

Darlington Youth Justice Plan 2019/20



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In my third year as Chair of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Management Board, I am pleased to introduce Darlington's Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2019–20. As in previous years the Board has developed this Plan after consultation with staff, partner agencies and most importantly our clients., it will be used practically to influence future decisions and set strategic priorities, whilst also taking account of some of the key challenges beyond the control of the Board that we face in the year to come.

This Plan has been developed in a continued climate of reduced funding and the YOS, like all public sector bodies, is facing difficult decisions about how we maintain and improve our services. We were pleased to receive the same allocation of funding to that of last year from the Youth Justice Board, however, the YOS and its partner agencies have seen reductions in budget allocations which will inevitably impact upon service provision.

On a brighter note, Darlington YOS continues to be one of the more successful services in the country evidenced by;

- Outstanding diversion programmes in partnership with the local authority Anti- Social Behaviour Team
- A continued reduction in young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time
- A broad range of reparation projects following a successful review of local and national good practice
- Providing high quality victim contact and restorative justice services
- Working in collaboration with partners continues to be a key strength of the YOS
- Continued work with Durham University, sharing good practice and research
- The development of new and innovative intervention tool
- Continuous professional development of staff in particular around health and wellbeing of young people (child psychologist input)
- YOS evaluation programme capturing the young person's voice to help shape future delivery
- Expansion of reparation projects and activity provision for young people
- Becoming a registered provider of the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Darlington YOS has a clear vision, delivers high quality, effective and safe youth justice services to prevent offending and reoffending by young people in Darlington. This Plan outlines how we intend to do this in the forthcoming year.

The continued challenge is to build upon the success to date and ensure that we keep offending and re-offending levels low utilising the services and opportunities available to us. This will not only achieve safer, stronger and more confident communities but crucially will result in better life opportunities for our young people.

The Board would like to express its thanks to those who support young people on a day to day basis. I would also like to personally thank both staff and managers for their ongoing commitment to ensuring the smooth and safe running of the service for what has been an exacting year. The Board would also like to express its appreciation for the support and assistance provided by the Youth Justice Board.

We recognise that the achievements I have mentioned are only made possible with the help of our skilled and dedicated workforce and partner agencies.

On behalf of the YOS Management Board I am pleased to endorse the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2019-20.



Adrian Green Temp. Chief Superintendent Durham Constabulary & Chair-Darlington YOS Board.

Introduction

Thank you for taking time to read this plan which provides an overview of how Darlington Youth Offending Service (YOS) will deliver services to improve outcomes for young people, their families and our community over the next year.

The plan supports wider partnership strategies including; 'Darlington Children and Young Peoples Plan 2017-2022', Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy 'One Darlington Perfectly Placed 2008 - 2026', 'One Darlington Perfectly Safe Community Safety Plan 2015 - 2020', the 'Police, Crime and Victims Plan 2016 - 21' and the 'Cleveland & Durham Local Criminal Justice Partnership Board Plan 2018 - 21'.

We are a multi-agency service tasked with;

- Working with young people to prevent offending and reoffending whilst also safeguarding them from future harm
- Supporting the victims of crime and protecting the public

Some of the young people involved with the YOS are the most vulnerable children in society and are at greatest risk of social exclusion, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' highlights the need for Youth Offending Services to work jointly with other agencies and professionals to ensure that young people are protected from harm and to support them to achieve more.

This plan will outline our local delivery model of youth justice services, including; our structure, governance and roles, partnership working, financial information, the risks to our future delivery as well as detailing our priorities for the coming year.

