

Youth justice plan template

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1. Introduction, vision and strategy (Page 9 of the Guidance)

As Chair of the multi-agency youth justice partnership in Milton Keynes, I am pleased to set out our strategic partnership plan for 2022-2023. The Plan highlights our core achievements over the past year for young people in contact with the criminal justice system as both First Time Entrants and for those who have been engaged through single or repeat contact with our Youth Offending Team and the range of statutory and community partners.

The commitment demonstrated by our Board members and the organisations they represent over the last year in sharing their valuable time, expertise, information, and ideas has promoted and sustained intra/inter-agency cooperation and collaboration towards the identification and protection of some of our most vulnerable young people. This has enabled us to help protect them from harm and ensure their complex range of needs are being met. Our focus on the delivery of innovative community-based prevention programmes alongside intensive, targeted and highly specialised multi-agency interventions over the past year has enabled Milton Keynes to achieve outcomes we can all be proud of.

We are achieving strong outcomes against Regional and National Performance Indicators with first time entrants, custody data and re-offending data, and this has been achieved in the challenging context of a changing strategic landscape, management and staffing changes and a year of intensive focus on practice improvements in Children's Services.

The year ahead will provide further opportunity to deliver seamless and coordinated services as our Youth Justice Services become more closely aligned to Family Services including our strong locality based Early Help offer supported by a continued commitment from all agencies towards achieving our aims to reduce youth crime, safeguard children and young people at risk of, or involved in, offending and protect the public from harm.

The Plan makes clear our intention to coordinate partnership efforts and draw on our collective creativity, expertise, and practice strengths so we can continue achieving our shared ambition for a resilient, safe, and thriving population of children and young people in Milton Keynes. This we must do by targeting our resources effectively to build on the learning from our 'Good' Inspection outcome of 2021 and ensure we continue our support and ambition for some of our most vulnerable children and young people in Milton Keynes to help them realise their potential and live happy and successful lives.

1. The 2022/23 Youth Justice Plan (YJ Plan) outlines the vision and strategy of the multi-agency youth justice partnership in Milton Keynes and details the focus, priorities and plans for delivery of youth justice services. The YJ Plan has been prepared in consultation with the Youth Offending Strategic Board (YOSB), the local Community Safety Partnership (SaferMK), staff from the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and children. In developing the YJ Plan we have considered the Community Safety Partnership priorities for Milton Keynes and the focus, direction, and detail of the Thames Valley Police and Criminal Justice Plan, including the feedback to the consultation of that plan. We have also considered and reflected relevant findings from the Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment. The YJ Plan has also been informed by the outcome of a Single Agency Inspection undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in May 2021.

2. In considering the focus for the coming year it is useful to reflect on the progress and in relation to the aims we set for 2021 /2022. The YOT and its partners have made good progress against the actions and targets set out in the 2021/22 Youth Justice Plan along with other additional achievements, notably:
 - a. Work to develop the Youth Offending Strategic Board Membership has resulted in the inclusion of the Chair of the Youth Panel as a representative from the Court. We have also added a representative of the community volunteers, ensuring a voice on the YOSB for the members of the wider community who are involved in supporting the work of the Youth Offending Team as Youth Offender Panel Members, Appropriate Adults and Mentors under the Youth Resilience Project.
 - b. In order to strengthen the effectiveness of the Youth Offending Strategic Board (YOSB) in its internal and external facing roles, we introduced a specific partner feedback slot at each YOSB Meeting to encourage greater joint reflection, participation, and dialogue. This has provided greater impetus and focus for a more informed discussion in YOSB Meetings and a greater sense of ownership by the YOSB Members in their roles as both representatives of

their parent organisation and as champions of the work of the Youth Offending Team and the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan.

- c. In addition to the detail of the Youth Justice Plan, the changes outlined above and the work and focus of the Youth Offending Team, alongside the work of the other teams that now comprise the wider Youth Offending Service (see below), has been shared and highlighted across key partners to increase insight and understanding of the work and child first methodology of the service and the importance of the co-ordinated focus around planning and delivery. Significant achievements include an increased focus upon multi-agency / multi-disciplinary partnership approaches to address the overlap between children involved in criminal exploitation; County Lines; gangs / Organised Crime Groups; serious youth violence; missing episodes and knife crime. This has seen greatly improved partnership information sharing and coordinated planning and delivery of individual and systemic solutions. This work has capitalised on the opportunities created by the closer alignment with wider Children's Services alongside Children's Social Care, and completing the integration of the Youth Offending Service, encompassing the Youth Offending Team; The Multi-Agency Missing and Exploitation Hub (ME Hub); the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (YPDAS) and the Stay Safe Team (specialist Youth Workers/Youth Support Workers and a Young Peoples Advice and Guidance Worker).
- d. We have identified additional current and future provision to ensure access to safe places so that staff can work safely and effectively with children, parents / carers, and victims. This has provided greater access to more child centred buildings across Milton Keynes, and these are continuing to be developed to reflect the changing professional practices enabled by more co-ordinated working between the Youth Offending Team and the other constituent teams that are part of the wider Youth Offending Service (Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service; Missing and Exploitation Hub; Stay Safe Team of Youth Workers). The evolution of these child focused provisions going forward will support the plans for development of a Contextual Safeguarding Team within the Youth Offending Service.

- e. We have explored more targeted recruitment approaches with a view to increase the diversity of the staff and volunteer team in order to better reflect the demography of Milton Keynes and the children and families who work with the service. This is ongoing and the continued work on this objective is reflected in the current plan.
- f. We have established succession planning for key roles, although there remains further work to progress around the Business Support and Information Manager role in particular reflecting similar challenges experienced by other Youth Justice Services in the Thames Valley / South-East area around the equivalent Performance Manager role.
- g. We have introduced a single profile document, collating, and presenting key details around desistance and unmet needs that is shared on a monthly / quarterly basis. The profile reflects identified specific desistance needs and demands, enabling both analysis and evidence gathering to support the identification of potential gaps in service provision across the partnership.
- h. Some progress has been made in resolving the lack of access to appropriate Physical Health provision however there remains further work to complete to achieve this goal and this will be reflected as a target in the plan going forward for the coming year.
- i. Based on the positive experience from the audit that was completed shortly before the HMIP Inspection in May 2021 and the positive outcome from that Inspection itself we have established a regular audit methodology to continue to drive forward and monitor professional practice.
- j. We have introduced an inhouse learning review process for swift learning to identify early lessons in relevant cases. This is structured to complement both the MK Together partnership arrangements and the Youth Justice Board expectations around serious case reviews.
- k. We have established approaches to enhance the connection between the Youth Offending Strategic Board and the front-line service delivery to improve effectiveness and coordination, including through greater Youth Offending

Service staff and volunteer attendance at YOSB to strengthen direct dialogue and closer links with opportunities for YOSB Members to attend Youth Offending Service Meetings.

- l. We have further developed our work to engage with victims, broadening our offer significantly to victims of offences by children who receive a Community Resolution and strengthening our other services to victims of crime. Additionally, we have strengthened the YOT's work in restorative justice, through collaborative work with the police to increase the level of victim information and, along with the Stay Safe Team, to ensure direct and indirect restorative approaches are person centred and meet the requirements of a service structured around Child First principles and approaches. This work now ensures that the needs of victims are paramount and the effective approach that had previously been developed for post court disposals is now fully replicated within all elements of the Diversion work of the Youth Offending Team and key partners in the YJS.
- m. Ensured that the additional resources available from the NHS funded Health and Justice 'Early Support Project' (ESP) have continued to enable more targeted work around prevention/early intervention and opportunities for further innovative developments. This has included accessing additional funding for a joint post for young people linked to both ESP and the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service. The ongoing evaluation of the ESP's effectiveness and positive outcomes continues to demonstrate the highly effective nature of the scheme in reducing future offending with only 3.39%, being involved in offending within 2 years. The opportunities to share the effective practice and learning with key partners across the Thames Valley has led directly to the development of a new ESP Knife Carrier Project initiative (ACT - NOW) which is to be fully funded for the next 12 months by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley.
- n. Greater engagement and closer co-ordinated partnership working with Alternative Education providers has supported improvements to address the issues related to reduced attendance at school and helped to mitigate the risk of this highly vulnerable cohort of children becoming involved in offending behaviour or being criminally exploited. This has resulted in significant

improvements in reducing the number of children moving into Alternative Education from mainstream schooling and ensuring that, for those that do make this transition, there is a clearer understanding of their individual needs through greater access to Speech Language and Communication Needs assessments. This follows the expansion of the Promoting Reintegration Reducing Exclusion (PRRE) part of the ESP, extending the bespoke Prevention offer to vulnerable children at risk of becoming involved in offending/exploitation in the vast majority of Secondary School and a significant proportion of Primary School settings. Supporting these providers to better identify and make adjustments to provision to meet needs and therefore reduce both permanent exclusions and moves into Alternative Education Placements.

- o. We have further developed solutions to effectively capture the voice of children who have engaged with the Youth Offending Team, expanding this to include those working with the Early Support Project. Their experiences of involvement in the YJS and working with the YOT and its partners continue to inform the future development of the service as the feedback informs the vision of the service going forward as well as the way, how and where it is delivered. Feedback from children, volunteers, and staff over this last year identified that crucial to the success of the service was greater access to child centred safe and confidential places to enable effective working, in particular with those children who pose a high risk of harm to others, including to other children and professionals. This feedback, supported by the findings of the HMIP Inspection, supported the YOSB and the YOT Management Team in gaining access to these provisions and in having a clearer understanding of the likely demand for the location and nature of additional provisions to meet this need in future years as Milton Keynes continues to expand.
3. In the next 12 months we will continue to develop the service in these areas alongside building on the other strengths identified by the HMIP Single Agency Inspection. Central to this strategy are the opportunities provided by the closer partnership alignment of the Youth Offending Service with Children's Social Care and the planned creation of a multi-agency/multi-disciplinary Contextual Safeguarding Team as a component of an expanded broader based Youth

Offending Service, further improving coordination and delivery within the service and with partners. The multi-agency work with Children's Social Care in particular reflects the significant overlap between the cohort of children with complex needs who are involved in working with the Youth Offending Team, with regular monitoring and analysis identifying that 21% having been looked after at some point, 19% having been subject to a Child Protection Plan and 80% either currently or previously on a Child in Need plan.

4. The analysis identified similar overlaps around issues of Criminal Exploitation with 51% having been identified as Exploited (7%), Targeted for Exploitation (12%) or Vulnerable to Exploitation (32%). This is in a context in which offences of Violence Against the Person currently represent the most prevalent type of offending and this, coupled with offending related to drugs, continues to represent the wider context of changing behaviour and offending within Milton Keynes. This is in a wider context that has seen a change in the nature of offending by children in relation to serious violence. In 2016 serious violence offences by children accounted for 1.1% of all serious violence. In 2021 children accounted for 19.4%¹ of all serious violence offences. 57% of all children identified as involved in serious violence between 2016-21 were previously reported missing². This is in the context that we have also seen an increase in the number of missing episodes reported for all children rising by 214% between 2018 and 2021, from 398 missing incidents to 12533. In the Thames Valley Police area 48.9% of all missing cases from 2019-21 were aged 13-17yrs.
5. This evolving picture of converging themes and interrelated risk and safeguarding considerations has, as outlined, necessitated stronger links across the partnership in developing and delivering co-ordinated strategies and individual and systemic interventions that bring about change. These are aimed at influencing individuals and impacting on systems to effectively address the needs and risks of these children in this context of direct involvement in or impacted by serious youth violence, drug dealing and knife offences who may have missing episodes and evidence of gang involvement, but who are also frequently

¹ Milton Keynes Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment 2022

² Milton Keynes Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment 2022

³ Milton Keynes Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment 2022

themselves victims of exploitation, youth violence and knife crime and the majority of whom, recent analysis has also demonstrated, have unrecognised unmet speech language and communication needs (2019/ 2020 – 80%; 2020/2021 – 84% ; 2021/2022 - 87%).

