

North Yorkshire Council

Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee

9 September 2024

Annual Performance Update on the Youth Justice Service

Report of the Corporate Director for Children & Young People Service

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides members with an overview of the performance throughout 2023-24 and the planned way forward for 2024-25.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Our Youth Justice Service is located within the broader Early Help offer, supporting a single, coordinated pathway for children presenting risky or challenging behaviour.
- 2.2 The key principles of the national youth justice practice model have been blended with the advanced, child-centred & strength-based approach used by Children's Services, achieving consistency and transferability of our assessments, plans & interventions.
- 2.3 North Yorkshire services work closely together across a breadth of other key partnerships to develop and deliver this coordinated approach. This has been further advanced by a Unitary Council structure that began in April 2023.
- 2.4 Our single, overarching vision for our services is to focus our work within communities, schools, and families to support early, creative and sustainable positive change. The more effectively we do this, the fewer people will develop complex, costly, or risky needs later. This is especially important for our children, who are prioritised in every strategy.
- 2.5 Our partnership within our Youth Justice Service reflects these values and is illustrated in our key object to reduce the number of children who get into trouble, and wherever possible to divert them to positive support. For the small cohort of children who present persistent or serious offending - and invariably have substantial, complex unmet needs - we want our Youth Justice Service to work alongside our children, their families, schools, and communities to find positive change.
- 2.6 We have a highly skilled, hardworking, operational workforce who are now fully embedded within the wider children and families service and as such trained in all elements of the Strengths in Relationship Practice model. We are proud of the successful outcome in our most recent HMIP Inspection (Inspection of Youth offending services in North Yorkshire 2020) with an overall grading of Good, and, more recently our Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services with a grade of Outstanding in all 5 areas (Inspection of North Yorkshire Children's Services 2023).
- 2.7 We regularly receive feedback from the service's QA processes, and independent analytical reports provided by the CYPS Strategy & Performance Team. We confidently know that our frontline teams are providing a high standard of assessment, planning and support for the children. Recent thematic audits and learning conversations have continued to inform

us that we are continually striving for excellence for the children and families we serve and provide evidence that our Practice model is fully embedded across our workforce.

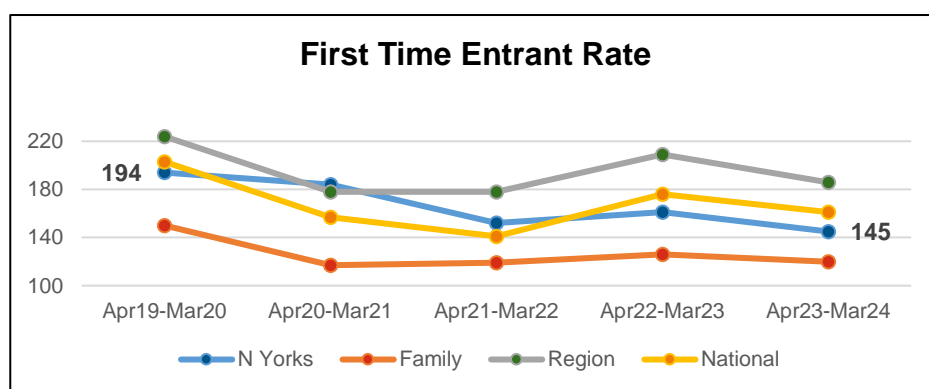
3.0 Performance

3.1 It is important to first highlight the significant and ongoing improvements that have been achieved against two of the three National Youth Justice indicators (the reoffending indicator remains a challenge).

- The First Time Entrant rate has continued to decrease with a 25% reduction seen between 2019/20 and 2023/24.
- In the 3 years to 2023/24, 7 custodial sentences were given. This compares with a total of 45 custodial sentences in the previous 3 years.

3.2 First Time Entrants (FTEs)

- We are pleased that our FTE rate continues to improve, the latest official data for the 12 months ending March 2024 showed a further decrease in the rate of FTE's (r=145) into the criminal justice system in North Yorkshire compared with the rate 12 months previously (r=161). The rate of 145 relates to 80 young people and places North Yorkshire in the 2nd Quartile nationally.
- 9 fewer young people entered the criminal justice system for the first time in the 12 months ending March 2024 when compared to the same period 12 months earlier.
- The current rate in North Yorkshire is lower than the national (r=161) and regional (r=186) rates but higher than the family group average (r=120). The rate in North Yorkshire has decreased at a faster rate than any of the 3 comparators since 2019/20.



- We have continued to work hard to improve the quality and impact of our diversionary Youth Outcomes Panel (YOP) and maintain closely detailed analysis of YOP throughput, outcomes, and re-offending. We know that the 2023 cohort had a 72% rate of diversion from recorded criminal outcomes – increasing from 48% in 2021.