The work of the YOS is framed by the Youth Justice Board strategic aim and functions 2018 - 21, which are:

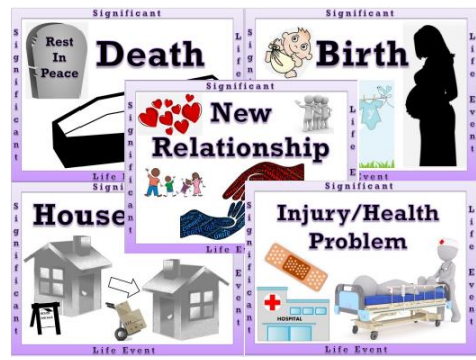
- Monitor the operation of youth justice services which deliver against the youth justice outcomes (Reduce the number of children in the YJ system, reduce reoffending by children in the YJ system, improve the safety and wellbeing of children in the YJ system and improve outcomes for children in the YJ system)
- Advise the Secretary of State on matters relating to the youth justice system
- Commission research to support the development of good practice
- Identify and share good practice and report on how the statutory aim of the youth justice system 'prevent offending by children and young people' can be best achieved
- Obtain and publish information to enable monitoring of youth justice services

Darlington YOS continues to challenge the effectiveness of service delivery with a focus on developing the strengths of young people and achieving outcomes which matter to them most.

We will outline achievements of 2018 - 19 against our priorities for the past year;

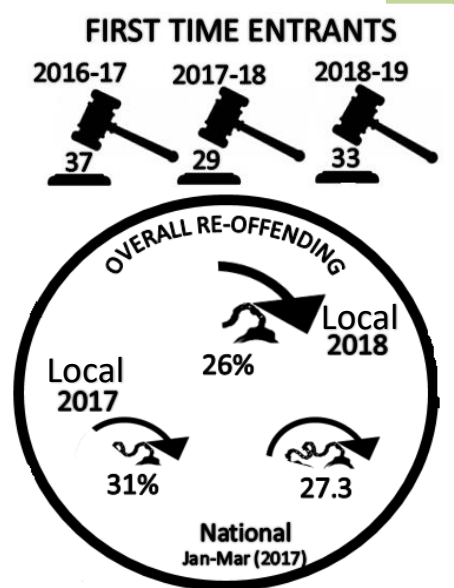
Reduce Offending & Reoffending

- The development of more client friendly resources which help parents and young people identify the significant events in their lives which have impacted on attitudes and behaviour, these have helped with parental engagement in assessments.



- YOS staff have received training and engaged in peer review exercises aimed at increasing their ability to recognise underlying strengths that young people possess, the benefit being that these strengths can then be built upon and used in planning a path that avoids future offending.
- The continuous professional development of YOS staff has led to the attendance of several training sessions with a child psychologist on the topics of ‘working with anger and violence’, ‘adolescent brain development’, ‘supporting young people that self-harm’, ‘working with young people with challenging families’ and ‘working with young people with special educational needs (Autism, Communication needs and learning disabilities)’, this training has led to clear practice changes in the staff and their ability to think more widely about the causes of behaviour, the plans that are created to address those behaviours and more importantly the methods that are used to best cater for the young person’s needs.

- There has been a comprehensive review and overhaul of how sexually harmful behaviour is assessed and addressed within Darlington, this has led to the development of; tools used to gather information, support forums which practitioners can attend, and specialised support from a child psychologist. There is a significantly different approach from YOS staff in particular when dealing with cases of this nature with far less anxiety or reluctance to talk about and address the behaviour.



Achievements

Support Victims & Protect Public

- Following a review of our victim participation we have removed constraints in relation to when we make initial contact with a victim, no longer waiting for full outcomes of the case before our Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) makes contact to begin exploring how they can assist
- The way in which the VLO identifies the needs of the victim has undergone development, the aim being that there is an increased focus on emotional health/well-being and strategies to overcome the harm
- There have been numerous pieces of bespoke reparation project work this past year, examples being a victim who requested that some monies were raised for a charity, the young person headed a Christmas craft project which generated for the stroke association, another young person organised a charity 5aside competition in aid of cancer research and St Teresa's and finally several young people took part in creatively altering poppies for sale



- The way in which reparation project work is approached has been aided by the creation of a template tool which guides the young person through their project and the different steps to achieve the goal, this allows the project to be more focused and meet the targets of both the victim and at times the young person

Reparation Project Workbook

Name: _____
Project Title: _____

Step by Step Plan

Detail the different steps to achieving your goal, be specific, make sure you can do it, say when it needs to be done by and how we can check that it has been done.