6. To achieve change it is essential to have a clear vision and set of principles underpinning the YJ Plan and our professional practice. The work of the YOT will therefore continue to be guided by the following principles:
7. We adopt a child-first approach across prevention, diversion, and statutory work. In order to achieve this, we strive to work in the best interests of children, we recognise potential, needs and capacities and we identify strengths and build on the positive factors within a child's world.
 - a. Through strong case work and multi-agency working, we support and encourage children to build pro-social identities to support their desistance from crime and reducing victims of crime and we work hard to offer victims of crime a voice.
 - b. Through continued staff support and supervision, we strive to ensure that interventions are constructive and meaningful, and that we remain future-focused and support children to make positive contributions to wider society.
 - c. We aim to work in partnership with children and their parents/carers/families, and whilst doing this, have a strong commitment to addressing social exclusion, marginalisation, social injustices, and structural barriers.
 - d. We recognise the need to address structural inequalities in tandem with interventions to support children's desistance from crime.
 - e. We seek to minimise stigma. Within the diversion and prevention elements of the service, we have our own personalised branding, 'The Early Support Project' to reduce the stigma that can be attached to children working with a Youth Offending Team.
8. Since 2008 Milton Keynes YOT have developed and refined an innovative approach, placing the routine identification of Speech Language and

Communication Needs (SLCN), by assessments undertaken by Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapists (SLT), as a core component across the service. This means that all children working with the team are assessed unless we have conclusive evidence that they don't have any SLCN, an approach referred to as 'Screening Out rather than Screening In'. This approach, which has informed and been informed by, local, national and international research, and frequently evaluated since its introduction, has proved effective in identifying those with SLCN (a hidden disability) whether present as a primary need, as a coexisting condition with other needs such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) ; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) ; Dyslexia etc., or as a consequence of other factors such as Attachment Disorder; Adverse Childhood Experiences; Trauma and Loss ; Domestic Abuse ; Family breakdown ; Sexual Abuse ; Criminal or Sexual Exploitation etc. Central to this approach is the recognition that the majority of children in the Youth Justice System (60%-90% Based on research; 65% - 87% based on local data; 71% based on YJB Asset Plus data) have SLCN but, as this is a hidden disability, for the majority of children this is not accurately recognised prior to them being assessed by the YOT.

9. Evidence in Milton Keynes collated over a number of years, found that of those with SLCN, between 61% and 79% had not had their needs accurately identified prior to assessment by the YOT Speech and Language Therapists. Analysis of collated data and individual case studies has also confirmed how frequently a child's presenting behaviour, including offending and anti-social behaviour, can be an indicator of other, as yet unrecognised, or unidentified, needs or factors. This methodology in both assessing the SLCN and identifying approaches to work effectively with and engage the child, has proved invaluable not only in enabling work by the YOT to be tailored in a bespoke way to the child's needs, but also in providing evidence and strategies to the child and parents / carers, as well as to key professionals and others working with the child or who may have interactions with them, including Youth Offender Panel members ; HMCTS ; Judges ; Magistrates ; Defence Solicitors ; CPS ; Police ; Education staff ; Health ; Children's Social Care ; Youth Workers ; Secure Estate staff ; Supported Accommodation and this assessment is shared when transitioning as an adult to other services such as Probation and Adult Social Care staff etc.

10. The evidence collected through the SLCN assessments, as well as providing further lines of enquiry about related additional needs or causal experiences (see above), is available to support decisions around justice processes (Bail applications ; Sentencing ; Joint Decision Meetings / Charging and outcome decisions) as well as key health and education processes including identification of SEND (for SEN Support and EHC Plans) and as evidence with referrals to Paediatricians (to support ASD Assessments) or to CAMHS / FCAMHS (ADHD / AIM3 assessments). Over the last few years there has been a change in the complexity of needs amongst those children working with the Youth Offending Service. This has also been mirrored amongst young people working with colleagues in Children's Social Care and there has been a significant increase in the overlap between the two areas. The most recent available data identifies 9% of the YOT cohort are currently Children in Care (rising to 15% when considering those who have previously been in care); 11% are on Child Protection Plans (rising to 27% when considering both current and previous CP Plans) and 27% are Children in Need (rising to 76% when also considering previous Child in Need episodes). Likewise, with the most recent analysis we have seen a significant increase in children who are assessed as vulnerable to exploitation (39%), being actively targeted or groomed (11%) or identified as being criminally (or sexually) exploited (CSE/ CCE) (4%). Currently 16% of the YOT cohort have Reasonable Grounds status following referral to the National Referral Mechanism, with a further 3% having Conclusive Grounds outcomes following referral.
11. These changing and coalescing cohorts continue to follow a pattern first identified in 2018 when Thames Valley Police and Children's; Social Care (CSC) jointly commissioned a Predictive Harm Analysis (PHA) The PHA identified a number of emerging ASB Groups / Gangs in Milton Keynes and a cohort of children and young adults at greatest risk of involvement in gang behaviour or vulnerable to exploitation. As the PHA had not considered any of the YOT data as part of the analysis (an oversight at the outset of the process) this provided the opportunity to cross reference with YOT data and identify not only the level of correlation across YOT / CSC, but also the level of SLCN amongst the cohort who had already been involved with the YOT. Of the identified individuals in the cohort 71% were previously or currently open to the YOT at that point and therefore SLCN Assessments were available. The completed SLCN assessments identified

that of the cohort who had worked with the YOT, 92% had SLCN and the remaining 8% had ADHD. This additional information not only provided key evidence in tailoring the way that both the YOT and partner agencies worked collaboratively with those individuals identified, but also provided important insight into a key risk factor relating to gang / exploitation involvement in highlighting the disproportionately high level of unrecognised SLCN – 92%, compared to 5%-8% amongst the general child population of the same age. The findings coincided with the introduction in Milton Keynes of the Early Support Project (ESP) funded by NHS England as a diversion project with SLCN Assessments as a core component. The evidence from the PHA provided the opportunity to adapt both the focus and scope of the ESP project to consider a number of different risk factors around both offending and exploitation and to broaden the remit to include prevention work.

12. The Early Support Project has been evaluated by NHS England as a model of effective practice and was highlighted by the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) SEND Inspection in October 2018, the Joint Targeted Area Inspection on Mental Health in October 2019, and the HMIP Single Agency Inspection in May 2021 as good practice and a key service to support the diversion and prevention work in Milton Keynes. The most recent reoffending rate for ESP measured over 2 years for those engaged by the project is currently 3.39%.
13. In the last couple of years the ESP has been extended to include the Promoting Reintegration Reducing Exclusion (PRRE) project which is focused on identifying any underlying SLCN amongst those children at greatest risk of school exclusion and to provide both an SLCN assessment and specialist training to enable schools to work more effectively to keep the child in education, or, if already in alternative education, to reintegrate back into mainstream schooling (recognising the higher risks around offending ; exploitation and missing episodes associated with education exclusion or involvement in Alternative Education provision).
14. The additional access to the SLTs through ESP / PRRE alongside further expansion of the referral routes into the ESP has enabled us to fast track SLCN assessments for a broader group of vulnerable children, including those referred to and accepted by the Channel Panel.

15. In June 2019 the current YOS Manager also became the Strategic Lead for Missing and Exploitation and created a multi-agency / multi-disciplinary Missing and Exploitation Hub (ME Hub) operationally led by the Professional Lead for Missing and Exploitation (PLME) and co-locating staff from Children's Social Care (CSC), Police, Youth Offending Team along with Youth Workers / Return From Missing Co-ordinator. The ME Hub became part of the wider Youth Offending Service in April 2021, alongside the YOT, Young Peoples Drug and Alcohol Service and the Stay Safe Team of Youth Workers / Youth Support Workers. The current Youth Offending Service is therefore key to the co-ordination, planning and delivery of both Youth Justice Services and the Tackling Child Exploitation Strategy in Milton Keynes. Key to this focus on both offending and exploitation are the multi-agency meeting arrangements such as the MK Youth Risk Meeting bringing together key professionals from YOT / Police / Education / Children's Social Care / Probation / Youth Services / Health etc to enable a shared understanding and coordinated professional strategy, including ensuring issues of harm and safeguarding are appropriately considered, for those children who are identified as at risk of or being exploited, involved in County Drug Lines, Gangs, Serious Youth Violence and / or Knife Crime.

16. In addition coordinated partnership working between the YOT, Police (Problem Solving Team / Violence Reduction Team), Health, CSC and the ME Hub is enhanced by the involvement of the Professional Lead for Missing and Exploitation (PLME) and YOT representatives providing effective YOT / CSC input to the Police Daily Management Meetings ; Tactical Tasking Core Group and Police Silver Meetings around specific Police operations addressing gangs, child exploitation, knife crime, serious youth violence. These arrangements are significantly enhancing the partnership working arrangements in Milton Keynes and have already led to better outcomes and swifter appropriate information sharing ensuring joint child safeguarding actions by the Police, YOT, Health and CSC in circumstances where there is a potential for high risk of harm.

2. [Local context](#) (Page 9 of the Guidance)

17. Milton Keynes, which achieved City status in 2022, was originally created as a 'New Town' in 1967 bringing together the existing towns of Bletchley, Fenny

Stratford, Wolverton, and Stony Stratford, along with another fifteen villages. This created a mix of urban and rural areas with the urban element accounting for 20% by area, but 90% by population. The most recent figures identify the population of Milton Keynes as 264,479 (2016) and it has a proportionately young community, with 50% of residents under the age of 35 and 27.4% under the age of 19.

18. Milton Keynes is one of the UK's fastest growing cities and is now the size of a large outer London borough. The population of Milton Keynes has expanded by 18% between 2004 and 2014 and this increase has continued, with a projection that between 2011 and 2026 the population will have increased by 24% (compared to 11% growth in England over the same period). The Office for National Statistics estimate that the population will reach 300,000 by 2025.
19. Milton Keynes Council's report in May 2021 on 'Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes' highlights the changing demographics and growing diversity, outlining that "the proportion of the black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) school population has increased from 31% in 2010 to 45.51% in 2020". This reflects wider changes in the local BAME communities "from a few well-established Asian, Chinese, Italian and Black Caribbean groups to a diverse range of African, Eastern European, Middle Eastern and other Asian backgrounds⁴".
20. Overall, there is positive school age education provision with outcomes for 89% of schools achieving Ofsted rating of 'Good' or better. The economic and associated population growth of Milton Keynes reflects its position at the centre of The Oxford – Cambridge Arc with good transport links with road and rail networks. Alongside the economic success of Milton Keynes, there are areas of deprivation and disadvantage, with Milton Keynes ranking alongside places like the Isle of Wight and Medway for child deprivation. There is a strong focus on partnership approaches aimed at closing these inequalities in regard to health and prosperity across the city. Milton Keynes Council Plan gives a high priority to children and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets the course for further improvement with strong multi-agency sign up.

⁴ Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes - Milton Keynes Council (May 2021)

3. Child First (Page 9 of the Guidance)

21. The Youth Justice Partnership has implemented the four tenants of the Child First principles into practical service delivery.

22. As outlined above Child First principles are integrated across all elements of the Youth Offending Team, including statutory case work and within the Youth Diversion and Prevention Service and the Youth Resilience Project (youth mentoring service). Child First and Strengths-Based training has been delivered to YOT staff in order to promote the tenants associated within the approach and to develop staff knowledge, skills, and confidence within this area.

23. We have integrated the Child First Principles in the following ways:

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

24. The best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential are captured within Asset Plus assessments and plans across all statutory, diversion and prevention work. Asset Plus is used to ensure that all areas associated with strengths, needs and risks are holistically identified and understood so that interventions are child-focused and developmentally informed. All children and young people are offered a Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessment and this informs the developmental approach adopted by YOT staff to support the child's understanding. Interventions are delivered to children and young people alongside addressing structural barriers (e.g., housing / education / health needs) to ensure that a parallel approach is adopted to addressing the needs and risks of children.

- *Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive*

relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society:

25. All work across the service has a focus on supporting children and young people to lead safe, healthy, and pro-social lives. Within this, supporting young people to become stakeholders in their local communities and increased social capital is key. The Youth Resilience Project, our youth mentoring service, has a significant role to play within this in terms of promoting pro-social attitudes and behaviours that we hope will lead to having better outcomes for young people, safer communities, and fewer victims. Intervention plans are balanced to reflect the needs, risks, and strengths of young people with a focus on moving young people towards a brighter future where they can get their needs met without involvement in offending and anti-social behaviour.

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

26. Young people and their parents are encouraged to actively contribute to the creation and review of their intervention plans and they also provide independent feedback at the end of their interventions so that this can be used to improve practice and service delivery. We use the Participation and Engagement Team that was developed in 2021 to discuss the young person's feedback so that this is independent and not completed by a member of the Youth Offending Service.

27. Within our Out of Court Disposals Policy, we obtain regular feedback from young people, parents, and stakeholders in order to inform our annual review of policy updates so that it improves the service as a whole and addresses any wider and systematic challenges that need to be addressed.

- *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:*

28. The Youth Diversion and Prevention Service actively promoted pre-emptive prevention and diversion and seeks to minimise criminogenic stigma from contact

across the system. Children and young people can receive an early intervention service from the Diversion and Prevention team via several pathways that have been created to ensure that we are working 'upstream' to identify young people at the earliest point. Within our Prevention service offer, we have developed the Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) Speech and Language Therapy project with primary and secondary schools. This project enables participating settings to refer children and young people for a Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessment should the child be at greatest risk of school exclusions or a move to alternative education. Offering a fast-tracked SLCN assessment with one of our three Speech and Language Therapists works towards identifying previously unidentified needs and supporting the setting to instigate alternative approaches to support the child further.

