to support the transition of young people to the probation service. Additionally, physical health provision is provided through an off-site screening process situated within the School Nursing Team.

Volunteer Youth Offender Panel members and Appropriate Adults are recruited, trained and supported by MKYOT. Additional Appropriate Adults were recruited in 2019. The service includes supporting vulnerable adults in collaboration with adult social care services.

The majority of current staff and Youth Offender Panel members have received training in restorative justice. Training for new volunteers is planned for 2019.

The team remains based at a single site in Bletchley in the south of Milton Keynes. Access to other locations around the borough managed by the Council and partners is available, with colleagues adopting the Council's policy for agile working.

Subject to the overall financial position nationally and locally some further restructuring of the service may need to take place during 2019/20 and beyond.

For a summary of activities provided for and on behalf of MK YOT see Appendix 2

Financial Resources – (for a full breakdown of the MKYOT budget see **Appendix 1**)

The budget for 2019/20 has been established at **£1,223,757**. Each of the statutory partners is required to contribute, with additional resources coming from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Ministry of Justice (via the Youth Justice Board).

For 2019/20 the YJB grant has been held at the same level to 2018/19 as has the contribution from the PCC.

Additionally in November 2018, Thames Valley PCC's office was successful in securing £822k for the whole of the Thames Valley area from the Early Intervention Youth Fund. This has allowed MK YOT to continue its early intervention/prevention work with partners in collaboration with schools, the youth work team and Buckinghamshire YOT.

As in previous years the resources will be prioritised on court ordered interventions especially at the intensive level. Maintaining a low level of re-offending and custodial sentences as well as significant reductions in Youth Detention Accommodation would seem to suggest that the strategy is having a positive impact and represents a good rate of return on the investment made. The additional grant funding via the PCC (above) has allowed the YOT to provide more early support which is having a positive impact on the number of first time entrants and allows a greater priority on wider preventative work around SEND and the emerging gang issues.

All grants from the YJB are controlled within the MKYOT budget arrangements and are used exclusively for the delivery of youth justice services. The only exception is the grant paid to support remands to Youth Detention Accommodation, which is held within the placements budgets of children's social care.

Contributing to the pooled budget for staffing, premises and delivery of interventions.

Supporting training and development of staff and volunteers.

Ensuring compliance with data recording and information exchange expectations.

Supporting delivery of Unpaid Work and Junior Attendance Centre.

AssetPlus

AssetPlus is the assessment and planning interventions framework developed by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) providing a holistic end-to-end assessment and intervention plan, allowing one record to follow a child or young person throughout their time in the youth justice system. AssetPlus is fully embedded at MK YOT and a recent training session was held to share more efficient ways to use the framework.

Training

During 2018/19 staff received training in a range of topics including:



The funding available for training is kept under close scrutiny in line with pressures on the overall budget. Some staff have benefited from following longer term professional development, both in-house and via external providers. Priority areas for training this year will be:

- New staff induction training on both AssetPlus and ChildView – the YOT’s case management system.
- Further training in both AssetPlus and ChildView will continue throughout the year as part of the regular team meeting slots and through any further training offered by YJB.
- All volunteers and staff will receive safeguarding training as individual circumstances require.
- Opportunities to participate in events focussing on child exploitation priorities such as, county lines, gangs and organised crime.
- New Youth Offender Panel and Appropriate Adult volunteers will be recruited and trained as required.

Partnership Arrangements

MK YOT has over many years developed and maintained strong links with a range of multi-agency groups:

- The Head of Service is one of the advisers to the SaferMK (community safety) Partnership Board.
- One of the Operational Managers has recently taken a more strategic lead in the local approach to tackling child exploitation, and is a member of the multi-agency risk management panel that considers children at risk of child exploitation and/or who go missing frequently.
- The Head of Service attends the Thames Valley YOT Managers meeting to discuss a range of issues and to share good practice.
- One of the team members attends the regular joint decision making meeting with the police considering out of court disposals.
- The Head of Service attends the Local Criminal Justice Board, representing regional YOT managers.
- MK YOT made a significant contribution to the recent Milton Keynes Area SEND inspection and one of the YOT Operational Managers draws on experience gained at a national level, including as Association of YOT Managers lead for SEND and speech and language.
- The Head of Service is a member of the Prevent Board. Information has been provided to assist in the preparation of risk and threat assessments. To date no young people known to the YOT have been accused or convicted of extremism related offences.
- One of the Operational Managers co-ordinates the MK Harmful Sexual Behaviour (AIM2) Programme which is delivered via a virtual multi-agency team.
- YOT is a standing member of the Schools Behaviour Partnership alternative education panel and is able to influence discussions on appropriate education provision.
- Joint work with the Strengthening Families team (MK's approach to the national Troubled Families Programme) to identify families eligible for the parenting courses run by MK YOT.