Date	Task	Comments on Progress

- Staff have received training and management support in their confidence to robustly manage risk and develop more streamline contingency plans for foreseeable risks

“Excellent service, well informed at all times”

“Appreciated the compensation of £245 which went some way to covering my costs following the incident”

“Thank you for taking your time to come and see me and my daughter and reassuring us both”

“Thank you so much for your help, you’ve been a big part of my progress”

- Feedback from Victims

Safe & Secure Futures

- Staff at the YOS have challenged the education provision that has been offered to several young people over the course of the last year, aiming for the young people to receive more appropriate and beneficial services for their needs
- In 2019 the Darlington Public Health Team led a multi-agency learning event to develop a Health and Wellbeing Needs Assessment of young offenders in Darlington. A robust methodology was used and the outcome reported to the YOS Board in July 2019. The local health and wellbeing needs of young people in Darlington YOS are similar to those described in the literature and nationally. The main issues are impact of adverse early experiences, mental health, substance misuse and speech, language and communication difficulties. Partners agree with multi-agency upstream collaborations on prevention and early intervention. Partners recommend that YOS Board lead whole system change by implementing service innovation and improving sustainability.
- YOS clients have received education requirements as part of their court orders to ensure there is a focus on the attainment of skills and qualifications that will prevent setbacks and barriers to goals later in life
- The YOS have developed methods to capture the young person’s voice, we continue to review how we gather their feedback on the service we provide as well as how we effectively inform our staff of key messages from the feedback
- There has been a significant expansion of our reparation projects and programmes, the cycle re-cycle project has benefitted from establishing relationships with both the YMCA and local Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), with these services using our provision for their own young people as a means to effectively manage behaviour and develop personal skills
- The Duke of Edinburgh award is now something which young people involved with the YOS are able to engage with, Darlington YOS has become a registered provider of the course and its first group have recently completed their expedition element and are in their final months before receiving their award (page 13)

Priority 1

Over the course of the next year we have three priorities, the following are details of what those priorities are and how we will go about achieving them.

Reduce Offending and Reoffending

What we aim to achieve:

- Identify and intervene early with young people to address risk and safety concerns that are likely to contribute to offending behaviour
- Excellent public service
- Holistic and integrated planning and case management
- To build on our success in reducing the number of first time entrants into the youth justice system
- Build our understanding of the specific problems faced by young people in Darlington

What we will do:

- Work with clients using a more therapeutic and trauma informed approach with an emphasis on building positive relationships
- Ensure assessments and plans are concise and do not limit the more valuable face to face work
- In light of the nationwide focus on violent crime we will stay informed of any new approaches and review our interventions to ensure they remain fit for purpose in this area
- Engage the local community through the training of new referral order panel volunteers who will bring new and fresh perspectives to our work with young people
- Build on the use of feedback and surveys to gain the young person's and parent/carer's voices on particular issues

How will we measure success:

- Reduced first time entrants
- Re-offending rates and analysis
- Positive feedback from young people and families via the evaluation programme
- Improved outcomes and feedback from young people subject to referral orders
- Evidence that interventions have been tailored or modified dependent on analysis of surveys

Support Victims and Protect the Public

What we aim to achieve:

- A holistic assessment and subsequent support package for victims of crime
- Robust assessment and effective risk management of young people who pose a risk to others
- Increased engagement in restorative processes
- Provide victims with a voice

What we will do:

- All victims of crime to receive support tailored to their presenting needs
- Young victims of crime offered specific support in the form of strengthening their health and wellbeing through newly developed pathways
- Continue to strengthen our risk management plans and ensure contingency plans are strong
- Ensure that victim requests and wishes are more prominent within plans
- Develop new ways of gathering the thoughts and feelings of victims on both the offence that happened and additionally their interaction with our service

How will we measure success:

- Reduction in Re-offending rates and analysis of cohort to enable understanding and shape service delivery
- Positive feedback from victims and public
- Successful completions of orders
- Number of restorative approaches used to increase from 2018