Youth Resilience Project

29. Youth violence and crime has become a priority for the MK Together Partnership due to the increase in incidents over the last 3 years. This is a national trend linked to various factors including County Drug Lines, Criminal Exploitation, and increased gang activity. The impact on individuals and the community is significant. For the children it includes entry into the criminal justice system, reduction in opportunities to thrive, poor education and employment prospects, physical harm and even death. For families it includes stress and a tension, risks of younger siblings being exploited, family breakdown etc. For communities it increases the fear of being a victim of crime. All of the above has a significant impact on our resources including police, education, and children's services Our vision is to create a happier, safer, and healthier Milton Keynes.
30. The Youth Resilience Project considers research from the Punishing abuse research published in 2021. Punishing Abuse is unique ground-breaking research into the extent of childhood adversity, abuse, loss, and trauma in children involved in the criminal justice system in the West Midlands. Two critical areas frequently cited in research on how resilience is developed and maintained is the importance of a relationship with an adult who cares and engagement in education. The Youth Resilience Project aims to provide a positive relationship

between the Mentor and Mentee to allow the young people to build resilience to tackle past, current, and future adversity. The Youth Resilience Project intends to prevent young people from becoming involved in youth violence, crime or being exploited and support those who have found themselves in difficult situations that they need help to get out of.

31. Professionals complete an exploitation screening tool and following a discussion at the Children Missing Exploited or Trafficked (CMET) Touchdown Meeting and the Missing and Exploitation Panel (ME Panel) they will be directed to make a referral. The young people must be 10 – 17 years old, experiencing, or experienced adversity and living in Milton Keynes. Mentors support the young people to choose up to three targets to work towards for a duration of up to 6 months. For example, to get back to School, be more confident, get on better with their family. Mentors meet with the child/ young person in the community or at School on an agreed day and time.

4. Voice of the child (Page 9 of the Guidance)

32. The users of youth justice services are considered a 'hard to reach' group as far as participation is concerned. Most do not volunteer, or choose, to be service users, but are supervised by the service as a result of a criminal sanction or O OCD. Despite these challenges, the YOT is committed to ensuring that children and their parents/carers have the same opportunity to contribute to service developments and have their voice heard.

33. Children are encouraged to participate by:

- Being actively involved in the creation of, and reviewing of, their intervention plans.
- Providing feedback following initiatives or activities, in order to inform and steer improvements to the service.

34. In 2021 we introduced independent evaluation using the Participation and Engagement Team of Youth Workers. At the end of every Order or OOC young people are given the opportunity to meet with a participation worker who is independent from the Youth Offending Service and complete a questionnaire on their experience during their time with YOT and also their experience of partner agencies. This service is currently being expanded to meet with all young people who engage with our Early Support Project, alongside using volunteers from the Youth Resilience Project to complete independent evaluations with young people.

35. The OOC and Custody, Resettlement and Transitions policies also include evaluation feedback forms from both young people and their parent/carer as well as professionals involved. The information from the evaluations is presented to YOSB on a quarterly basis for review and feedback and this provides an opportunity for all members to analyse the data produced and look at good practice examples and areas for improvement.

36. The information received from this feedback is used to inform individual staff and team development. An example of this includes the use of Taxi's to transport young people to appointments due to them feeling unsafe to travel in their local area. Feedback from a young person following their panel meeting also resulting in increased training for panel members looking specifically at how to engage with young females.

37. Young people open to the service have also attended the quarterly Youth Court Users meetings and a young person who was previously open to the YOT is engaging with the Youth Resilience Project to assist in the training of volunteers by sharing his experiences from arrest to sentencing and completion of his Court Order.

38. Going forward we are also developing opportunities for young people to engage in reparation through volunteering with the Youth Cabinet. This will give young people who are often missed from these types of opportunities a voice in influencing key local priority setting amongst their peers.

39. As well as the voice of young people, parents / carers views are sought through the use of the self-assessments. Parents who also attend group work interventions are also provided opportunities to complete an evaluation questionnaire. Further work is being explored on how to collate this feedback to ensure it informs practice development going forward.

40. The views obtained will continue to inform policy developments and the Youth Justice Plan going forward.

5. [Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements](#) (Page 10 of the Guidance)

41. Governance of local youth justice arrangements is delivered through a multi-agency partnership convened by the Chief Executive of the Local Authority and, at a minimum, comprising senior representation from the Police, Health (CCG), Probation, Local Authority (principally children's social care, Public Health and education services); with these agencies additionally being charged with financially resourcing the Youth Offending Team and providing staff. In Milton Keynes the local governance group is known as the Youth Offending Strategic Board (YOSB).

42. Historically the quality of the governance arrangements has been independently assessed as strong, however the HMIP Single Agency Inspection in May 2021 identified areas that could be strengthened further, and these were outlined in the YJ plan 2021/22. The creation of the MK Together Board combining the Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Safety Partnership as part of wider changes to partnership arrangements created a more streamlined and closer alignment of boards avoiding duplicated work streams.

43. The YOSB is chaired by the Director of Children's Services. The board receive regular performance reports and budget information.

44. The Board also receives highlight reports and analysis from the YOS Manager 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 monitoring the implementation of the Youth Justice Plan, discussing and analysing risks and challenges and planning for the future. Opportunities are ensured to discuss items that from a youth offending perspective are required by national standards and/or conditions of grant.

45. The Youth Offending Service also has an informal reporting line to the Community Safety Partnership – Safer MK. The Chief Executive and lead cabinet member are also briefed as required, as is the Local Police Area Commander. Milton Keynes Youth Offending Service is one of nine Youth Offending Teams 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 on which the Milton Keynes YOS Manager is also the representative for the Thames Valley YOTs.

46. The current YOS Manager is employed by Milton Keynes Council and is managed within the Children’s Services Directorate by the Group Head of Children and Families who in turn reports to the Director of Children’s Services.

47. The YOS Manager has a wide range of responsibilities encompassed within the expanded Youth Offending Service including in addition to the Youth Offending Team both strategic and operational lead responsibility for the Multi-Agency Missing and Exploitation Hub (ME Hub), the Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Service (YPDAS) and the Stay Safe Team (specialist Youth Workers/Youth Support Workers).

Partnership Arrangements

48. The Youth Offending Team has, over many years, developed and maintained strong links with a range of multi-agency groups:

- The YOS Manager is one of the advisers to the Safer MK (community safety) Partnership Board.

- The YOS Manager is also the Strategic Lead for Exploitation responsible for developing and delivering the local approach to tackling child exploitation and co-chairs the Strategic Exploitation Panel along with a Detective Chief Inspector from Thames Valley Police.
- The YOS Manager is a member of the MK Together Risk Board which identifies new and emerging areas of risk and exploitation and responses. The Risk Board has oversight of case-based panels (Channel, Strategic Exploitation Panel, Vulnerable Adults/Children, MARAC, etc.).
- The YOS Manager attends the South-East Region and Thames Valley YOT Managers meetings focusing on Youth Justice Services and issues impacting Youth Offending Teams across the respective regions of the South-East/Thames Valley.
- The YOS Manager is a member of the Thames Valley Together Programme Board
- One of the team members is a core member of the regular Joint Decision-Making Panel with the Police, CAMHS / Liaison and Diversion and the Professional Lead for Missing and Exploitation considering Out of Court Disposals (OOC).
- The YOS Manager attends the Local Criminal Justice Board, representing the 9 Thames Valley YOT managers.
- The YOS Manager has made a significant contribution to the development of professional practice in the YJS around Speech, Language and Communication Needs and SEND including direct advice to Government Departments at Director level in the Department of Education and Department of Health as a member of the Communication Council. The developments in these key areas have informed and been informed by local, national, and international research in these areas. The YOS Manager draws on experience gained at a national level, including as a member of the Executive of the Association of YOT Managers (AYM) and as the AYM lead for SEND and Speech and Language.
- The YOS Manager is a member of the Channel Panel providing information and specialist advice to assist in the preparation of risk and threat assessments to

help support and manage risks posed by children involved in extremism behaviour.

- The YOT Deputy Manager co-ordinates the MK Harmful Sexual Behaviour (AIM2 / AIM3) Programme which is delivered via a virtual multi-agency team.
- The Youth Offending Team is a standing member of the Schools Behaviour Partnership alternative education panel and is able to influence discussions on appropriate education provision.
- The YOT Family Support and Intervention Coordinator is responsible for partnership working with Strengthening Families, Children and Family Practices and Social Work Teams in identifying and working with parents who would benefit from the specialist parenting courses delivered by the YOT.
- The YOS Manager and a Senior YOT Officer are both members of the multi-agency MK Youth Risk Meeting which aims to reduce serious youth violence, knife crime and exploitation through drug related crimes in line with the national public health approach of early identification, engagement, intervention, and diversion. The meeting provides a forum to discuss children where there are concerns around: -
 - Gang activity participation or gang associations
 - ASB group associations where there is a risk of serious youth violence and/or increase in criminality
 - Concerns of local or county drug line exploitation.
 - Weapon carriers
 - Any other risky behaviours, which increase the risk of youth violence to that child or any other person or groups
- One of the Senior YOT Officers is on the Missing and Exploitation Panel ensuring that plans to address missing and exploitation concerns are robust and reflect a multi-agency approach.

- The YOS Manager is a member of the Legacy Panel, a multi-agency group scrutinising Part Time Timetables that have been in place for longer than 6 weeks to ensure appropriate steps are taken to re-engage children in full time education.
- In addition to the statutory partners and linkages identified above the Youth Offending Service has wider partnership arrangements with - Youth Information Service (YIS); Primary and Secondary Schools; HMCTS Youth and Crown Court; Speech and Language Therapy (SLT); Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND); Education, Sufficiency, Access and Attendance; Youth Information Advice and Guidance; NHS England Health and Justice; Thames Valley Police Violence Reduction Unit, Problem Solving Team and SOFEA.

6. Resources and services (Page 10 of the Guidance)

49. Currently the YOS management team directly responsible for the Youth Offending Team consists of the YOS Manager/Strategic Lead for Exploitation, a YOT Deputy Manager, three Senior YOT Officers and a Business Support and Information Manager.

50. In total there are 27 practitioner and administrative staff (23.41 FTE).

51. As well as generic YOT officers, a number of whom are qualified Social Workers, the team includes a seconded Police Officer, a CAMHS mental health worker, a Family Support and Intervention Coordinator, 3 Speech and Language Therapists, and an Education Training and Employment coordinator. In addition, we have a full time PhD Student Speech and Language Therapist placed with the team for the next 4 years undertaking research on effective interventions with children with Developmental Language Disorder in the Youth Justice System.

52. 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 was available to support children approaching adulthood in the transition to the probation service. This arrangement has continued for this year to cover the absence of an allocated Probation Support Assistant to the Service (0.25 FTE) and at a reduced amount for an allocated Probation Officer (0.6 FTE) as it is anticipated that this latter post will be in place from early July 2022. Additionally, physical health provision is provided though an off-site

screening process situated within the School Nursing Team, but this is currently subject to review and the identification and implementation of a more effective replacement arrangement is a key component of the YJ Plan for the coming year.

53. Volunteer Youth Offender Panel members, Youth Resilience Project Mentors and Appropriate Adults are recruited, trained, and supported by the YOT; the Appropriate Adults also provide support to vulnerable adults.
54. The team base in Bletchley was closed during the pandemic and was moved to the main Civic office in Central Milton Keynes and for the majority of the staff work from this location with some working from home 1 to 2 days a week. Wider solutions for accommodation to enable greater co-location of multi-agency staff and a child centred safe environment in which to work directly with children have been identified and a number of these are fully in place at key locations around the city and further accommodation in Bletchley is due to become fully accessible for this purpose imminently. Additionally, other locations around the City managed by the Council and partners are available to use for contact with children and their families, with colleagues adopting the Council's policy for flexible working.
55. The next few months will see additional resourcing in the Youth Offending Team directly funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley with the implementation of the new strand of the Early Support Project (Knife Carrier Project): ACT – Now ('Achieving Change Together – Now'). This will provide 3 additional YOT Officers, 1 working core hours and the other 2 of whom (32 hrs per week each) will be operating mainly outside of core hours from 4pm-10pm daily and from 9am – 10pm on Saturday and Sunday so that they can engage within 90 minutes 7 days a week with children in Police Custody arrested for knife carrying offences.
56. In addition to the above with the creation of the Youth Offending Service, Youth Justice Services in Milton Keynes benefit from a more integrated approach to co-ordinated partnership working with colleagues in the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service; the Stay Safe Team of Workers / Youth Support Workers and the multi-agency / multi-disciplinary Missing and Exploitation HUB. All of these teams, alongside the more integrated working with partners in Children's Social Care, SEND and Virtual School that has been strengthened by the YOT

relocation to Civic Offices, contribute, with the Youth Offending Team, to a more coherent approach to partnership approaches aimed at addressing offending by children, and the risks associated with this, within the wider contextual landscape in which those risks exist and overlap with other risks and safeguarding concerns. In the next few months, the multi-agency Missing and Exploitation Hub within the YOS is being significantly expanded to become a co-located Contextual Safeguarding Team bringing together additional resources that will directly benefit the work with those children who are at risk of or involved in offending and for whom there are also concerns or risks around missing episodes; serious youth violence; knife crime; criminal / sexual exploitation.