3.3 Prevention & Diversionary Activities

The Early Help Service continues to lead on the delivery of the Trauma Informed Test & Learn Pilot Programme of work as part of the Regional Health & Youth Justice Vanguard. Funding for this project has now been extended until 2028.

- All three delivery elements (Change Direction, Trusted Relationships, and PIPA), remain fully staffed and operational. We provide monthly highlight Reports to the regional leadership team providing a running commentary on progress and future planned activity. Our Quarterly data and KPI submissions to NHSE, along with our written Case Studies, adds further richness to the story of this work in North Yorkshire.

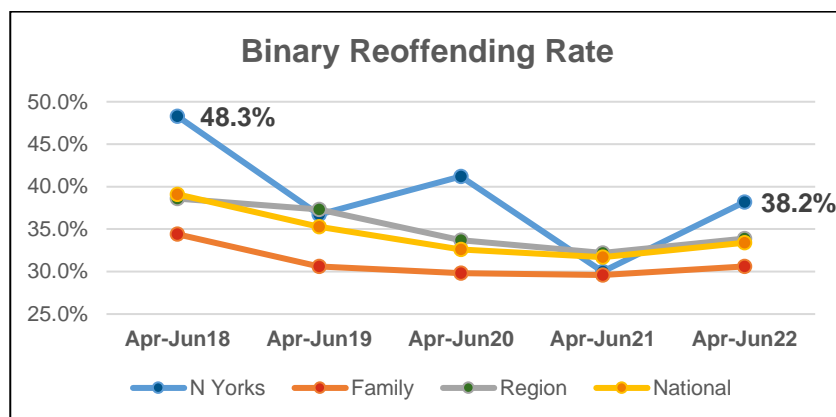
- The primary focus is to build on existing work delivering action that brings about a reduction in the number of First Time Entrants (FTE's) into the criminal justice system as well as positively influencing the trajectory of those young people at risk of re-entering the system. Recent data suggests that this approach is having a positive impact.
 - We are linking up with trauma informed developments in Health and Adult Services as part of the 'Trauma Informed and Responsive North Yorkshire' in recognition of the important transitions young people make into adult services.
- 3.4 Our Xchange communication 'add-on' (developed internally in conjunction with Mind of My Own), continues to be used by young people open to our YJS, ensuring their voice is incorporated in their self-assessment and to further gather their wishes and feelings.
- 3.5 Significantly, this Xchange product has now been taken up more widely by several other Youth Justices Services, with further interest also from National Health Service England (NHSE).
- 3.6 Funding for the Turnaround Programme was announced by the Ministry of Justice in October 2022 and launched in January 2023.
- We are now in a third year of the three-year programme which aims to improve outcomes and prevent offending for children who are on the cusp of the youth justice system and who do not meet the threshold for statutory support.
 - We have been able to build on shared learning from our Change Direction programme (part of the test & learn pilot) and will continue to work with North Yorkshire Youth to refine and improve the programme as we move forward.
 - The trajectory for North Yorkshire is to work with 177 children over the three years. To date the programme has worked with 112 children.
 - Up to the end of Q4 2024 - 82 young people have engaged in the programme of these 70 (85.5%) have maintained successful outcomes with only 12 (14.5%) becoming involved in criminal justice post referral to Turnaround. Although it is early days, this demonstrates a higher number of positive outcomes when compared to the National data.
- 3.7 This work highlights a major change of focus and practice for the operational Youth Justice Service, pivoting from historical high-volume/light-touch casework to a more sustained and detailed engagement with far fewer but much more complex children.
- 3.8 Work with girls
We continue to be concerned by the unusually high representation of girls in both our FTE (24%) and offending cohorts (22%), which significantly exceeding national trends.
- A key differentiation is that girls tend to enter the youth justice system a year earlier in developmental terms, and also to 'peak' and desist sooner. This is consistent with national evidence, and we do not perceive any discriminatory or disproportionality concerns.
 - North Yorkshire continues to support the development of a national focus group (Girls Group Forum) exploring work with girls coming to the attention of Youth Justice Service. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) having joined the focus group is now

developing a Resource Hub to provide practitioners with access to the toolkits and programmes that are shared in the forum.