Priority 3

Safe and Secure Futures

What we aim to achieve:

- Families to feel supported and listened to, helping to embed more long term changes in young people's behaviour
- Education that effectively meets the needs of young people within the criminal justice system
- Promote and secure the voice of young people within the youth justice system to shape service delivery
- Deliver tailored and targeted interventions to promote desistance
- Promote the health and wellbeing of young people

What we will do:

- Ensure that service delivery continues to take into account the impact of trauma on young people and their families and deliver practice that has the young person's health and wellbeing at its heart
- Ensure that the young person's voice is evidenced within assessments and plans
- Ensure that families are involved in assessments, planning and that interventions can take a whole family approach
- Ensure education providers are made aware of how their decisions impact on young people's offending/re-offending and work collaboratively to improve education offers and engagement
- With a national focus on criminal exploitation we will ensure that staff are up to date on the latest trends and issues in this area and are sufficiently aware of how to address them

How will we measure success:

- Number of young people in the youth justice systems who are in education/training increases
- Offences occurring within educational environments decreases
- Positive feedback from families and significant others
- Successful completions of orders and interventions
- Young people's voice evident in plans

The YOS is located within Darlington’s Children and Adult Services Directorate, it gives high priority to its statutory duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The YOS and Early Help service are aligned with management arrangements delivered and overseen by the Service Manager.

Governance arrangements for the YOS are the responsibility of the YOS Management Board who hold all statutory partners accountable to represent youth justice issues in their organisation.

Integrated strategic partnership working and clear oversight by the YOS Management Board are critical to the success and effective delivery of Youth Justice Services in Darlington.

The Board (see table below) has an agreed terms of reference which is reviewed and refreshed on a two year basis. All board members sign and agree to the terms. The leadership, composition and role of the Board are crucial. The board is directly responsible for:

- Delivering the principal aim of reducing offending and re-offending
- Strategic Performance Oversight
- Ensuring the effective delivery of youth justice services for children and young people
- Accountability and representation of youth justice issues within the local authority
- Ensuring that children and young people involved in the youth justice system have access to universal and specialist service
- Reacting and responding to findings from HMIP inspection reports
- Ensuring local authorities discharge their duties under the Children Act 1989, in particular those in Schedule 2, paragraph 7, to:
 - Discourage children and young people within their area from committing offences
 - Take reasonable steps designed to reduce the need to bring criminal proceedings against children and young people
 - Avoid the need for children within their area to be placed in secure accommodation.