57. The Youth Justice Grant, alongside partner contributions, both in staffing and financial, enable us to deliver the activities and services outlined above and below that contribute to the aims and outcomes of the plan. The benefits and impact of these services are evidenced by the KPI outcomes achieved and documented, alongside further commentary around these services and their direct and indirect benefits that are referenced and illustrated throughout this plan.

A summary of activities provided for and on behalf of the YOT are:

- **Youth Diversion and Prevention Early Support Project (ESP)** offer including Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) SLT project in primary and secondary schools. Our offending rate is 3.39% and our last published First Time Entrants (FTE) rate is 126 per 100,00 (with the proxy data up to 31/3/2022 indicating 136 per 100,000). This compares to the national average of 146 per 100,000; Thames Valley 126; YOT Family 145.
- **Appropriate Adult (AA)** services are provided to the Police Station: A volunteer scheme, maintained by the YOT, is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This service is offered to vulnerable adults as well as children.
- **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). A Joint Decision-Making Panel is held which includes representatives from YOT, Police, Missing and Exploitation Hub and CAMHS / Liaison and Diversion.

- **Court Services:** YOT staff advise the Youth Court regarding available sentences. YOT staff prepare pre-sentence reports and operate a duty system to address remand issues and ensure bail packages are available when necessary. Speech Language and Communication Needs assessment reports are also provided alongside pre-sentence reports to both Youth Court and Crown Court so that Courts are fully aware of children's additional needs given the disproportionality high prevalence of SLCN in the Youth Justice System (87% last data for Milton Keynes) compared to the general population (5-8%). 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:** The YOT provides case holders for children made subject to Court Orders and manages these in accordance with National Standards. This will include managing children subject to custodial sentences and planning and supervising for their release.
- **Victims:** A member of the team contacts victims of children working with YOT offering support, including being kept informed of case progression, support to attend Youth Offender Panels and meeting the child face-to-face for a restorative conference.
YOT staff are trained to YJB/Restorative Justice Council standards for the facilitation of restorative conversations.
- **Volunteers:** There are currently three volunteering projects to support young people. Volunteers are recruited to be Youth Offender Panel members - people from the community who meet with the child, parents, and victim to agree a contract which will prevent further offending and repair harm. Volunteer mentors are recruited to mentor vulnerable young people open to the Youth Resilience Project. Finally, the YOT also manage the Appropriate adult scheme, supporting young people and vulnerable adults in custody. The YOT continue to encourage volunteers from diverse backgrounds in order to offer a diverse pool of volunteers to meet the needs of the young people.
- **Stay Safe** who are now part of the wider Youth Offending Service are a team of Youth Workers and Youth Support Workers providing one to one support to children working with the YOT and are also responsible for delivery of our Reparation

/ Community Enrichment Service. They meet with children and their YOT Officers as part of the induction process and seek to either develop new bespoke projects or appropriately match children's interests with the projects available. Children can achieve awards through the work they complete with Stay Safe.

- **Young People's Careers Information Advice and Guidance Team** provide a worker to assist children in finding Education, Training and Employment opportunities amongst our post-16 cohort, as part of their Information, Advice and Guidance Service. This service has established links with training and education providers within Milton Keynes and surrounding areas and also services to monitor those post 16 out of ETE allowing for continued monitoring and support to be offered both during intervention with YOT and post intervention.
- **Education, Training and Employment Coordinator:** We have a Coordinator who has links with schools and alternative education provisions, they support children who are experiencing difficulties with school attendance including advocating for children, challenging part-time timetables, and providing support with core subjects such as English and Maths. The Coordinator is also a core member of the Alternative Education Panel and has championed and promoted the offer of Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessments by the YOT Speech and Language Therapists to children at the greatest risk of a move to an alternative provision. The Alternative Education Panel now routinely ensures that an SLCN has been undertaken and consequential reasonable adjustments explored prior to an agreed transfer.
- **Milton Keynes Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (YPDAS)** – The YOT work closely with YPDAS who provide specialist interventions for children who misuse alcohol or substances. The nature of the partnership work has been greatly strengthened by the incorporation of the YPDAS as part of the wider Youth Offending Service. The ESP Service Lead has a close working relationship with the Team Leader at YPDAS as part of the TVP Drugs Diversion Scheme (DDS). The Thames Valley wide partnership approach to joint delivery of the DDS by Thames Valley Police and Thames Valley YOTs is a key part of the Violence Reduction Strategy.

- **Probation** – due to recruitment challenges for Probation Officers we do not currently have a Seconded Officer inhouse. A new Probation Officer has been identified to move into post imminently with arrangements being finalised currently.
- **Health** – the YOT continue to have limited access to the School Nursing Service, and it is recognised that this remains an area of challenge for the YOSB. The service previously reviewed health screenings and offered access to specific services within their remit. The level of service is under current review and challenge as it is recognised that many of our children who have identified health needs do not fit the remit of school nursing and require a different focus of support due to the complex needs identified. Progression of this was initially delayed due to complications and pressures on health provision as a result of Covid and remains an area for addressing that is reflected in the current plan.
- **CAMHS** – A positive and strong relationship has been built with our local CAMHS team. This is filled by a practitioner who has significant experience of the complex needs of our children, and whose work has previously been recognised positively in the Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the provision for Mental Health. We have access to regular (6 weekly) consultation appointments with a Consultant Clinical Psychologist for complex case discussion and support. Additional telephone consultations are also provided. The Mental Health Practitioner offers assessments and interventions to children and their families and provides training to staff.
- **Parents and Families** – the Family Support and Intervention Coordinator (FSIC) at the YOT provides 1-2-1 support to the parents of the children working with the service. This is frequently focused on helping parents/carers with the issues relating to their child, such as, tension in the family home, boundary setting and rebuilding relationships.

The role also provides support to parents and carers to help address wider structural barriers affecting the family e.g., debt, benefits, housing and the FSIC can apply for funding for items that are needed through the Strengthening Families fund. The FSIC is both, the coordinator and main facilitator, for the Who's in Charge Programme; a 10-week programme for parents/carers who are experiencing violent or abusive behaviour from their children aged between 10-18. This

programme takes place 6 times a year, with afternoon and evening sessions available to maximise parental attendance.

- **Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)** – we have three Speech and Language Therapists and a full time PhD Student, and all children are offered a Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessment. From 2021 – 2022, we identified, following assessment that 87% had SLCN needs that were not identified by others prior to ESP/YOT involvement. SLCN assessments have also been useful in focusing in and identifying co-existing conditions and underlying life events and experiences that have an impact on the child. We also have a SEND Link Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist that can provide individual case consultation and supports the comprehensive free training we offer to schools under our PRRE SLT project.
- **Missing and Exploitation Hub** – The multi-agency / multi-disciplinary Missing and Exploitation Hub is now part of the wider Youth Offending Service (YOS) and strengthens the links with close partnership working between the YOT, Children's Social Care, Police and Health, for children being exploited, as well as significantly enhancing joint working approaches to identify and address issues relating to gangs, county lines, modern day slavery, serious youth violence and knife crime.
- **YOT Police Officer** – This role is used creatively across the service including direct involvement with delivering OOCDS, undertaking interventions with children to strengthen relationships between children and Police, provide key information around risks using PNC and Police intel. The role of Thames Valley Police in the YOT is also enhanced by our close partnership working with TVP Problem Solving Team and Violence Reduction Unit.

Financial Resources –

58. The final budget for 2022/23 has yet to be established but is not expected to be any less than 2021/22 (which was £1,417,434).

59. Additionally, the YOT has been successful in securing NHS funding of £128,076 for the year to continue the Early Support Project prevention work with an additional worker, and continued funding to the end of 2023/24. This will enable

us to continue our early intervention/prevention work and expand into more direct work with schools. The YOT is also due to receive £147,969 over the next 12 months from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley to fund the Early Support Project (Knife Carrier Project): ACT- NOW. This will expand our work pre-OOCD / Court with children arrested for knife carrying offences. The tailored voluntary engagement and support programme which children arrested for knife carrying offences can begin the process of accessing whilst still in Police Custody between 9.00am – 10.00pm, 7 days a week and provides them with the opportunity to begin working towards positive goals and achievements prior to the offences being considered for OOCD / Court outcomes. Reports from ACT-NOW will be available to the JDMP / Court to positively influence disposals and increase opportunities to divert more children towards Outcome 22, YCC (rather than Court Disposal) and reduce the risk of custodial sentences / longer community-based sentences, recognising the positive benefits for longer term outcomes for children when contact with the formal Youth Justice System is minimised.

60. 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.

61. All grants from the YJB are controlled within the YOT 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.

7. [Progress on previous plan](#) (Page 10 of the Guidance)

62. As reflected in the summary earlier the YOT and its partners have made good progress against the actions and targets set out in the 2021/22 Youth Justice Plan along with other additional achievements, notably:

- Work to develop the Youth Offending Strategic Board Membership has resulted in the inclusion of the Chair of the Youth Panel as a representative from the Court. We have also added a representative of the community volunteers, ensuring a

voice on the YOSB for the members of the wider community who are involved in supporting the work of the Youth Offending Team as Youth Offender Panel Members, Appropriate Adults and Mentors under the Youth Resilience Project.

- In order to strengthen the effectiveness of the Youth Offending Strategic Board (YOSB) in its internal and external facing roles, we introduced a specific partner feedback slot at each YOSB Meeting to encourage greater joint reflection, participation, and dialogue. This has provided greater impetus and focus for a more informed discussion in YOSB Meetings and a greater sense of ownership by the YOSB Members in their roles as both representatives of their parent organisation and as champions of the work of the Youth Offending Team and the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan.
- In addition to the detail of the Youth Justice Plan, the changes outlined above and the work and focus of the Youth Offending Team, alongside the work of the other teams that now comprise the wider Youth Offending Service (see below), has been shared and highlighted across key partners to increase insight and understanding of the work and child first methodology of the service and the importance of the co-ordinated focus around planning and delivery. Significant achievements include an increased focus upon multi-agency / multi-disciplinary partnership approaches to address the overlap between children involved in criminal exploitation; County Lines; gangs / Organised Crime Groups; serious youth violence; missing episodes and knife crime. This has seen greatly improved partnership information sharing and coordinated planning and delivery of individual and systemic solutions. This work has capitalised on the opportunities created by the closer alignment with wider Children's Services alongside Children's Social Care, and completing the integration of the Youth Offending Service, encompassing the Youth Offending Team; The Multi-Agency Missing and Exploitation Hub (ME Hub); the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (YPDAS) and the Stay Safe Team (specialist Youth Workers/Youth Support Workers and a Young Peoples Advice and Guidance Worker).
- We have identified additional current and future provision to ensure access to safe places so that staff can work safely and effectively with children, parents / carers, and victims. This has provided greater access to more child centred buildings across Milton Keynes, and these are continuing to be developed to

reflect the changing professional practices enabled by more co-ordinated working between the Youth Offending Team and the other constituent teams that are part of the wider Youth Offending Service (Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service; Missing and Exploitation Hub; Stay Safe Team of Youth Workers). The evolution of these child focused provisions going forward will support the plans for development of a Contextual Safeguarding Team within the Youth Offending Service.

- We have explored more targeted recruitment approaches with a view to increase the diversity of the staff and volunteer team in order to better reflect the demography of Milton Keynes and the children and families who work with the service. This is ongoing and the continued work on this objective is reflected in the current plan.
- We have established succession planning for key roles, although there remains further work to progress around the Business Support and Information Manager role in particular reflecting similar challenges experienced by other Youth Justice Services in the Thames Valley / South-East area around the equivalent Performance Manager role.
- We have introduced a single profile document, collating, and presenting key details around desistance and unmet needs that is shared on a monthly / quarterly basis. The profile reflects identified specific desistance needs and demands, enabling both analysis and evidence gathering to support the identification of potential gaps in service provision across the partnership.
- Some progress has been made in resolving the lack of access to appropriate Physical Health provision however there remains further work to complete to achieve this goal and this will be reflected as a target in the plan going forward for the coming year.
- Based on the positive experience from the audit that was completed shortly before the HMIP Inspection in May 2021 and the positive outcome from that Inspection itself we have established a regular audit methodology to continue to drive forward and monitor professional practice.

- We have introduced an inhouse learning review process for swift learning to identify early lessons in relevant cases. This is structured to complement both the MK Together partnership arrangements and the Youth Justice Board expectations around serious case reviews.
- We have established approaches to enhance the connection between the Youth Offending Strategic Board and the front-line service delivery to improve effectiveness and coordination, including through greater Youth Offending Service staff and volunteer attendance at YOSB to strengthen direct dialogue and closer links with opportunities for YOSB Members to attend Youth Offending Service Meetings.
- We have further developed our work to engage with victims, broadening our offer significantly to victims of offences by children who receive a Community Resolution and strengthening our other services to victims of crime. Additionally, we have strengthened the YOT's work in restorative justice, through collaborative work with the police to increase the level of victim information and, along with the Stay Safe Team, to ensure direct and indirect restorative approaches are person centred and meet the requirements of a service structured around Child First principles and approaches. This work now ensures that the needs of victims are paramount and the effective approach that had previously been developed for post court disposals is now fully replicated within all elements of the Diversion work of the Youth Offending Team and key partners in the YJS.
- Ensured that the additional resources available from the NHS funded Health and Justice 'Early Support Project' (ESP) have continued to enable more targeted work around prevention/early intervention and opportunities for further innovative developments. This has included accessing additional funding for a joint post for young people linked to both ESP and the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service. The ongoing evaluation of the ESP's effectiveness and positive outcomes continues to demonstrate the highly effective nature of the scheme in reducing future offending with only 3.39%, being involved in offending within 2 years. The opportunities to share the effective practice and learning with key partners across the Thames Valley has led directly to the development of a new

ESP Knife Carrier Project initiative (ACT - NOW) which is to be fully funded for the next 12 months by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley.

