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| <u>Committee and Date</u> |
| Council                   |
| 13 January 2022           |

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| <u>Item</u>   |
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## **WEST MERCIA YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2021/22**

### **Responsible Officer**

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### **1.0 Synopsis**

- 1.1 The Youth Justice Plan sets out how youth justice services across West Mercia are structured and resourced and outlines key actions to address risks to service delivery and improvement.
- 1.2 The Youth Justice Plan is endorsed by the Council annually.

### **2.0 Executive Summary**

- 2.1 Under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 each Local Authority has a duty to produce a Youth Justice Plan outlining how youth justice services in their area are provided and funded.
- 2.2 The West Mercia Youth Justice Plan is prepared on behalf of Herefordshire Council, Shropshire Council, Telford and Wrekin Council and Worcestershire County Council, and sets out how the West Mercia Youth Justice Service is structured and resourced
- 2.3 The plan contains a short review of 2020/21, commentary on the service's performance and sets out the priorities and an improvement plan for 2021/22.
- 2.4 The plan has been approved by the West Mercia Youth Justice Service Management Board and was submitted to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) in June 2021.

### **3.0 Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the Youth Justice Plan as attached at Appendix A be recommended for approval by Council

## **REPORT**

### **4.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal**

4.1 The principal aim of the Youth Justice System is the prevention of offending and re-offending by children and young people. The Youth Justice Plan sets out an action plan to address the significant risks identified to future service delivery and improvement.

### **5.0 Financial Implications**

5.1 These are covered by the existing budgetary contribution

### **6.0 Climate Change Appraisal**

6.1 Although this report does not have any direct impact on the Council's climate change agenda, it is recognised that the operation of the youth justice service does have an environmental impact and consideration is made to reducing waste and resources where possible. The Shropshire Team is moving to new premises early in 2022, which will allow contact with children on site, reducing the number of car journeys undertaken by staff.

### **7.0 Background**

7.1 Under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 each Local Authority has a duty to produce a Youth Justice Plan setting out how youth justice services in their area are provided and funded and how the Youth Justice Service for the area is resourced and composed, the plan is submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB).

7.2 The Youth justice Plan is prepared on an annual basis on behalf of Herefordshire Council, Shropshire Council, Telford and Wrekin Council and Worcestershire County Council. The basic plan preparation is undertaken by West Mercia Youth Justice Service according to the deadlines and guidance from the YJB.

7.3 The annual Youth Justice Plan sets out how the service is structured and resourced and outlines the 2021/22 improvement action plan for the service addressing the priorities agreed by the management board. A short review of 2020/21 and commentary on the service's performance against the national youth justice indicators is also

provided along with some specific data on Shropshire at appendix A.  
The key priorities are:

#### OUR PEOPLE

- 1.1 Rebuilding Teams and Increasing Staff Morale following Covid-19 working arrangements
- 1.2 Promoting staff engagement in service development and improvement

#### OUR PARTNERSHIPS

- 2.1 Strengthening opportunities for emotional and mental health support for our service users
- 2.2 Improving joint and integrated work with partner agencies

#### OUR PRACTICE AND PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 Strengthening our Pathways, Intervention and Risk Planning
- 3.2 Strengthening and increasing restorative approaches
- 3.3 Promoting and understanding the child first approach in our practice
- 3.4 Improving our resettlement offer

#### OUR GOVERNANCE

- 4.1 How we hear and respond to the voice of the child, our stakeholders and staff
- 4.2 Understanding and Communicating Our Vision, principles and priorities
- 4.3 Responding to national and local standards, guidance and learning

#### COVID-19 SERVICE RECOVERY AND TRANSFORMATION

- 7.4 Actions addressing each of the priorities are also included in the delivery plan in section 4.10 of the plan.
- 7.5 The West Mercia Youth Justice Plan was agreed at the West Mercia Youth Justice Service Management Board on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and was submitted to the YJB on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

### **8.0 Additional Information**

- 8.1 The youth justice service is subject to three national indicators. Performance against the indicators is outlined in the plan. The Shropshire specific information is set out on pages 23 to 25 of the plan.

- 8.2 The first indicator is the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system (FTE) indicator which is expressed as the number of first time entrants to the youth justice per 100,000 youth population. The FTE rate was 171 for Shropshire in 2019. The Shropshire rate for the year is lower than for West Mercia, 187, and for England, 211.
- 8.3 The second indicator is about the use of custody, which is measured as the number of custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population. The use of custody performance for Shropshire in 2020 was 0.07, which is the same as for West Mercia, and lower than for England at 0.17.
- 8.4 The third indicator is re-offending. There are two measures which both measure re-offending in the same cohort of offenders over a 12 month period following the youth justice sanction that placed that young person in the cohort. The first, the frequency rate, is the average number of re-offences per offender who re-offends. The second measure is the proportion (%) of the cohort who re-offended. Due to the way the Ministry of Justice measure this indicator there is a delay in the results being published. The most recent data available for the preparation of the plan was for the cohort identified in 2018, whose re-offending was tracked for 12 month period until December 2019.
- 8.5 The frequency measure for Shropshire for this period was 3.00 offences per re-offender which is less than the England rate of 3.93, and similar to the West Mercia rate of 2.91. The proportion of the cohort re-offending was 21.1%, which is lower than West Mercia, 23.7% and significantly better than the England performance of 38.9%.

## 9.0 **Conclusions**

- 9.1 A youth justice plan is prepared annually, approved by West Mercia Youth Justice Service management board and submitted to the YJB. The plan requires approval from Shropshire Council.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 40

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Cllr Kirstie Hurst-Knight

**Local Member**

All Members

**Appendices**

Appendix A – West Mercia Youth Justice Plan 2021/22