BOARD ROLE INDIVIDUALS

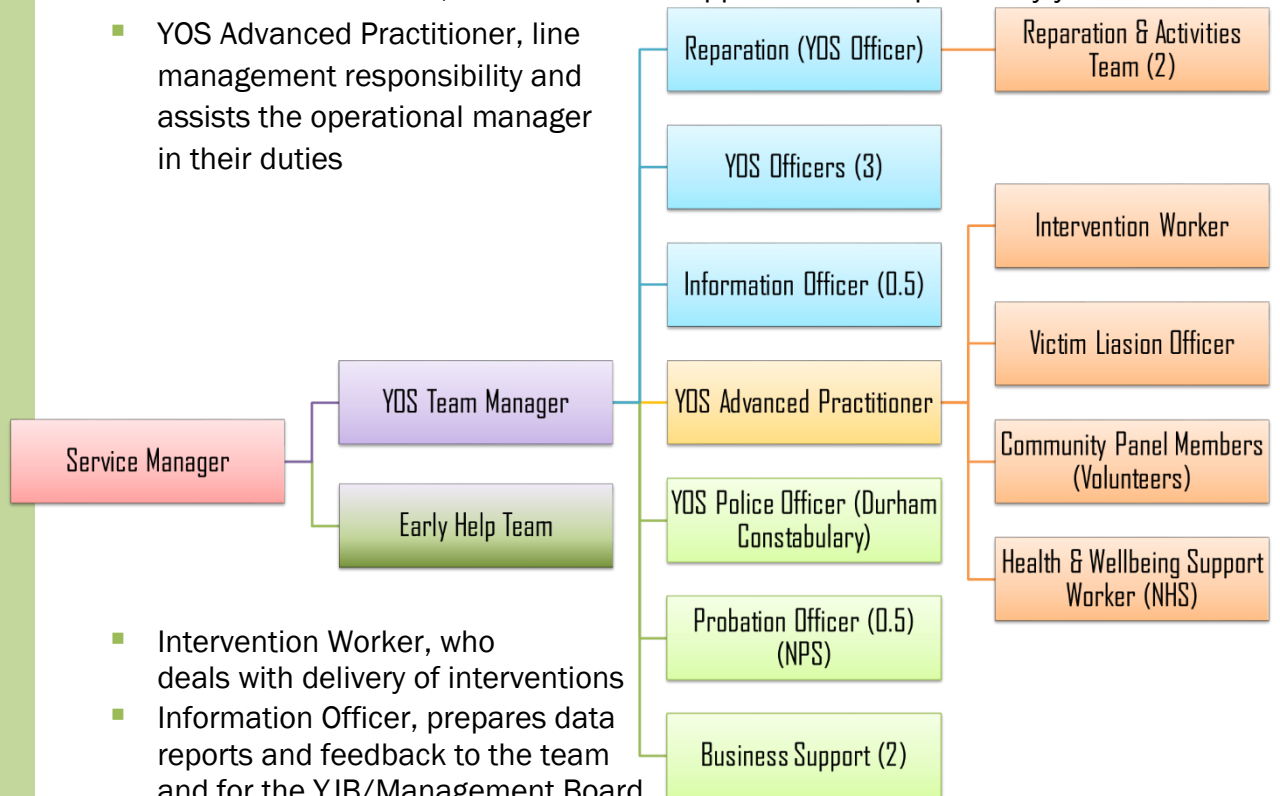
<i>CHAIR</i>	Chief Superintendent, Durham Constabulary
<i>STATUTORY PARTNERS</i>	Head of Durham National Probation Service
	Chief of Staff, Office of the Durham Police, Crime and Victims’ Commissioner
	Head of Commissioning and Strategy – Clinical Commissioning Group
	CAMHS Team Manager
<i>CRC</i>	Director of Operations for DTV CRC
<i>LOCAL AUTHORITY PARTNERS</i>	Assistant Director of Children’s Services, Darlington Borough Council
	Lead member for Children and Young People
	Service Manager Youth Offending Service & Early Help
	Youth Offending Service Team Manager
<i>COURT</i>	Head of Community Safety
	Clerk to the Justices, Her Majesty’s Court Services (HMCTS)
<i>EDUCATION</i>	Acting SEN Manager/16–19 Manager Learning & Skills
	Virtual School Head Teacher for Looked After Children, DBC

Structure

The YOS is a multi-agency team with staff from different agencies, our structure (diagram below) has changed over time due to constraints and developments within the world of youth justice and also based on the pressures and focuses of local government and other partnership agencies.

The YOS comprises of;

- Service Manager, responsible for the YOS, their role is to steer service direction
- YOS Team Manager, responsible for day to day management of staff and service delivery, quality assurance and sign off responsibility
- Victim Liaison Officer, who meets and supports those impacted by youth crime
- YOS Advanced Practitioner, line management responsibility and assists the operational manager in their duties



- Intervention Worker, who deals with delivery of interventions
- Information Officer, prepares data reports and feedback to the team and for the YJB/Management Board
- Reparation and Activities Team Co-ordinator, responsible for overseeing the reparation and activities team
- YOS Police Officer, a seconded worker who is a direct link to the Police and works predominantly with out of court cases
- Business Support, assist the team in administration tasks and other duties
- Health and Wellbeing Worker, is a new role funded by health partners, supporting young people in an array of ways with a focus on health needs
- Supervising Officers, are assigned workers who deal with all aspects of a young person's case and other duties of the YOS such as court
- Probation Officer, completes duties as outlined in the supervising officer role but has an additional focus on the successful transition of cases to adult services, organising handover meetings or working with the young person on their probation caseload to provide continuity and familiarity when required
- Community Panel Members, discussed later in this plan under the 'Volunteers' section
- Reparation and Activities Team are responsible for delivering all forms of reparation as well as other positive activity sessions with young people

Darlington YOS is proud of its long history, traditions and achievements in partnership working.