The Voice of Young People

The users of youth justice services are considered a hard to reach group as far as participation is concerned. Most do not volunteer or seek to be service users but are supervised by the service as a result of a criminal court or pre-court sanction. Despite the nature of the relationship and its attendant challenges MK YOT is committed to ensuring that young people (and their parents/carers) have the same opportunity to contribute to service developments and have their voice heard.

Young people are encouraged to participate by:

- Contributing and reviewing (with their parents/carers) their own intervention plans.
- Completing feedback forms following particular initiatives or activities to steer improvements.
- Young people are asked to complete end of intervention evaluation (Where2Now) – to ensure greater independence and improve the quality of feedback this survey will be ‘outsourced’ in the future.
- YOT clients are encouraged to contribute to wider participation activity and special events (e.g. Alcohol Awareness Week, No Smoking Day, Anti Bullying week)

As part of the recent review of the YOT, six young people agreed to provide feedback – among the questions was the following:

Thinking back about your contact with YOT, how would you rate your experience?			
Very Good	Good	OK	Poor
33%	50%	17%	0%

One young person commented their worker was “very thoughtful, understanding, gave good feedback and clear explanations.”

Performance and Risks to Future Delivery

There are a number of risks to future delivery, including:

- Changing patterns in frequency of particular offences reflecting national trends in violent offending, child exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour.
- Future budget settlements (including changes in national funding arrangements) will have a significant impact on the ability to provide the range of services and intervention required in Milton Keynes to meet national standards and reduce first time entrants, re-offending and use of custody.
- The contribution from the national Troubled Families Programme (known locally as Strengthening Families) with the planned closure of the programme on 31 March 2020.
- Funding may also be reduced if youth justice is not considered a priority by local partners including the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- Potential changes in the structural and management arrangements in the Children's Services Directorate of Milton Keynes Council may lead to some uncertainty regarding the positioning and structure of the YOT.
- Disruption due to unresolved technical deficiencies with the ChildView software.
- Specific risks against each of the national indicators are identified below set in the context of current performance and targets.



First Time Entrants

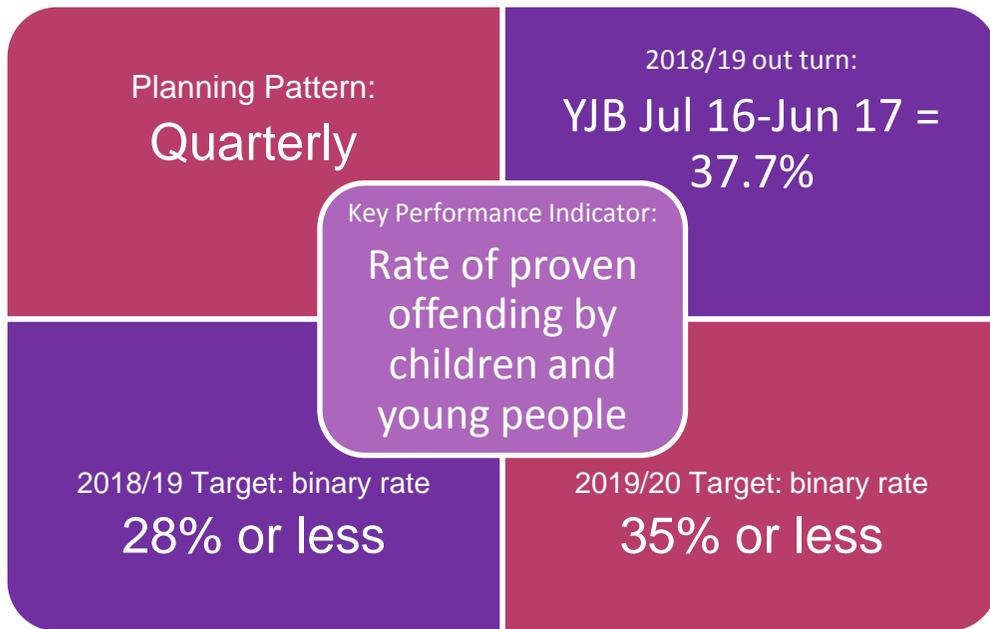
This target was met following joint YOT and TVP action leading to improvement management of out of court disposals. The 2018/19 outturn data puts MK on a par with the regional and national figures – and further action is being taken to improve this.

Risks to Delivery

- Pressures on YOT budgets require redeployment of resources away from early intervention which may ultimately lead to more young people appearing in Court.
- Unable to resolve issues with respect to joint decision making.
- Service reductions especially in family support services
 - Increased exclusion or poor attendance may promote disengagement and deteriorating behaviour.
 - Poor access to post 16 learning opportunities may promote late onset of antisocial behaviour/crime.
 - Higher thresholds for intervention leading to unrecognised and unmet need increasing risk.