- As part of the Serious Violence Duty, funding was secured from the Police and Crime Commissioner to enable 'Square Up to Violence Against Women and Girls' to deliver training to staff in North Yorkshire and York. The programme encourages opportunities to consider the impact of violence against women and girls and the reasoning behind their behaviours. As part of the training, participants from across Early Help/YJS received sessions, plans and resources to enable them to deliver sessions and interventions to young people.
- We are working alongside with St Giles Trust who offer unbiased and confidential support to help address any underlying issues which are holding the females back from progressing their lives and explore a trauma informed approach to guiding them forward. Typically, these involve crime, poverty, substance misuse, domestic abuse, and physical and/or mental health issues.

3.9 Reoffending

The Binary reoffending rate in North Yorkshire increased to 38.2% in the April-June 2022 cohort. As indicated in the chart below, the North Yorkshire rate is higher than the regional rate (33.9%), the national rate (33.4%) and the family group average (30.6%).



3.10 The April-June 2021 cohorts showing lower reoffending rates on the chart are believed to have been impacted by covid related lockdowns and the recovery of the court system. In particular, it is believed that continued delays in the processing of cases meant that increased numbers of reoffence convictions may have fallen outside of six-month waiting period and therefore not be counted in the statistics.

3.11 There were 34 young people in the latest cohort in North Yorkshire, of whom 13 committed a proven reoffence within the 12-month tracking period. The Frequency reoffending rate (average number of reoffences per reoffender) increased to 6.23 in North Yorkshire as the 13 reoffenders committed a total of 81 proven reoffences.

3.12 Unofficial data from the YJS case management system forecasts lower binary and frequency reoffending rates for the next cohort, July-September 2022.

3.13 We have procured a new case management system which goes live in late July. It is anticipated that this new system will enable a far richer analysis of offending data than is available through the system it is replacing.

3.14 Serious Youth Violence

As highlighted in the table below, recent data produced by the YJB shows that the rate of Serious Youth Violence (SYV) in North Yorkshire has been below that seen in each of the 3 comparators in each of the 3 years shown.

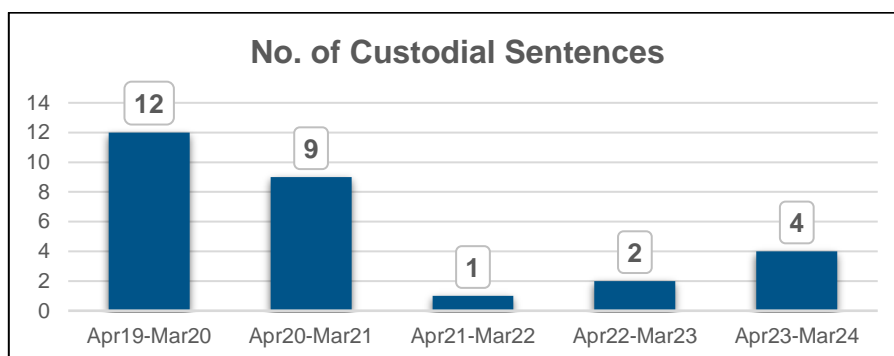
	Year Ending December (Rate per 10k 10-17 Population)					
	2021		2022		2023	
	No. of SYV Offences	Rate of SYV Offences	No. of SYV Offences	Rate of SYV Offences	No. of SYV Offences	Rate of SYV Offences
North Yorkshire	11	2.0	4	0.7	12	2.2
Family Average	13	2.4	13	2.3	16	2.9
Region	250	4.8	263	5.0	255	4.9
National	2942	3.9	2906	5.2	3069	5.5

- The YJB’s definition of SYV is any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity score of 5 or more. Gravity scores range from 1 (least serious) to 8 (most serious) with all robbery offences carrying a gravity score of 6.
- The period covered relates to the date the young person received a criminal justice Outcome rather than the date of the actual offence.
- In the year ending December 2023 serious violence offences comprised 3% of all offences in North Yorkshire.

3.15 Custodial Sentences

Reduction of custodial sentencing has been a key North Yorkshire priority for several years, and we are delighted by the sustained progress our partnership has achieved. Although the number of custodial sentences increased to 4 (this relates to 3 children) in 2023/24, this remains significantly lower than the numbers seen prior to 2021/22.

3.16 Whilst the rate per 1,000 of the 10-17 population of custodial sentences has also decreased nationally in recent years, the current national rate (r=0.11) and regional rate (r=0.16) are both higher than the 0.07 in North Yorkshire.



3.17 Child First

The principle of ‘Child First’ guides the work of our YJB and underpins our work, values, and principles in North Yorkshire. For those who do offend, our core focus continues to be rehabilitation, tackling underlying causes of youth offending, and delivering a system that

gives children the support they need to break the cycle of offending and builds productivity and fulfilling lives supported by positive relationships.