- Greater engagement and closer co-ordinated partnership working with Alternative Education providers has supported improvements to address the issues related to reduced attendance at school and helped to mitigate the risk of this highly vulnerable cohort of children becoming involved in offending behaviour or being criminally exploited. This has resulted in significant improvements in reducing the number of children moving into Alternative Education from mainstream schooling and ensuring that, for those that do make this transition, there is a clearer understanding of their individual needs through greater access to Speech Language and Communication Needs assessments. This follows the expansion of the Promoting Reintegration Reducing Exclusion (PRRE) part of the ESP, extending the bespoke Prevention offer to vulnerable children at risk of becoming involved in offending/exploitation in the vast majority of Secondary School and a significant proportion of Primary School settings. Supporting these providers to better identify and make adjustments to provision to meet needs and therefore reduce both permanent exclusions and moves into Alternative Education Placements.
- We have further developed solutions to effectively capture the voice of children who have engaged with the Youth Offending Team, expanding this to include those working with the Early Support Project. Their experiences of involvement in the YJS and working with the YOT and its partners continue to inform the future development of the service as the feedback informs the vision of the service going forward as well as the way, how and where it is delivered. Feedback from children, volunteers, and staff over this last year identified that crucial to the success of the service was greater access to child centred safe and confidential places to enable effective working, in particular with those children who pose a high risk of harm to others, including to other children and professionals. This feedback, supported by the findings of the HMIP Inspection, supported the YOSB and the YOT Management Team in gaining access to these provisions and in having a clearer understanding of the likely demand for the location and nature of additional provisions to meet this need in future years as Milton Keynes continues to expand.

8. Performance and priorities (Page 11 of the Guidance)

63. Outlined below are the National and Local KPIs for the Youth Offending Team illustrating outcomes for the past 12 months indicating current performance and the planned targets for the coming year. Where relevant a brief narrative is included to add clarity. The priorities for the coming year represent continuing incremental improvement on progress made to date or, in the case of Prevention, maintaining the positive outcomes achieved as the multiple complexity of need for those accessing the service increases.

KPIs:

1) Reoffending

- a. Target for 2021/22 was <32%.
 - i. Outturn was 22.1% (for cohort July 2019 to June 2020)
- b. Target for 2022/23 has been agreed as <30%

2) First Time Entrants

- a. Target for 2021/22 was <145
 - i. Outturn was 126 (for period January to December 2021)
- b. Target for 2022/23 has been agreed as <140

3) Use of custody

- a. Target for 2021/22 was <0.2
 - i. Outturn was 0.03 (for period April 2021 to March 2022)
- b. Target for 2022/23 has been agreed as <0.2

4) Prevention

- a. Target for 2021/22 was for less than 5% of young people engaged to go on to offend within 2 years.

i. Outturn was 3.39%

b. Target for 2022/23 has been agreed as <5%

5) Disproportionality

a. Disproportionality is monitored 'in real time' on a quarterly basis, with data being reviewed by the Youth Offending Strategic Board, and also via the YJB data which is published approximately 1 year in arrears.

Milton Keynes has a BME proportion of 25% and the latest quarterly data showed a figure of 31% while the YJB data showed 28% for the year ended 31/3/2021.

Note: The figures above are based upon the census data from 2011 on demography. Milton Keynes Council's report in May 2021 on 'Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes' highlighted the changing demographics and growing diversity since 2011, outlining that "the proportion of the black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) school population has increased from 31% in 2010 to 45.51% in 2020". This is also in the context that the projection of population growth between 2011 and 2026 predicted that this will have increased by 24% (compared to 11% growth in England over the same period). The Office for National Statistics estimate that the population of Milton Keynes will reach 300,000 by 2025.

Education, Training and Employment

64. The Youth Offending Team recognises that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in relation to Education, Training and Employment (ETE) are evolving and we have processes in place / or are in progress to ensure that we are able to monitor how many children are not receiving their education entitlement, how many children are excluded from school, how many children are educated on reduced school timetables, how many children / parents elect for home education and the number of children on SEN Support or who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place.

65. The education staffing provision in the service are two part-time workers that both have separate areas of responsibility. The Education, Training and Employment (ETE) Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that children of school-age receive appropriate education, and our link Young People's Personal Advisor is responsible for offering support to young people over the age of 16 who are NEET (those not in education, training, or employment).
66. The Education, Training and Employment Coordinator is actively involved where children and young people are identified as being on a reduced school timetable, home educated or school refusing. We have recently introduced a process whereby the ETE Coordinator has regular 1-2-1 meetings with YOT Officers to ensure that there is a ETE plan for every child working with the Youth Offending Team, and that complex circumstances have intervention from the Coordinator to support the YOT Officer in addressing these difficulties successfully.
67. The ETE Coordinator attends the Alternative Education Panel to represent the Youth Offending Team in cases where children and young people are brought to the attention of alternative education due to problematic and challenging behaviour within their school of origin. In order to best meet young people's needs, we are able to offer a Speech and Language Therapy assessment for young people who have not previously had their needs assessed in order to support the setting to implement alternative approaches with the child with a view to addressing behaviour more effectively should SLCN be identified.
68. The ETE Coordinator's role includes advocating and liaising with school settings whereby complex situations arise.
69. If a setting participates with our PRRE Speech and Language Therapy project, they are also afforded free Speech and Language Training to develop the knowledge and skills of school staff and to upskill staff within the Speech and Language Therapy arena to feel confident in employing strategies within the classroom to specifically address identified SLCN.
70. We are currently in the process of creating an 'Education, Training and Employment Panel Meeting' comprised of the management lead responsible for ETE, the ETE Coordinator, the Young People's Personal Advisor, SEND

representation, Virtual School, and local authority (Children's Social Care) representation. YOT Officers will present a young person's case to the panel where they are school refusing, home educated or on a reduced school timetable with a view to developing a personalised education plan to address any concerns. The plan will be reviewed every 8 weeks by the panel to ensure that education remains a priority within the intervention plan, and that progression can be evidenced, and any drift can be addressed.

71. We have also identified that school refusing children with emotional based school avoidance, may require a multi-faceted approach from the Youth Offending Team. As such, we are in the process of developing an Emotional Based School Avoidance pathway whereby children and young people receive paralleled support from our Mental Health Practitioner, ETE Coordinator and Speech and Language Therapy team to address the barriers to attending school and offering a bespoke package of support dependant on the individual risks and needs of the young person.

72. We are also in the process of further strengthening the links with the Virtual School to expand the opportunities for young people receiving YOT intervention to be better supported by the local authority. This is being led by our ETE Coordinator.

73. Simon Simms, Head of Delivery for Sufficiency & Access is a core member of the YOT Strategic Board.

Overrepresented Children

74. We constantly monitor the ethnic diversity of our caseload as part of the monthly 'demographics' report and 'white' young people have consistently been over represented. As outlined in the commentary above the YOSB regularly reviews the data on disproportionality at each meeting and this is kept under constant review. Whilst there is a statistically small over representation of some other groups the percentage numbers involved because of the small numbers of statutory cases can be misleading, particularly given the significant changes that have occurred in both the population size and school age ethnicity demography

since 2011 when the official census data was last published. The last quarter saw what appeared to be a statistical increase in percentage terms of Black young people on statutory orders, however the physical numbers remain small (the percentage related to 7 young people) so any increase / decrease by 1 has a disproportionate impact in percentage terms. We are continuing to monitor but analysis has not highlighted any clear reason for the change.

75. The greatest area of significant statistical over representation in the Youth Justice System in Milton Keynes relates to children with Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN). Latest data for the last 12 months identified that of children who worked with the YOT on statutory and voluntary basis, 87% were assessed as having SLCN. This compares with the prevalence of SLCN across the general population of the same age group of 5-8% giving an overrepresentation of between 9 and 16 times compared to levels of expected prevalence, or as a percentage the overrepresentation is between 987% and 1,640%. We are aware from Milton Keynes YOT research that the children identified with SLCN are in the majority of cases not being identified as having this need prior to assessment by the YOT Speech and Language Therapists and therefore the focus of the service continues to be in the provision of approaches across the service from Prevention upwards that aim to identify these needs at the earliest opportunity, enabling earlier support and reasonable adjustments by all professionals involved with the child (particularly teachers and other education staff) to reduce the risk of temporary and permanent exclusion, or managed moves to alternative education which increase the risk of Part Time Timetables or disengagement. One of the factors we aim to explore in the coming 12 months through analysis of data and individual case studies is whether there is any evidence of 'Adultification' as a factor with any of the overrepresented groups of children, with needs not being recognised because challenging behaviours are viewed as 'deliberate' or 'expected' rather than seen as potential indicators of an unidentified and unmet need. Such approaches can result in enforcement and exclusion action being pursued by schools, rather than explorative supportive approaches to assess unmet needs and adjust provision accordingly. This approach reflects the expectations outlined in the HMIP Thematic Report on Understanding Racial Disparity to "ensure that black and mixed heritage boys are receiving their legal entitlement to education, including alternative provision when

this is deemed necessary, and that the placements are suitable to meet their needs”

76. Given the responsibilities of both the Youth Offending Team and the wider YOS in supporting children involved in County Lines as victims of criminal exploitation, then the Youth Offending Service and partners are jointly focused ensuring that multi-agency practice around planning and support is also reflective of other key findings of the HIMP thematic report into Understanding Racial Disparity. Specifically that:

77. “Local authorities should:

- provide suitable and timely accommodation placements and support packages for black and mixed heritage boys who are facing remand or being released from custody
- make sure that, where children and families are moved to a new location as a result of concerns about their safety, the accommodation and placements provided are suitable and sustainable to meet their needs”

78. The YOT will continue to monitor the data and where gaps are identified seek additional information from across individual partner services to ensure that a triangulated approach to analysis continues to inform the YOSB. Any strategy that is formulated following this analysis for improving outcomes will reflect a joint strategic need assessment and be shared across the YOS and partner agencies with clear targets set and mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of outcomes.

79. In addition, building on the work undertaken to capture and reflect the voice of children in shaping the services provided by both the YOT and its partners, we will explore whether further changes are needed to ensure that processes for gaining feedback from over represented groups, such as black and mixed heritage boys, about the services they receive are effective and inform our collective ability to assess, review and improve the quality and suitability of those services.

80. The YOS Management and Seniors ensure through management oversight, induction programmes, training and supervision and support that staff fully understand what is expected of them in exploring and adjusting their practice to

reflect the individual needs and diversity of children, and to enable them to work effectively with all children with particular consideration of additional barriers faced by overrepresented groups of children, including black and mixed heritage boys. Staff are made fully aware of how to escalate concerns both within the YOT and with partner organisations in seeking to address identified barriers that are preventing access to required services.

81. Appropriate steps are taken to address key gaps in provision for over-represented groups, including black and mixed heritage boys. A good example is around providing access to mentoring whilst the Youth Resilience Project is still developing and recruiting a representative demographic of mentors. The YOT are working in partnership with a third sector specialist mentoring provider, Fresh Youth MK, who provide one to one mentoring and group empowerment sessions to young people in Milton Keynes with a particular emphasis on support for children from black ethnic groups as they have access to a network of mentors and coaches who represent the same black ethnic groups as the children being linked in for mentoring.

82. To tackle over Representation, Milton Keynes Youth Offending Service has considered and implemented the following:

- Staff within YOT attend Cultural Diversity Training
- Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) – as outlined earlier the YOT recognise the over representation of young people in the Youth Justice System with Speech Language and Communication Needs. Speech and Language Provision is offered to all young people regardless of intervention including PRRE, ESP and both community and Court Order's. It is evidenced through the data collected and individual case studies that offering this assessment and support at PRRE can reduce the number of young people excluded from school because their needs are not being identified and supported.
- Joint Decision-Making Panel (JDMP) – the YOT representation at JDMP provides a multi-agency approach to consider diversity and learning needs prior to decision being made about action, including input from CSC, CAMHS / Liaison and

Diversion, and therefore taking into account their current status within CSC and any identified Health needs.