Mitigations/Actions

- Improved MK YOT and TVP collaboration to address issues with respect to decision making in the management of the out of court disposal process.
- Joint work with the Youth Faculty and single lines of senior management align preventative and out of court disposal work.
- Work with local partners to enhance access to education and training provision that is responsive to the needs of the MK YOT client group.
- Additional resources available from the Early Intervention Youth Fund to support more targeted work around prevention / early intervention.



Rate of proven offending by children and young people

The target set for 2018/19 was not achieved due to our change of working practices (with the police) in respect of pre-court offenders. Using interventions with Youth Restorative Disposals (YRDs - which aren't counted in the re-offending cohort) considerably reduced the overall size of the cohort; meaning that the court outcomes constituted the bulk of the cohort.

Risks to Delivery

- Lack of clarity locally and nationally on what the key priority areas for YOTs should be may result in confusion and competing demands for reducing resources.
- MK YOT has developed a range of resources and established programmes to reduce offending, risk of harm and meet wider health and wellbeing needs. Maintaining the continuous development of these is challenging when resources are stretched.
- Lack of access to education training and employment opportunities, appropriate accommodation and services to meet health and well-being needs present significant risks.
- Increasing trends in child exploitation, including drug running (County Lines) and membership of gangs leading to involvement of young people already at risk.

Mitigations/Actions:

- Embedding mental health provision within the YOT provides appropriate therapeutic assessment and response to the complex needs of some of the young people worked with.
- Improved co-ordination and response around child exploitation through better management oversight, information sharing and forward planning.
- The further development of restorative justice approaches linked to the continued development in understanding of and expertise in speech, language and communication needs.
- Improving links with the Youth Faculty to provide a focus on accessing and maintaining education, training and employment and providing child-focussed reparation opportunities.

Planning Pattern:

Quarterly

2018/19 Out Turn:

YJB Apr 17 - Mar 18 =
0.26

Key Performance Indicator:

Use of custodial sentences

(per 1,000 10-17 year olds)

2018/19 Target:

0.2 Per 1,000

2019/20 Target:

0.2 per 1,000

Use of custodial sentences

The final outturn for 2018/19 was 0.26 which translates to one custodial sentence for each of 3 quarters and 2 cases in the fourth. This 'additional' case was a young man who lived 'out of area', offended in that area and was sentenced by the court in that area – but, as he had moved to Milton Keynes following the offence to get away from gang influences, he counts as ours due to living here on the date he was sentenced.

Custodial sentences are avoided through the provision of high quality pre-sentence reports and imaginative use of intensive community orders.

Risks to Delivery

- Unable to recruit to vacancies with suitably skilled and experienced staff.
- Insufficient resourcing of credible alternatives to custody.
- Insufficient resources to provide appropriate resettlement for those returning from custody.
- Unable to access suitable placements for remands to local authority accommodation.

Mitigations/Actions:

- Appointment of qualified probation officer and recruit high quality replacements for departing staff.
- Continue service wide refinement of processes and procedures to ensure resources are effectively deployed increasing capacity for direct work with young people.
- Continue to develop alternatives to custody, building on success in providing the courts with proportionate intensive YROs /Referral Order options.
- Contribute to placement sufficiency reviews to ensure the needs of the client group are fully taken into account including those requiring accommodation following charge in line with the national Concordat.
- Scrutiny of the quality of pre-sentence reports. MK YOT reports have been praised by judges.
- Local direction and expectations for custody and resettlement based on the 7 resettlement pathways.

Challenges and priorities for MK YOT and its partners in 2019/20

1. Ensuring the appropriate focus upon criminal exploitation of children through improved partnership information sharing and forward planning; includes consideration of child sexual exploitation, knife crime, county lines, gangs, trafficking and modern day slavery.
2. Further develop the proactive outreach work, in collaboration with the Education Psychology Service, in highlighting specific risks around children being drawn into offending and criminal exploitation linked to unrecognised speech and language and SEND needs.
3. Ensure the additional resources available from the NHS funded Health and Justice 'Early Support' Project continue to support more targeted work around prevention / early intervention; evaluate the project's effectiveness and look at opportunities to share the learning and effective practice across other services and with the partnership.
4. With secondary schools and partners address the issues related to attendance at school to reduce the risk of children and young people getting involved in offending behaviour or being exploited.
5. Strengthen the YOT's work in restorative justice, in particular the work with victims, through collaborative work with the police and Youth Faculty.
6. Develop more opportunities for children and young people to inform service delivery through appropriate feedback mechanisms.
7. Ensure that eligible young people known to the YOT are offered support to combat substance misuse, either through an in-house resource or via a commissioned service provider.
8. Provide more employment, training and education opportunities for young people who have offended through collaborative work with relevant partners including the Youth Faculty, MK College, other local providers and employers.