The YOS was established in April 2000 following the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is a Multi-Agency service comprising representatives from the Police, National Probation Service, Health, the Councils Children Directorate and is directed by a Service Manager.

Governance arrangements for the YOS sit within the Darlington YOS Management Board and are overseen at a national level by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

Darlington YOS is fully integrated with partnership planning arrangements for both children and young people and the criminal justice services and reports are provided to Boards in relation to cross cutting safeguarding and youth crime related issues. The YOS is represented on the Darlington Joint Children and Adult Board as well as various sub groups including reducing re-offending, early help, missing and exploited children and safeguarding.

The YOS also contributes to the wider sustainable community strategy “One Darlington: Perfectly Placed” which sets the direction for the various organisations working together within the Darlington Partnership to make the borough of Darlington an even better place to work and live. The strategy has a number of key aims including “providing children with the best start in life” and ensuring “a safe and caring community”.

The YOS Service Manager is an active member of Darlington Community Safety Partnership, the council nominated lead for the Channel programme, the lead for Early Help within the council and an active contributor to a number of regional and national groups including Heads of Service Youth Justice Executive-North East Region and the Association of Youth Offending Team Managers.

Darlington YOS has continued excellent working arrangements and engagement with the Police Crime and Victims commissioner (PCVC) and his office. The YOS Service Manager meets with the PCVC on a regular basis. The links are further strengthened with the PCVC through joint membership of local strategic groups.

Darlington YOS remains committed to working in partnership with others around the key issues affecting young people including significant and continued emerging problems around both sexual and criminal exploitation, mental health, domestic abuse, trauma, substance misuse and the ‘Prevent’ agenda.

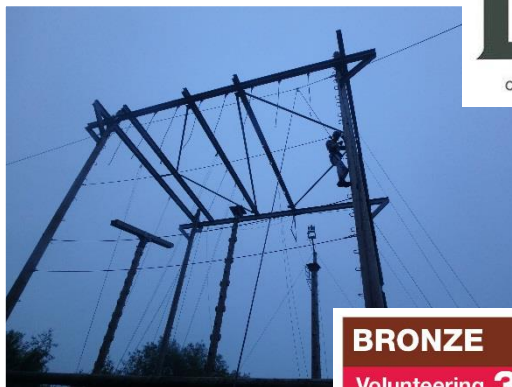
All HMIP inspection reports and thematic inspections are responded to and escalated to board level to ensure any actions are addressed at a local level.

Duke of Edinburgh

In some cases young people within the youth justice system are out of education, training or employment (ETE) and whilst this is a key objective for the YOS to ensure young people are accessing ETE, there are a number of barriers that both the young person and the YOS have to overcome before this is achieved. Whilst efforts are being made to achieve this, the YOS have looked at how we can provide recognition and reward to young people who work hard whilst fulfilling their intervention targets. This is achieved through the delivery of the Duke of Edinburgh Programme.

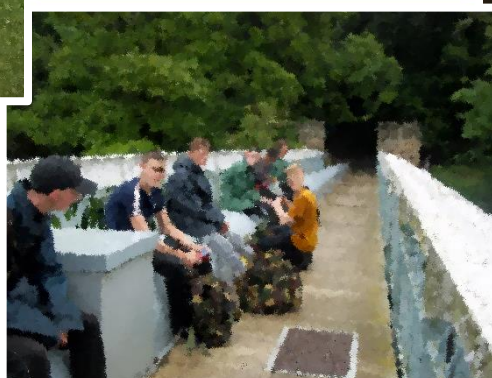
As part of the programme over the last six months 7 young people have committed their time in developing practical and social skills, participating in physical recreation and volunteering in their community. These new skills have then been put to use when the young people completed an outdoor expedition, testing their individual behaviour, stamina and team work abilities.