- 3.18 Our North Yorkshire practice model is fully aligned with the 'Child First' values. Our practice model underpins these values and principles and illustrates how we collectively respond to the needs of children, young people, and their families. Our intention is to keep children within their families, schools, and communities to ensure support is provided at the right level by the right person using the right intervention.
- 3.19 We take all possible steps to divert children from formal criminalisation, and where that is unavoidable, we foster trusting and influential relationships to support young people through positive, strengths-based change. We recognise that children in the YJS often have multiple and complex needs, therefore by providing support early, we seek to divert children from the justice system entirely and address their needs by promoting social identity, and supporting young people to find new, constructive purpose in their families and communities.
- 3.20 Voice of the Child
North Yorkshire has a comprehensive engagement and participation approach. Within Children's Services this is led by our Youth Voice and Creative Engagement Service, comprising of 4 specialist participation workers who support and facilitate the voice of young service users. This includes a number of consultative 'voice groups', a team of Young Inspectors, and a Children in Care Council.
- 3.21 Our partnership approach to Youth Justice does not distinguish or stigmatise children who commit offences. Some of the children supported by youth justice are involved in Youth Voice projects, but we do not have (or want) a separate strand which primarily labels them as criminals.
- 3.22 Recently, the Youth Voice has been involved in the refreshing of the MAP document and have been working with young people who have experience of working with Youth Justice, to see what they think about the document and what they would like to see in look like in the future. This has been an important piece of work, ensuring the people who benefit most from this assessment tool have been able to contribute to discussions around what the document looks like and how their voices are heard throughout the document. One-to-one and focus groups were held, and the information gathered from these sessions will be fed back to the working group in July 2024.
- 3.23 Building on the success of previous years, the Youth Voice team has continued to offer one-to-one sessions with young people using rap as a way of exploring their emotions. One young person attending these sessions got so much from them he asked if he could bring along a friend, who would also benefit from joining.
- 3.24 Skills 4 Work (S4W)
Skills 4 Work, funded through Anglo American, continues to offer our post-16 young people an opportunity to deliver projects within the local community of Scarborough & Whitby, on the East coast. A maximum of 4 young people can attend the programme at the same time to ensure that the project supervisor can provide sufficient health and safety oversight to the tasks being undertaken, whilst providing a mentoring role to the young people.
- We offer all young people and their workers the opportunity to attend a panel discussion when they apply to attend the programme -this allows the panel to meet the young person, and provides opportunity for the young person to meet the supervisor and ask questions. This ensures that the trajectory of young people is identified prior to commencement of the programme, enabling panel members to ascertain the direction

of travel and any support required from the educational advisor. It also provides clear management oversight of the decision-making process.

- The project undertakes community-based activities, that community members are unable to do for themselves or do not have the resources to complete the tasks thereby developing community-cohesion. The work over this last year has been around the Whitby area and close to the Woodsmith Mine. The work is very varied such as repairing / replacing a broken fence for a nursery in the small village of Egton, painting the floor in the sports pavilion in Sleights, assembling playhouses for an infant school in Ruswaarp as well as grass cutting and hedge trimming in several villages.
- Tasks have also included planting trees within the participating young people's own community that will be there for many years, giving the trainees pride in the place they live, a sense of belonging and perhaps an opportunity reflect on their time on Skills4Work in years to come with their own family.
- As part of the 'growing our own' approach, the Skills4Work team have been undertaking tasks to support our Supported Accommodation team. This work has involved furnishing accommodation for our Asylum-Seeking young people, constructing flatpack furniture and undertaking general maintenance duties.
- Funding from Anglo American was previously secured until December 2024. The funding currently covers the cost of a project supervisor for three days a week, alongside an incentive allowance and materials and equipment required for the community work. Anglo have confirmed that the current funding will continue until December 2024 and discussions are taking place regarding a further extension of their funding for the Skills4Work project until December 2025.

3.25 North Yorkshire alternative Prevention and Diversion Assessment – My Assessment Plan (MAPs):

The YJB have agreed continued use of our alternative assessment – My Assessment Plan by North Yorkshire YJS. A Memorandum of Understanding has recently been agreed which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

- Work is currently ongoing to further enhance our assessment tool following the recommendations identified from the evaluation undertaken in 2023. The assessment will then be built within our new Case Management System enabling reportable data functions.
- The development work has included consultation with young people open to our service and their families, it is our intention to share the finalised form with our key partners, including HMIP inspectors, to ensure there is stakeholder confidence in this work going forward. This is considered vital in our preparation for the next inspection.
- Once finalised the assessment will then be built within our new Case Management System. Forms development is part of the training package purchased from CACI which will enable the MAPs form to be built as a reportable form within the system.