Milton Keynes Youth Justice Plan 2019-2020

Sign Off

This plan and the end of year performance measures were shared with the Youth Offending Strategic Board on 30 July 2019.



Mac Heath

Chair of the Milton Keynes Youth Offending Strategic Board

Date 5 August 2019

Appendix 1 Financial Summary 2019/20

Income	Staff (£)	Delegated funds (£)	Total (£)
Police	54,015		54,015
Police and Crime Commissioner		116,900	116,900
Probation		29,776	29,776
Health	32,185	31,502	63,687
Local Authority		609,347	609,347
YJB		268,311	268,311
Other (for breakdown see below)	22,721	70,000	92,721
TOTAL	108,921	1,125,836	1,234,757

'Other' Income	
DSG for SLT provision	£ 22,721
Strengthening Families	£ 70,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to core costs • Family work projects 	
	£ 92,721

Summary of Services Provided by Milton Keynes YOT

Appropriate Adult (AA) services provided to the Police Station: A volunteer scheme is maintained by MKYOT available 24 hours a day 7 days a week; includes vulnerable adults as well as young people.

First Time Entrants: MK YOT will provide specific, offending behaviour interventions to young people who have received Youth Restorative Disposals and families engaged in the Strengthening Families programme.

Out of Court Disposals: Arrangements are in place with Thames Valley Police and Thames Valley YOTs to provide the range of disposals (Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions).

Court Services: MK YOT staff advise the youth court about sentences. YOT staff prepare pre-sentence reports and operate a duty system to address remand issues and ensure bail packages are available when necessary. A protocol exists with children's social care regarding management of remands to local authority accommodation and Youth Detention Accommodation.

Court Orders including Intensive Supervision and Surveillance: MK YOT provides case holders for young people made subject to court orders and manage these in accordance with National Standards. This will include managing young people subject to custodial sentences and planning and supervising their release.

Attendance Centre: A Junior Attendance Centre operates fortnightly on Saturday mornings. It is run from the YOT offices and is partly staffed by YOT personnel. Arrangements have recently been reviewed to improve record keeping.

Victims: A member of the team contacts victims of YOT young people offering support, including being kept informed of case progression, support to attend Youth Offender Panels and meeting the young person face-to-face for a restorative conference. MKYOT staff are trained to YJB Council standards for the facilitation of restorative conversations.

Volunteers: Volunteers are recruited to be Youth Offender Panel members - people from the community who meet with the young person, parents and victim to agree a contract which will prevent further offending and repair harm. In 2019/20 MKYOT will train a new cohort of volunteers

Summary of Services commissioned by or provided on behalf of Milton Keynes YOT

Community Reparation: Where the young person who has offended is not able to repair the harm they have caused directly to their victim, they are supervised to undertake work repairing the harm to the community. This is provided by the Council's Youth Faculty providing opportunities for joint co-ordination and delivery.

Speech and Language: MKYOT is a national leader within youth justice in the assessment and response to those with speech, language and communication problems. MKYOT has a speech and language therapist attached to the team by the health service.

Health: MKYOT has a seconded Primary Mental Health worker (0.8) to the team who carries out assessments and interventions. The YOT has off-site access to broader healthcare support to young people and advice to YOT staff.

Substance Misuse: Some cases are referred via an SLA to the local young people's drugs service Compass.

Education Training and Employment: An education, training and employment co-ordinator works to sustain engagement with schools and other providers, working closely with the Council's SEN team, schools partnership and local 16+ providers. On-site support from an Information, Advice and Guidance worker plus close arrangements with the Youth Faculty have provided more opportunities for young people to take accredited traineeships and other pathways.

Appendix 3 Staffing

By gender / ethnicity

Ethnicity	Strategic Managers		Operational Managers		Practitioners		Administrative		Referral Order Panel Volunteers		Other Volunteers		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
White	1		1	1	4	13	1	2	2	13	1	7	10	36
Asian									1			1	1	1
Black					1			1				1	1	2
TOTAL	1		1	1	5	13	1	3	3	13	1	9	12	39

No other ethnicities were represented.

By contract type (fulltime equivalents)

Contract type	Strategic Managers		Operational Managers		Practitioners		Administration		Sessional	Students	TOTAL
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time			
Permanent	0.33			2	5.29	6	0.97	2			16.59
Seconded Police						1					1
Seconded Probation											0
Seconded Health Mental Health					0.8						0.8
Seconded Health Physical Health											0
Seconded Health Speech & Language					0.4						0.4
Vacant						1					1
TOTAL	0.33			2	6.49	8	0.97	2			19.79