- Within Milton Keynes we have an effective data sharing process which enables a young person's vulnerabilities and diverse needs to be shared with Police, who in turn share with CPS to fully inform charging decisions.
- Diversity needs are incorporated into a young person's child friendly plan for example if someone attends prayers on a Friday, so that intervention is informed and delivered around diversity needs.
- We recognise that the current YOT staffing is not as culturally diverse as the demography of Milton Keynes. Consequently, we liaise directly with other services to ensure support is available for young people that supports their cultural identity. This has also informed recruitment processes in seeking to make the staff team more representative of the wider community.
- When young people are open to other services / provisions such as Children's Social Care; SEND; Pupil Referral Unit the YOT ensure co-ordinated partnership working to achieve best outcomes.
- In all Pre-Sentence Reports, Breach, and other Court reports particularly for sentencing the YOT include within the report when a young person is part of an overrepresented group so that the Court acknowledge and take this into account during sentencing. Copies of SLCN assessments are also supplied to ensure that the impact of a child's SLCN can also be considered by the Court to inform sentencing.
- YOT Staff comply with the Equality Policy within the Council.
- Young people complete 'Where to Now' reflective feedback at the end of all YOT statutory and voluntary interventions with an impartial staff member from the Participation and Engagement Team to gain feedback around the service. Currently the feedback and questions covered are being reviewed to ensure we can tailor more specific questions for over-represented young people to inform service development and delivery of the YOT and partners.

- Although we do have access to interpreting facilities, this service is not as reliable or consistent as hoped and we acknowledge that this will likely impact upon the effectiveness of this service. We are committed to either driving improvements in the interpreting service and / or exploring other alternatives to improve the service quality going forward.
- Youth Resilience Project – this has been in development for a number of months and is on track within next year plan to source a more diverse and representative group of volunteers, as we recognise a more reflective group that mirrors Milton Keynes demography will be beneficial to young people.

Prevention and Diversion

83. Milton Keynes Youth Offending Team (MKYOT) have a well-established Youth Diversion and Prevention Service that is known locally at the Early Support Project (ESP). ESP offers support to children and young people who require early prevention and targeted prevention and diversion from the formal youth justice system. Within the Prevention service offer, we have a Speech and Language Therapy project that works with primary and secondary schools, known locally as PRRE (Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusions). The project enables school and further education settings (where appropriate) to refer children and young people to the project where it has been identified that they are at the greatest risk of school exclusions and / or a move to an alternative provision. The Prevention element of ESP works with children and young people who are displaying behaviours associated with offending behaviour and / or child exploitation in order to safeguard and reduce vulnerabilities that could be associated with them being at risk of entering the formal youth justice system.

84. There are currently 8 primary referral pathways for agencies to refer children and young people to the Prevention element of the service (including PRRE). These are:

- Children's Social Care including the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Children and Families Practices (Early Help)

- Missing and Exploitation Panel (MEP)
- Strategic Exploitation Panel (SEP)
- Milton Keynes Youth Risk Meeting
- Primary and Secondary schools and Further Education settings
- Alternative Education Panel (a multi-agency panel where children and young people at risk of being moved to alternative education are discussed)
- PREVENT Channel Panel (a multi-agency panel where children at risk of radicalisation and / or extremism are discussed)

85. Within the Diversion aspect of the service, we have a local service level agreement with Thames Valley Police whereby we received all YOT1 notifications for young people who have received Community Resolutions in the Milton Keynes area. We then complete an initial screening assessment for the ESP and if the young person is considered suitable and eligible for the project, we make a service offer and complete an Asset Plus assessment and plan to address young people's risks and needs and build on identified positive factors and strengths.

86. As part of our Out-of-Court-Disposal (O OCD) service area, we have a Joint Decision-Making Panel (JDMP) that meets weekly to discuss young people referred to the panel by the Youth Justice Unit for an O OCD to be assessed. The JDMP has representatives present from Milton Keynes Youth Offending Team, Youth Justice Unit at Thames Valley Police, Missing and Exploitation Hub based within Youth Offending Service but also linked to Children's Social Care and a representative from the local Liaison and Diversion service to represent CAMHS. Our O OCD Lead completes an Initial Screening Assessment (ISA) for all young people being discussed at the panel, with a full Asset Plus being completed for serious violent or sexual offending, including those offences involving weapons and / or knives.

87. We have a new initiative which is due to start in Milton Keynes shortly, which is the Early Support Project Knife Carrier Project (KCP): ACT – Now ('Achieving Change Together – Now'). 'ACT- Now' will be located within our Prevention and

Diversion Service. The project is a joint initiative being piloted with Thames Valley Police whereby we respond, and visit, all under 18s being arrested for knife crime within 1 ½ hours of being notified of the arrest by Custody. ESP will then look to engage with the young person for a programme of voluntary intervention. This is being fully funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for 12 months with plans to extend the project and funding if the pilot proves successful.

88. In terms of processes, the ESP offers children and young people a 12 – 24 weeks period of intervention in order to address structural barriers that may have an impact on the individual being at risk of offending or further offending, as well as delivering interventions to address problematic behaviour. ESP is a strengths-based and future-focused service in that we support young people and their families to build on their strengths and move towards building a safe, healthy, and pro-social future.

89. We offer an 'opt out' service. We contact all young people considered appropriate for the service.

90. We use a consistent screening, triage, and case management approach within the Early Support Project whereby we; screen, triage, assess, plan, review and signpost all young people.

91. Keeping others safe, keeping the young person safe and supporting young people to build on the factors that will support them to avoid crime is key within our work, to ultimately enable young people to have successful and positive futures. We use our understanding of trauma and adverse childhood experiences to explore behaviour and how it impacts on the young person, their desistance, risk to others and their own safety and wellbeing. Understanding attachment behaviour helps us explore how young people get their needs met (which may include offending to meet these needs). We also identify and explore the links between school absence, serious youth violence, exploitation, and the persistence of offending into later life. We have a strong emphasis on Speech and Language Therapy within the Prevention and Diversion Service, and more specifically, how unrecognised Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) can have a significant impact on a young person's education and future life opportunities if not recognised early. We understand that to safeguard

children and young people, a contextual safeguarding approach with adolescents is often needed and we work alongside the Missing and Exploitation Hub and Children's Social Care in protecting and promoting the safety of children and young people in Milton Keynes.

92. The service is evaluated on an annual basis and has been regularly independently evaluated by an external researcher. We provide quarterly reports to the NHS, one of our funding partners to identify our received referrals, working data surrounding the age, gender and ethnicity of the young people accessing the service, and providing case studies to demonstrate how the service promote better outcomes for children and young people.

Diversion data (young people given a community resolution): Between 1/4/2021 and 31/3/2022; 66 cases were referred to MKYOT and of these 31 completed a programme of work. 39 cases refused the offer of support, and we are working to understand the reasons for this and identify methods to engage with these cases. We are aware that timeliness

Prevention data (young people at risk of becoming involved in crime): During the same period; 63 cases were referred and of those 44 completed a programme of work. Again 9 cases refused the offer of support, and the reasons are being reviewed.

Offending by these 2 groups is monitored for 2 years following their engagement and just 3.39% have gone on to offend.

Serious violence and exploitation

93. In response to increasing concerns regarding serious youth violence and exploitation highlighted earlier in this Youth Justice Plan Milton Keynes Youth Offending Service have taken the following steps:

- The Missing and Exploitation Hub have established very positive information sharing and multi-agency working with the wider partnership with particular focus on joint working with Thames Valley Police which results in more robust co-ordinated partnership response to safeguarding concerns and targeting adult perpetrators who are exploiting children or engaging them in acts of serious youth violence.
- A Senior YOT Officer is core member of the Missing and Exploitation Panel ensuring that multi-agency plans to address missing and exploitation concerns are robust and reflect an effective multi-agency approach.
- A joint National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Policy has been created to ensure consistency across all key services within Children and Families (Youth Offending Service; Children's Social Care etc) and to assist with capturing accurate data and recording of NRM outcomes across the wider partnership.
- The Missing and Exploitation Hub (ME Hub) is expanding with a new role for a Specialist Criminal Exploitation Practitioner (SCEP) being recruited to work intensively with children who have been exploited. This work will be alongside the Specialist Sexual Exploitation Practitioner (SSEP) role that is already in place. Whilst we wait for this SCEP role to be in post, a YOT Officer who previously worked within the ME Hub is supporting with working with young people identified as groomed/targeted for exploitation frequently alongside their identified risks of offending / serious youth violence / knife crime.
- Given the significant increase in the young people in Milton Keynes being the victims of exploitation specialist training is being developed for delivery across Milton Keynes Children and Families Services to upskill practitioners understanding of Exploitation including the frequent potential for overlap with some or more of a number of other key elements including Serious Youth Violence / County Lines / Gangs / Knife Crime and Missing episodes.
- The ME Hub have created an Exploitation Bulletin sharing key information, updates, trends, and emerging themes around exploitation issues to support Contextual Safeguarding approaches within Milton Keynes to safeguard young

people. The Exploitation Bulletin is circulated every 4-6 weeks to Children and Families Services (including the YOS).

- A Senior YOT Officer has been accepted as a SCA Multi Agency Assurance Panel (MAAP) member, which will significantly support our NRM referrals and enhance our ability to challenge NRM Decisions where these appear incongruous based upon the evidence available.
- All Young people working with the YOT on statutory interventions or referred to ESP must have an up-to-date Exploitation Screening Tool completed and referred to the ME Hub, ensuring a more holistic multi-agency assessment, scrutiny and advice is available to address the needs and risks of that young person.
- The addition of Youth workers and Youth Support Workers seconded into the Missing and Exploitation Hub, has provided additional resource enabling greater opportunity for early intervention to be offered to young people identified as vulnerable to exploitation.
- As highlighted earlier we have been successful in obtaining pilot funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to provide a joint response to knife or bladed article carrying / possession along with Thames Valley Police. The ACT-Now (Achieving Change Together - Now) project is being funded initially for 12 months whereby the YOT will provide a pro-active and timely response (within 1 ½ hours) to young people in Police custody where they have been arrested for a knife / bladed article offence. This enables YOT staff to reach out and offer timely intervention and support to young people, therefore capitalising on reachable and teachable moments within a child and young person's life.

Constructive Resettlement and Use of Custody

94. Milton Keynes Youth Offending Strategic Board (YOSB) are responsible for ensuring that the approach to custody, resettlement and transitions is evidenced-based as well as ensuring that suitable and timely accommodation provision is available for all children leaving custody along with young people having equitable access to services. The YOSB are able to identify, challenge and address any structural barriers that exist with regards to the resettlement of young

people into the community (e.g., poor access to education, training, and employment for NEET young people over 16, and a lack of suitable accommodation provision for young people in care/ care leavers).

95. Milton Keynes YOT 'Custody, Resettlement and Transitions Policy' provides the detailed framework for this area of work, outlining the service expectations in relation to children and young people serving custodial sentences, remanded to youth detention accommodation and for those leaving custody and resettling back into their communities, including clear guidance and expectations around:

- evidenced-based research underpinning the practice model
- Resettlement
- Structural barriers to resettlement
- Transitions
- Role of Children's Social Care
- Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation
- Custodial sentences
- SEND Code of Practice: Legal Duty (Chapter 10)
- Transitions
- Extended Sentences
- Use of Youth Justice Assessment Framework (YJAF)
- Additional Contact with Young People in Custody
- Policy Evaluation

96. We recognise that the Resettlement of females requires a different approach to when addressing the needs of males (Beyond Youth Custody, 2014). An interpersonal approach to Resettlement with high levels of support is required for

females. Developing a pro-social identity, forming positive supportive networks, and addressing relationships are key in terms of supporting an effective Resettlement (Beyond Youth Custody, 2014).

97. The approach adopted by Milton Keynes YOT wholly supports the perspective that young people serving custodial sentences must receive an effective, end-to-end service provision based on a thorough assessment of need and risk, in order to reintegrate them into the community. We recognise that in order to achieve this, partnership working, alongside the participation and engagement of young people and their families, is essential for Resettlement (Beyond Youth Custody, 2014).

98. Milton Keynes YOT has an approach that reflects the findings of research that young people who offend (but especially young people serving custodial sentences) are likely to have considerable Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), along with additional needs as a result of being in the care of the local authority, being a care leaver, having complex family backgrounds, problematic substance misuse, significant health needs, trauma and several adverse childhood experiences. This list of anticipated needs is not exhaustive; however, it outlines how resettlement has to be approached on an individual basis as it is different for every young person and how an accurate assessment of needs and risks is essential to ensuring that barriers are identified, addressed, and overcome.

99. It is a service expectation, and reflected in National Standards 2019, that allocated Social Workers are actively involved in all aspects of remand and sentence planning. Responsible YOT Officers ensure that Social Workers are invited to all planning meetings held within the secure estate and liaise regularly outside of these meetings to ensure effective and timely information sharing and joint planning.

100. We also recognise that structural barriers, such as a lack of suitable and timely accommodation for young people in care and care leavers need to be addressed at the earliest opportunity within remand/ sentence planning. One of the most important Resettlement Pathways is 'Accommodation' as feeling safe and stable

lends itself well to young people being able to effectively engage in other positive activities including education, training, and employment.