The benefits of this programme for these young people have included increased self-esteem, improved communication skills, opening up of new opportunities, development of new skills and abilities, all of which they can record on their CV's with the evidence of having successfully completed a recognised and valued qualification.



BRONZE

Volunteering 3 months	PLUS a further 3 months in the Volunteering, Physical or Skills section.
Physical 3 months	
Skills 3 months	
Expedition 2 days 1 night	

Darlington Youth Offending Service has a team of 5 volunteers who are fully trained to perform the role of community representatives on “Referral Order Panels”. This has reduced from 12 last year as Darlington YOS are strictly imposing a cap on service length of 4 years, this is to ensure that more people within the community of Darlington are able to have this experience and bring their personalities and attributes to benefit the young people of the town. Starting in September 2019 Darlington YOS will be training a new group of community volunteers for the role utilising our outgoing volunteers with the recruitment process.

...there is always a great deal of support from YOT Officers on duty for Panel's to support the young person and assist panel members. I have enjoyed my time as a volunteer and feel that there is always an opportunity... to 'follow' a young person through their order and feel included in any thoughts around changing processes or individual cases whereby there is a need for sensitivity and a change to the process in specific circumstances.

- Community Volunteer

The panel members whose service has concluded this year have been a fantastic help and we are indebted to them for their commitment and willingness to sacrifice their time to assist in the running of referral orders.

In 2017 we held an event to celebrate our volunteer panel members whilst simultaneously engaging in some learning and building relationships between other YOS staff and our volunteers. The event was a success and as a management team we wanted to deliver another event this year.

With that in mind we developed an escape room based on a prison cell and wing office, the idea was to incorporate lots of elements from our prison awareness work pack and that the session could then be utilised with young people with some amendments, as well as a team building/problem solving and prison awareness intervention rolled into one.

The staff and panel volunteers were invited to attend the evening, they were separated into teams of 3 or 4 and given time slots, each team would spend 30 minutes either before or after their 'escape room slot' with the team manager engaging in group supervision.

The feedback from those who took part in the escape was overwhelmingly positive, lots of staff that were initially unsure about what to expect finished the session enthused and entertained.



The 'open door' and 'nothing is too much trouble ethos' is always apparent, alongside ongoing learning & development and Volunteer meetings, this has afforded me opportunities to ensure the best possible decisions and outcomes for the Young People concerned.

- Community Volunteer

I first trained for the YOS in September 2003 hoping to make a difference to some young people's lives. The training was thorough and stood the test of time and over the years as society changed so did the offences of the young people, but the YOS always kept abreast of events by updating the training and documentation accordingly.

At Darlington I only have admiration for the whole team of YOS officers who do their best to help the young clients through sometimes very difficult times and situations.

Finally, I would like to say that the Darlington YOS never forgot that we were volunteers and had jobs, family commitments and accordingly moved panel and meeting times to accommodate us volunteers.

- Community Volunteer

The partnership financial structure consists of a central government grant administered by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and mandatory investments from key agencies.

The Local Authority contribution represents the largest strand to the pooled budget arrangement. The YJB grant award is an important funding stream representing c36% of partnership funding sources. Deductions have been applied in recent periods, however in both 18-19 and 19-20, the settlement has been maintained, thus securing a degree of budget stability. This funding is critical in order that we are able to sustain the ability to deliver on all aspects of youth justice locally.

The contribution of 27.3k received from the local PCVC office to underpin restorative justice projects will continue at the same level in 19/20. In addition, the PCVC office contributed a further 24k to support work with victims. Investments from both the Police and Probation Service have been maintained which is a positive result in the current public sector funding climate.

100% of the youth justice grant is allocated to staffing costs within YOT functions; to deliver statutory youth justice work in the courts, community and custody; the supervision and management oversight of case managers and other YOT staff, and staff who populate the youth justice management database and extract performance data. The cost of seconded staff are met by their employing agency.