3.26 Careworks – Case Management System

As identified in the previous report we have had some significant developments in respect of strategic decisions to explore, source and implement a new case management system. Youth Justice Service are expected to migrate when the Careworks contract expires on the 31st of March 2024.

- 3.27 We have now successfully procured a YJB approved Case Management system - Provider CACI Product Name - ChildView. Due to the timescales imposed by the withdrawal of Careworks there has been a significant focus on the implementation of a new system, however we have purchased a one-year licence extension of the current product Careworks allowing time for successful data migration, the building and implementation of forms within the new system and to allow us to continue to submit the required data to the YJB during the implementation period.
- 3.28 Although there a slight delay in migration the new system has recently gone live. As part of the implementation training has been provided at appropriate levels to all practitioners and support services within YJS who will require access to this new system.
- 3.29 Further training will be rolled out over this next quarter to enable greater access to the system by Practitioners across the C&FS. The full training programme should be completed by November 2024.
- 3.20 This has provided the services with the opportunity to develop a more child-centred, interoperative system, which is fully aligned with our practice model and our child first approach.

4.0 Quality Assurance

- 4.1 North Yorkshire Childrens and Families Service have a Quality of Practice Framework which is embedded across all children's services. The framework is designed to embed a continual improvement across the service to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people.
- 4.2 The framework centres on three elements:
- Voice – The voice of the child and family is evident and has informed plans and outcomes.
 - Quality – Quality of practice is high and enable achieving the best outcomes for children.
 - Practice Outcomes – Data will demonstrate the outcomes delivered by the team and identify areas of strength and risk.
- 4.3 As part of our monthly learning space process, we capture feedback from partner agencies. The key messages from the feedback are reported in the quarterly Quality Assurance Summary Report, with progress on identified learning and improvement actions tracked.

5.0 Ongoing Development Opportunities

- 5.1 Speech and Language Therapeutic Service
In September 23, our commissioned provider HDFT (Harrogate District Foundation Trust) gave North Yorkshire notice to end contract of Speech and Language Therapy services to No Wrong Door (NWD) and Youth Justice, with services ending in March 2024. We continue to recognise the Speech Language and Communication needs is a significant area of need for most young people open to Youth Justice in North Yorkshire and that the service has been invaluable to establish improved understanding, assessment, and intervention with young people.
- 5.2 We have used this opportunity to consider an alternative method of delivery. Following discussion with the Inclusion Team within Children and Young People Service within North Yorkshire, we have agreed to use the funding to increase the capacity within the Inclusion Service to develop an in-house offer to meet this need. A small working group has been

established to take this forward with a view of implementing a programme of support from September 2024.

5.3 Whilst developing this provision, refresher training has been delivered using funding from the OPFCC across YJS and NWD. YJS practitioners from City of York Council were also invited to attend. Two workshops have now been successfully delivered by North Yorkshire Inclusion Service ensuring practitioners have a good awareness of speech language and communication needs and the earliest identification of the needs to ensure appropriate referrals to NHS services.

5.4 Harmful Sexual Behaviour

In North Yorkshire we identified that we need to have a better understanding of Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) displayed by children and young people. To support a support a system wide review we secured funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner to conduct a multi-agency HSB Farmwork Audit by NSPCC.

5.5 The aim of the Audit was to understand our awareness of HSB and the current pathways of support for children and young people displaying these behaviours. The Audit was to gain a 'whole system' view of HSB – how the current system works and is experienced by professionals, children, and families and to help us have a clear and honest picture of our current position in North Yorkshire. The findings have been used to highlight actions that are required from all partners to improve the response and provision of services for children and young people.

5.6 Serious Violence Duty

The Duty, which commenced 31st January 2023, requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce Serious Violence that occurs in the area and implement a strategy to address it. Funding is allocated through the OPFCC to support the Duty. North Yorkshire YJS are working collaboratively with the OPFCC and partners to implement and respond to the Duty, aligned to the wider work of the YJS accordingly.

6.0 **Looking Forward 2024 -2025**

- We will continue to drive forward the Implementation and embedding of the New Case Management system.
- Implementation of the revised MAPS into the new case management system as a reportable form.
- Continue to drive work to reducing the criminalisation of children in care and children with Special Educational Needs
- Identify strategies for reducing the number of children re-offending.
- Continued focus on working with girls to reduce the number of girls committing criminal offences.
- Enhance the offer for children transitioning between children and adults' services.
- Continue to actively engage with the Serious Violence duty.

7.0 **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and advise officers regarding any areas of the work that they may wish to see more detailed information at future meetings or briefings.

Stuart Carlton
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Northallerton

30 August 2024

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

APPENDICES: None

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.