101. We are realistic in recognising that finding suitable and appropriate accommodation for young people who offend can be challenging. To ensure that this is addressed in a timely way in line with the YOT and CSC Partnership Working Agreement (Jan 2020), where a young person is identified during the custodial period as being likely to require accommodation on release the YOT will complete a referral to MASH at least 3 months prior to the release date.
102. In order to ensure that young people are sufficiently prepared to make the transition from custody to the community, CSC (where appropriate) ensure that accommodation for children is confirmed no later than one week prior to the Final Planning Meeting to enable the young person to have an opportunity to plan, prepare, share their views, and discuss any concerns at the Final Planning Meeting. The YOT encourage identification of a placement at the earliest point within the custodial phase of a sentence, however, also recognise that this can be a significant challenge to achieve so far in advance.
103. We have developed evaluation tools to capture the views of young people, parents / carers, and key professionals in relation to their experiences in order to ensure these inform the development of the service and policy reviews.
104. YOT have a Resettlement Champion to support practitioners with custody, remand, and resettlement. The Champion is responsible for monitoring and liaising with Responsible YOT Officers so that evaluation forms are completed in a timely manner, and that practitioners can obtain specific support around Resettlement throughout the entirety of the sentence.

Restorative Justice and Victims –

105. Through strong case work and multi-agency working, we support and encourage children to build pro-social identities to support their desistance from crime and reducing victims of crime and we work hard to offer victims of crime a voice.
106. We have strengthened the YOT's work in restorative justice, through collaborative work with the police and Youth Services (Stay Safe) to increase the level of victim

information and engagement and to ensure direct and indirect restorative approaches are both available and meet the requirements of a service structured around Child First principles and approaches. This work in particular was further developed to ensure that the needs of victims are paramount, and the effective approach developed for post court disposals was fully replicated within all elements of the Diversion work of the Youth Offending Team and key partners in the YJS.

107. A member of the team contacts victims of children working with YOT offering support, including being kept informed of case progression, support to attend Youth Offender Panels and meeting the child face-to-face for a restorative conference. YOT staff are trained to YJB/Restorative Justice Council standards for the facilitation of restorative conversations. Current data shows that of the victims who we were given details by the police, 77% engaged with the YOT service.
108. Following a recent restructure, we are focusing on expanding the opportunities available for Reparation / Community Enrichment to enable young people not only to repair the harm they have caused but also to provide opportunities for community engagement, and development of key skills and qualifications.
109. One area that will be developed over the year of 2022/2023 will be how we effectively capture the voice of victims to inform the evaluation and development of the services that have been offered to them.

9. National standards (Page 14 of the Guidance)

110. A Baseline self-assessment of 'Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System 2019' was completed in early 2020. The audit identified that the majority of areas were rated as good. Actions were identified to strengthen areas of service and all but one of these have now been implemented. Case audits were completed in 2021 as per recommendations; participation services have been undertaken to gain an independent review of YOT and partner services following completion of interventions, this work has now been extended to be completed with voluntary interventions also. Links with local youth services have been strengthened through the integration of the Stay Safe Team under the lead of the YOS. Victim and Restorative Justice services have been strengthened and

contact is now offered to all victims who consent including those victims of young people on voluntary interventions.

111. The YOT participates in the Thames Valley scrutiny panels for OOCd, and the new Resettlement and Transitions policy has taken account of current research and evidence of good practice. The only remaining area for development is that of undertaking further diversity training, this was initially impacted by Covid and is planned to be undertaken with 2022/2023.
112. An internal audit was completed in April 2021 and reviewed 15 formal OOCd's and statutory cases. All case management domains were reviewed, and the findings identified good practice in all areas. All audit recommendations have now been achieved.
113. The Youth Offending Team was subject to a Rapid Service Review which identified a number of proposed managerial and structural changes to the Service. Those that were taken forward were completed as part of the wider changes to Children's Services that took effect in April 2021. The key changes combined the role of YOT Manager / YOT Operational Manager / Strategic Lead for Exploitation into one role as YOS Manager / Strategic Lead for Exploitation and incorporated the Youth Offending Team; Missing and Exploitation Hub; Stay Safe Team (Youth: MK) and Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service into one Youth Offending Service managed by the YOS Manager.
114. In May 2021, Milton Keynes Youth Offending Team were subject to inspection by HM inspectorate of Probation. The results of which were published in August 2021 and reflected an overall rating of Good. Three recommendations were made, and all of these have now been achieved.
115. All recommendations from the internal audit in 2021 and the HMIP Inspection 2021 were collated in to 15 key targets. All of these are included and discussed within this plan under Progress on Previous Plan.

10. Challenges, risks and issues (Page 14 of the Guidance)

116. In line with our identified offending profile, there is a need to further develop the focus upon addressing the criminal exploitation of children, and the overlap with serious youth violence, through improved partnership information sharing and forward planning; embedding approaches to address child exploitation, knife crime, serious youth violence, county lines, gangs, trafficking and modern-day slavery.
117. The high number of children continuing to enter the YJS in Milton Keynes with unrecognised and unmet Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) evidences the significant disproportionality in relation to this group of children and the requirement to continue to develop the proactive outreach work, in collaboration with the Education Psychology Service, to highlight the specific risks around children being drawn into offending and criminal exploitation linked to unrecognised SLCN and SEND.
118. Through evaluation and data analysis, we ensure that the additional resources available from the NHS funded Health and Justice ESP continue to support and enhance the targeted work around diversion, prevention, and early intervention. This includes exploring the opportunities to share the learning and effective practice across other services, within the partnership. Consideration was given to explore opportunities to build on the evidenced model by upscaling parts of the Serious Violence Reduction Strategy, which has led to the development of the ACT -Now project targeted at Knife Carriers and being piloted in Milton Keynes. If this project is successful there remains the opportunity to explore the development of ESP and / or ACT-Now across other areas of the Thames Valley.
119. With secondary schools and partners, there is a need to continue to address the issues related to attendance at school and access to appropriate timetables and levels of individual support that meets their needs to reduce the risk of children getting involved in offending behaviour or being exploited.
120. We need to continue the work on strengthening the YOT's work in restorative justice, through collaborative work with the Police and Youth Services (Stay

Safe), to increase the level of victim information and engagement and to ensure direct and indirect restorative approaches are both available and meet the requirements of a service structured around Child First principles and approaches. This work will ensure that the needs of victims are paramount, and that we seek to encourage greater uptake by victims, reflecting the effective approach developed for post-court and pre-court disposals, that has now been extended to all elements of the Diversion work of the YOT and key partners in the YJS.

121. Continue development work in capturing the voice of children who have offended, and their lived experiences of involvement in the YJS, and working with the YOT and its partners. This continuing development will enable the voice of children and families involved in the YJS, alongside that of staff and volunteers, to more meaningfully contribute to a holistic coproduction model of the vision of the service going forward and also the way, how and where it is delivered.
122. As outlined earlier, feedback from children, volunteers and staff identified that crucial to the success of developments in this area was greater access to child-centred safe and confidential places, to enable effective working in particular with those children who pose a high risk of harm to others, including to other children and professionals.
123. We continue to address the national difficulties surrounding securing opportunities for children aged over 16 including the need to explore greater access to employment, training and education opportunities for children who have offended through collaborative work with relevant partners including Young People's Careers Information Advice and Guidance, Milton Keynes College, other local providers, and employers.
124. We need to continue to identify and address the longer-term impact that the Covid pandemic has had on our work with children and their families including through reduced education engagement, exploring the opportunities for innovative approaches to support those not accessing appropriate levels of Education.

125. As outlined earlier, previous feedback from children, volunteers and staff identified that crucial to the success of intervention is greater access to child centred safe and confidential places to enable effective working, in particular with those children who pose a high risk of harm to others. Whilst we have successfully improved this access in a number of Council buildings, we are continuing to explore other appropriate venues and locations for future development that will ensure that children, families, and victims continue to be enabled to have effective face-to-face contact with YOT staff at locations around the City.
126. We need to develop the local physical health offer as this does not fully meet the needs of our client group at the present time. Discussions have been ongoing; however, this still needs to be resolved to ensure children have access to appropriate assessment of needs and any support / health provision that is identified.
127. We have identified an increase in serious youth violence within Milton Keynes and tackling and addressing this, with our partners remains a key priority. This has been, and will continue to be, an ongoing challenge, but is highlighted as a Council and partnership priority. We have established close links with the Thames Valley Police Problem Solving Team and the Violence Reduction Unit. The Stay Safe Team and Missing and Exploitation Hub (ME Hub) and are now part of the Youth Offending Service and the planned development and expansion of the ME Hub into a multi-agency / multi-disciplinary Contextual Safeguarding Team within the Youth Offending Service will allow for a closer focus on coordinated working for this key area.
128. Milton Keynes is a fast-growing city, with known areas of poverty and deprivation. It is important for us to fully understand the social challenges and structural barriers facing our children and families, and the long-lasting impact of deprivations and associated risk factors (e.g., domestic violence/poor health/poor education).
129. 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. Funding may also be reduced if youth justice is not considered a priority by local partners including the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

130. The contribution from the national Supporting Families Programme may reduce, with the uncertainty around longer term funding of the programme, which would directly impact upon available staffing and service delivery.

11. [Service improvement plan](#) (Page 14 of the Guidance)

131. The Quality Assurance Audit in April 2021 and the Single Agency Inspection by HMIP in May 2021 have helped inform and shape our delivery and improvement plan for the coming year with key areas of development and focus. A number of these have subsequently been fully addressed and the others we are continuing to drive forward as part of the ongoing development of the YJ Services.

- Sharing the work and focus of the YOS/Youth Justice Plan across key partners to increase insight and understanding of the work of the service
- Exploring access to further safe places across the City to enhance safe and effective working with children, parents / carers, and victims.
- Exploring targeted recruitment approaches to increase the diversity of the staff team in order to better reflect the demography of Milton Keynes and the children and families who work with the service
- Establishing succession planning for key roles
- Developing a single document Desistance and Unmet Needs Profile reflecting identified specific desistance needs and evidence around gaps in services reflecting and quantifying unmet needs
- Resolving lack of access to appropriate Physical Health provision
- Implementing the regular audit methodology to continue to drive forward and monitor professional practice

- Enhancing the connection between the YOSB and the front-line service delivery to improve effectiveness and coordination
- Strengthening our services to victims of crime
- Further developing mechanisms to capture the voice of children, parents/carers, victims, and our partners

Workforce development –

132. During 2021/2022, training opportunities were less heavily impacted by the Covid pandemic and the YOT were able to offer inhouse training in key areas of service, as well as having access to multiple webinar's provided by the YJB and access to internal training specifically aimed at children services staff provided through Milton Keynes Council. Staff therefore received training in a range of topics including:

- AIM3 Training
- Attachment and Trauma Training
- Clinical Supervision
- Critical Reflection and Analysis
- De-escalation and Personal Safety Training
- Diversity Training
- Domestic Abuse Training
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness Training
- Modern Slavery awareness training
- Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusion Project
- Risk Training

133. The Deputy Manager and a Senior YOT Officer (the Out of Court Disposal Lead) are currently training to become Local Assessors with HMIP. One Senior YOT Officer will be training as a Multi-Agency Assurance Panel Member with the Home Office.
134. In 2022 / 2023, we are planning to complete further Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) training to all YOT staff and key partners to ensure that the SLCN of children and young people within the youth justice system can be identified and fully understood to promote better outcomes.
135. The YOT are supported by a team of trained and experienced volunteers acting as Youth Offender Panel Members, Youth Resilience Project Mentors and Appropriate Adults. These groups have access to statutory and non-statutory training as well as regular support and consultation meetings.
136. All YOT Officers are trained in the full remit of the service from Diversion and Prevention, Out of Court Disposals (O OCD) and Post-Court, including custody and transitions.
137. Continued Professional Development is a key component of the Youth Offending Team's approach with staff. We have an in-house Practice Educator who regularly takes student placements and utilises a similar methodology with supporting the professional development of staff members. The YOT has an established practice learning curriculum for students, including more specifically, Student Social Workers who undertake both 70 days and 100-day placements. The wider team currently contains two members of staff who in addition to their substantive role, are also Social Work Apprentices.
138. YOT alongside the ME Hub are creating Exploitation Training to be delivered within YOT, ME Hub and to wider Children's Social Care Staff to upskill practitioners in Exploitation, given the significant increase in the young people in Milton Keynes being the victims of exploitation.
139. We have a well-established internal progression model that has enabled practitioners to progress and take advantage of development opportunities. This is attractive to staff and is reflected within our excellent retention rates.

140. The funding available for training is kept under scrutiny, in line with pressures on the overall budget. Priority areas for training this year will be:

- Child First Approach
- 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.
- AIM3 Training (was planned for early 2020 but was postponed due to the pandemic).
- Diversity Training
- All volunteers and staff will receive safeguarding training in line with Milton Keynes Council guidelines and as individual circumstances require.

12. Evidence-based practice and innovation (Page 15 of the Guidance)

141. Milton Keynes Youth Offending Service are keen to use the latest research and development of effective practice guidance to continue to improve services for young people and their families. The areas below demonstrate some of the key areas of evidence-based practice and innovation currently in place.