We are committed to delivering services that represent value for money. A significant amount of time has been spent on understanding the 'value' of services that are delivered in terms of cost, outcomes and savings created through prevention and 'invest to save' approaches.

We will continue to deliver a range of services going forward in respect of youth justice provision and in partnership with others, to avoid duplication and to draw upon the skills and expertise of staff and partners in order to maximise use of resources.

Agency	Staffing Costs (£)	Payments in Kind (£)	Other Delegated Funds (£)	Total (£)
Local Authority	-	£113,656	£268,268	£381,924
Police Service	£50,468	-	£70,900	£121,368
National Probation Service	£26,653	-	£5,000	£31,653
Health Service	-	-	£0	£0
Police and Crime Commissioner	-	-	£51,389	£51,389
YJB (Youth Justice Grant)	-	-	£222,827	£222,827
Total	£77,121	£113,656	£618,384	£809,161

In compiling this plan the YOS management board understand that the youth justice system faces challenges, with the continued need to deliver savings.

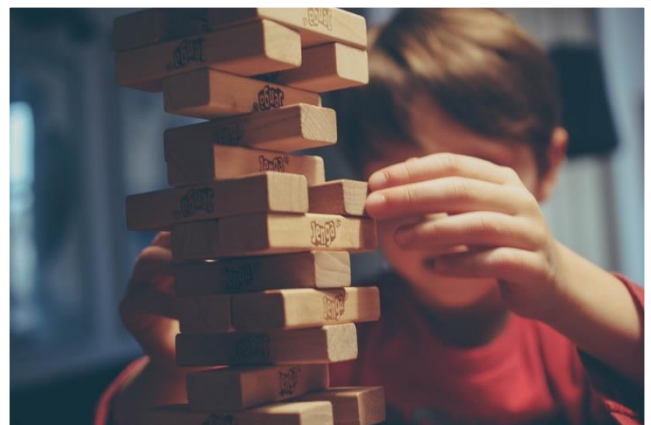
Reductions in public expenditure are having an impact on all public services; the Youth Offending Service has experienced significant reductions in budget and staffing in recent years.

To an extent, this has been offset by reductions in levels of youth crime locally. However, as more young people are successfully diverted away from the criminal justice service, those who remain are increasingly complex and challenging. We all recognise that this may make it potentially more difficult to reduce reoffending at the same rate as in previous years.

Analysis evidences that a small number of young people are responsible for a disproportionate amount of youth crime and we continue, with our partners, to engage with this group of young people and deliver effective services.

Other key risks for future delivery include:

- The element of funding controlled by the PCVC remains a year on year discretionary allocation
- The Local Authority continues to require savings and may include reductions in funding allocated to the YOS
- Statutory partners have significant budget cuts to absorb and this may in turn reduce their capability to maintain YOS funding contributions and/or remove seconded staff
- The reduction in First Time Entrants will level off and may actually reverse
- Time limited funding arrangements from health for the child psychologist will cease leaving a gap in provision leaving a potential deficit to find in 19/20



Workforce Development

As a service we utilise the performance and quality assurance framework described on the previous page to inform our staff development initiatives, in the past year this has focused on;

- How to identify and assess internal strengths
- Reviewing and altering our planning processes
- Developing the way in which targets for young people are written
- Specific use of tools to aid our assessments of young people who engage in sexually harmful behaviour
- Approaches to engage young people in substance misuse intervention
- Four specifically tailored modules delivered by our child psychologist with a view to upskill staff in dealing with emotional and mental health
- Keeping staff informed of practice developments within wider children's services and their adoption of a 'signs of safety' approach



PARTNER AGENCIES



STRATEGIC LINKS



BOARDS AND GROUPS

Further Information can be obtained from:
Service Manager / Central House Annexe
Gladstone Street
Darlington
DL3 6JX
Telephone: 01325 406999

Or view the YOS website:
<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/your-council/policing/youth-offending-service/>