142. The Youth Resilience Project (mentoring programme) considers research from the Punishing abuse research published in 2021. Punishing Abuse is unique ground-breaking research into the extent of childhood adversity, abuse, loss, and trauma in children involved in the criminal justice system in the West Midlands. Two critical areas frequently cited in research on how resilience is developed and maintained is the importance of a relationship with an adult who cares and engagement in education. The Youth Resilience Project aims to provide a positive relationship between the Mentor and Mentee to allow the young people to build resilience to tackle past, current, and future adversity. The Youth Resilience Project intends to prevent young people from becoming involved in youth violence, crime or being exploited and support those who have found themselves in difficult situations that they need help to get out of. The project is currently in its

infancy, however, will be reviewed in March 2023 to identify levels of engagement and offers of services being provided.

143. Speech and Language Assessments are offered to all young people open to the service. These assessments inform our developmental approach to support young people's understanding of their interventions. This approach, which has informed and been informed by, local, national and international research, and frequently evaluated since its introduction, has proved effective in identifying those with SLCN (a hidden disability) whether present as a primary need, as a coexisting condition with other needs such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) ; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) ; Dyslexia etc., or as a consequence of other factors such as Attachment Disorder; Adverse Childhood Experiences; Trauma and Loss ; Domestic Abuse ; Family breakdown ; Sexual Abuse ; Criminal or Sexual Exploitation etc. Central to this approach is the recognition that the majority of children in the Youth Justice System (60%-90% Based on research; 65% - 84% based on local data; 71% YJB Asset Plus data) have SLCN but, as this is a hidden disability, for the majority of children this is not accurately recognised prior to them being assessed by the YOT.
144. Our Custody and Resettlement Policy takes into consideration research developed by Beyond Youth Custody in 2014 and 2017 in regards to the resettlement of females and the 5 C's of effective resettlement. It is also underpinned by the YJB guidance on resettlement pathways and National Standards 2019.
145. The Early Support Project is a short-term intervention underpinned by a case management model, focused on strength based and future focused working, it is underpinned by a strong health and education focus given emerging research around school exclusions, SLCN, home education, SEND and social inequalities. Within the ESP there is a systems theory / contextual safeguarding approach to case management, highlighted by the Taylor Review in 2019 as an example of good practice.

13. Looking forward (Page 15 of the Guidance)

146. One of the most exciting initiatives in 2022 / 2021 is the ACT-Now pilot to address knife / bladed article carrying and knife / bladed article possession with Milton Keynes. The YOT, along with Thames Valley Police, will be responding to children and young people in Police Custody within 1 ½ hours, offering specialist support and intervention to children, young people, and their parents / carers. Those in custody will receive an initial custody visit from a YOT Officer who will then arrange to see the child / young person within 48 hours to complete an initial screening assessment. This assessment will underpin the voluntary intervention plan that is developed with the child / young person and parents / carers. All children and young people will be offered a Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessment at the start of the intervention period in order to fully understand their needs and any difficulties identified.
147. In order to ensure that children and young people receive timely and appropriate disposals for knife carrying / possession offences, we are developing an Out of Court Disposal (OCD) pathway to ensure that where possible and appropriate, a timely assessment for a Youth Conditional Caution is considered as directed by local and national guidance. All young people considered for an OCD of this nature will be reviewed at the weekly Joint Decision-Making Panels (JDMPs) jointly chaired by the YOT with Thames Valley Police and attended by the Professional Lead for Missing and Exploitation on behalf of the ME Hub / CSC and a representative of the Liaison and Diversion service to represent CAMHS.
148. In recognition of the links between Serious Youth Violence, Knife Crime, County Lines, Criminal and Sexual Exploitation and young people who go missing, a multi-agency / multi-disciplinary Contextual Safeguarding Team is being developed to specifically work with young people whose main needs and risks are due to factors outside of the home environment. This service which will be based around an expanded ME Hub will sit under the Youth Offending Service manager ensuring strong links with the Youth Offending Team.
149. In order to respond to increasing demands across services in relation to exploitation and serious youth violence, we will identify points of contact in each

team across Children's Social Care who can be upskilled to provide peer support in teams where there are working directly with children with contextual safeguarding concerns.

150. In relation to young people who go missing we will be instigating a joint pilot between Thames Valley Police and the Youth Offending Service identifying those who have gone missing on 3 occasions and evaluating additional support to be provided. The pilot is based upon comprehensive research which has identified that after the third episode young people are at significantly higher risk of being involved in exploitation and other concerns related to their missing episodes. It is anticipated that this early intervention will reduce the number of missing episodes that young people are involved in and reduce associated risks of serious youth violence and exploitation,
151. Some progress has been made in resolving the lack of access to appropriate Physical Health provision however there remains further work to complete to achieve this goal and this therefore remains as a target in the plan for the coming year.
152. Whilst we have explored targeted recruitment approaches to increase the diversity of the staff and volunteer team across the Youth Offending Service there is still further focus required in order to better reflect the demography of Milton Keynes and the children and families who work with the service. This will therefore remain as an ongoing objective in the current plan.
153. There has to date been some progress in succession planning for some key roles in the Youth Offending Team, but there remains a significant gap in relation to the Business Support and Information Manager role in particular, reflecting similar challenges experienced by other Youth Justice Services in the Thames Valley / South-East area around the equivalent Performance Manager role. We will continue to focus upon resolving this in order to ensure service resilience going forward. This will include exploring alternative approaches for delivery of this role taking into account the greater connectivity amongst teams in the wider Youth Offending Service.

14. Sign off, submission and approval (Page 16 of the Guidance)

Chair of YJS Board - name	Dr Mac Heath
Signature	
Date	30 June 2022

15. Appendix 1 (Page 10 of the Guidance) *Outline of full board membership, including attendance, job title of the board member and dates of board meetings should be included in Appendix 1*

Membership of the Youth Offending Strategic Board is;

- Local Authority (Milton Keynes Council)
 - o Director of Children's Services
 - o Group Head – Children and Families
 - o Head of Partnerships and Delivery
 - o Head of Delivery – Sufficiency and Access (Education)
- Central Bedfordshire Council Shared Services
 - o Head of Public Health Programmes
- Probation
 - o Head of Probation Delivery Unit – Milton Keynes & Buckinghamshire
- Police
 - o Deputy Local Police Area Commander
- CAMHS
 - o Interim Service manager
- NHS CCG (Central and North-West London)
 - o Associate Director, Children's and Maternity Commissioning
- Buckinghamshire Magistrates Court
 - o Chair of Youth Magistrates Panel

- Youth Offending Team
 - o YOS Manager / Strategic Lead Exploitation
 - o Volunteers' representative

In addition to the core board members, we also have the following advisors / invitees;

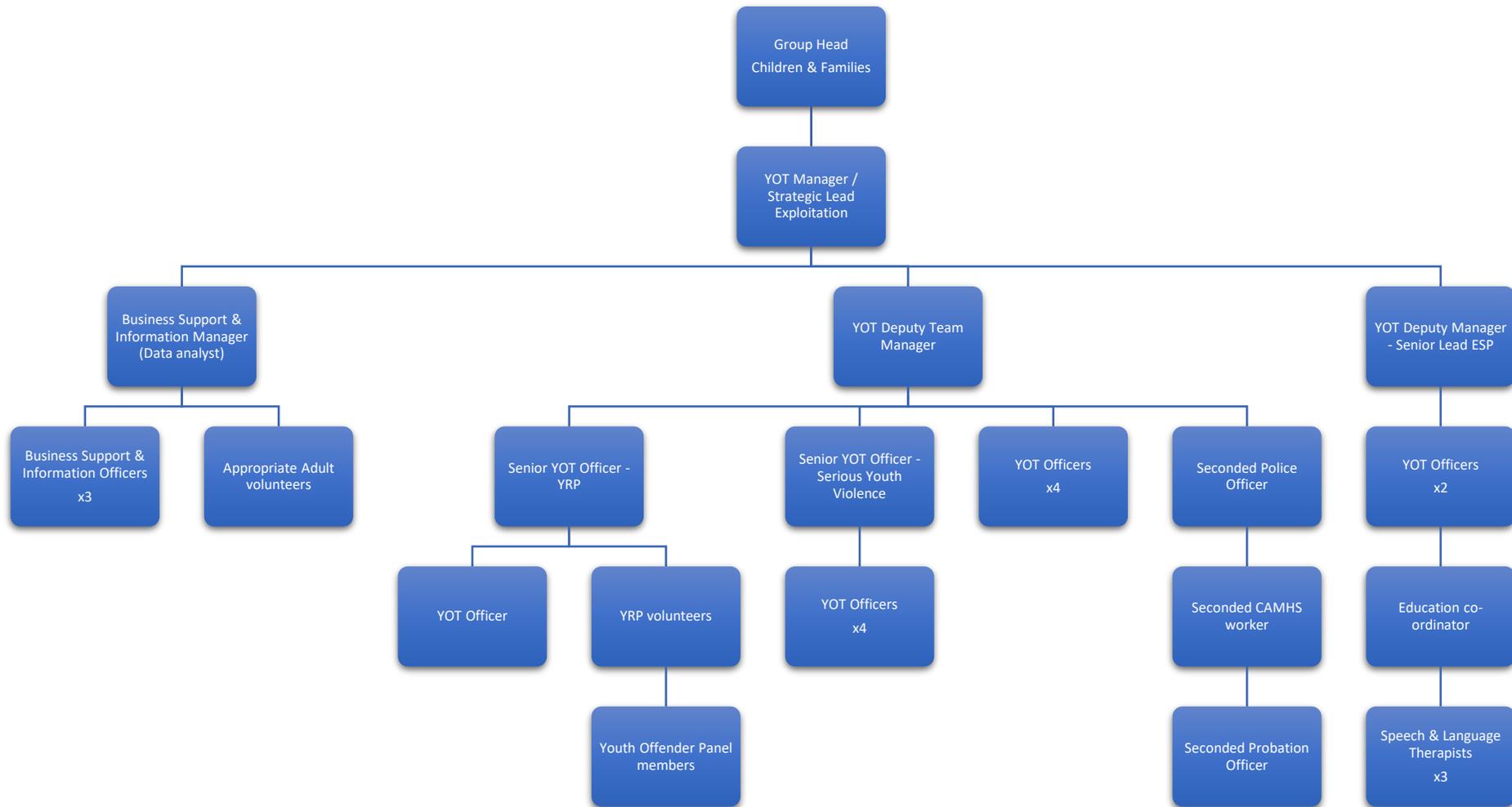
- Police
 - o Youth Justice Unit Sergeant
- Youth Justice Board
- Police and Crime Commissioner representative
- Court
 - o Senior Legal Advisor
- YOT
 - o Deputy YOT Manager

Attendance:

Member's role	Meeting 20/10/21	Meeting 3/2/22	Meeting 28/4/22
Director of Children's Services	Attended	Attended	Attended
Group Head – Children and Families		Attended	Attended
Head of Partnerships and Delivery	Attended		Attended

Head of Delivery – Sufficiency and Access	Attended	Attended	Attended
Head of Public Health Programmes	Attended	Attended	Attended
Head of Probation Delivery Unit	Attended	Attended	Attended
Deputy Local Police Area Commander		Attended	Attended
CAMHS Interim Service Manager		Attended	
Associate Director – Children’s and Maternity Commissioning	Attended	Represented	Attended
Chair of Youth Magistrates panel	Not included at this time	Attended	Attended
YOS Manager	Attended	Attended	Attended
Volunteers’ representative	Not included at this time	Attended	Attended

Appendix 2 – Service Structure Chart (Page 10 of Guidance) should include details of the staff roles in the YJS and the reporting arrangements for the Head of Service. Information on the links to the data analyst should also be included. There should be a separate table in the appendix recording the ethnicity, sex and known disability of staff.



YOT staffing:

Ethnicity group	Managers Strategic		Managers Operational		Practitioners		Administrative		Sessional		Student		Referral Order volunteers		Other volunteers		TOTAL		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Asian or Asian British																1			1
Black or Black British					1			1								1		1	2
Mixed																			
Chinese or Other																			
White or White British	1			2	3	15	1	2				1	2	6	3	8	10	34	
TOTAL	1			2	4	15	1	3				1	2	6	3	10	11	37	

There are no members of staff with disabilities.

Common youth justice terms, please add any locally used terminology

ACE	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
AIM 2 and 3	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
ASB	Antisocial behaviour
AssetPlus	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services
CCE	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
Children	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
Child First	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach,

	it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
Child looked-after	Child looked-after, where a child is looked after by the local authority
CME	Child Missing Education
Constructive resettlement	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
Community resolution	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
EHCP	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs
ETE	Education, training or employment
EHE	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
EOTAS	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting

FTE	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
HMIP	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
HSB	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
JAC	Junior Attendance Centre
MAPPA	Multi agency public protection arrangements
MFH	Missing from Home
NRM	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
OOCD	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
Outcome 22/21	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending

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