



WEST MERCIA YOUTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP



YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN



2021/22



Preface

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (the Act) youth offending partnerships have a statutory duty to produce an annual youth justice plan which is submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. The purpose of the plan is to outline how statutory youth justice services, as defined in the Act, are structured, funded and delivered in the area. All statutory youth justice services within West Mercia are delivered directly or commissioned by West Mercia Youth Justice Service.

This plan outlines the vision and priorities for West Mercia Youth Justice Service and outlines key actions to be undertaken during 2021/22.

The content and format of the plan has been informed by and prepared in accordance with “Youth Justice Plans: YJB Practice Guidance March 2021” issued on behalf of the Secretary of State by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales on 30th March 2021.

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1.0 Introduction

Introduction from Karen Bradshaw, Chair of West Mercia Youth Justice Service Management Board



West Mercia Youth Justice Service (WMYJS) is partnership between the Local Authorities, National Probation Service, West Mercia Police, NHS organisations across West Mercia and the Office for the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner. The service is accountable to the WMYJS Management Board, comprised of senior officers from each partner agency. The service is hosted, on behalf of the Local Authorities and the partnership by the Office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

The previous year has been difficult due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions placed on the service as a result and the service was one of seven selected by HMI Probation for a thematic inspection on how YOTs had responded to Covid-19. The thematic inspection was positive about the ways in which services had adapted their delivery models and ensured meaningful engagement with children. From our local monitoring the board have been pleased to note that there has been no deterioration of performance in terms of frequency of contact with children and timeliness of key processes. Service development has also continued during this period, with the full implementation of the revised joint decision arrangements for out of court disposals during 2020, the development of a service website and piloting an approach for parent support in partnership with a third sector agency.

Service performance against the three national outcome indicators has improved on previous years. The performance in relation to the rate of young people receiving a custodial sentence has improved between 2019 and 2020 from 0.13 to 0.07 custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population, and this rate is significantly below the national rate of 0.14. The proportion of young people re-offending (cohort identified in 2018) is 23.7% which is significantly lower than the national rate at 38.4%, and an improvement on the previous year when it was at 25.3%.

The first time entrant (FTE) rate for the period 2019 is at 187 FTE per 100,000 youth population and represents a major improvement on the previous year when it was at 297, and for the first time West Mercia rate is lower than the national rate which is 211 for the same period.

For 21/22 the partnership has continued to identify priorities based on the four themes of;

Our People
Our Partnerships
Our Performance, Quality and Practice; and
Our Governance

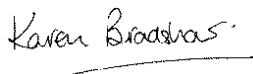
With an additional priority of Covid-19 recovery and transformation.

The youth justice partnership recognise that we do not work in isolation in reducing offending by children and improving the outcomes for children who have entered or at risk of entering the youth justice system. The board are committed to promoting better joint work between the service and other agencies at a local level, and this will particularly be the case in tackling growing issue of criminal exploitation and county lines type activity.

1.1 Approval of the Plan

This plan was approved at the West Mercia Youth Justice Service Management Board meeting held on 12th May 2021.

Signed:



Date: 12th May 2021

2.0 Youth Justice Plan 21/22 Executive Summary

2.1 Context

The previous year has been challenging due to delivering the services throughout the Covid-19 lock down periods and associated restrictions. This has resulted in three continuing risks to service delivery; increased caseloads, additional demands on operational managers and continuing Covid-19 secure working arrangements effect on staff and potential negative effect on effective case management. There are mitigations in place as part of the service's recovery plan.

The YJB vision is of a child first youth justice system, and during 21/22 the service will be working to further understand and embed a child first approach in practice. A particular model of support for parents provided by a third sector organisation to parents will be piloted.

The service will continue to contribute to partnership work in order to address exploitation and peer on peer abuse. Although serious youth violence is currently not a significant issue, the service will monitor data in relation to serious violence and will respond accordingly if this becomes a more prevalent or a serious issue in West Mercia.

Although there is not a significant over representation of BAME children in the overall offending population in West Mercia, we recognise that there needs to be a more granular level of analysis, and there are actions to address this in the National Standards improvement plan.

2.2 Priorities and Key Actions 21/22

The youth justice partnership has identified the following priorities and key actions for 2021/22.

1 OUR PEOPLE

1.1 Rebuilding Teams and Increasing Staff Morale following Covid-19 working arrangements

- *Team development training*
- *Staff conference*
- *Staff recognition*

1.2 Promoting staff engagement in service development and improvement

- *Staff involvement in Covid-19 recovery*
- *Process for staff contribution to leadership team decision making*
- *Internal communication strategy*

2 OUR PARTNERSHIPS

2.1 Strengthening opportunities for emotional and mental health support for our service users

- *Review of health contribution to the service*
- *Implementation of the emotional and mental health improvement plan*
- *Strengthening service links with the Liaison and Diversion Schemes*

2.2 Improving joint and integrated work with partner agencies

- *Providing social care access to youth justice service information systems*
- *Strengthening transition to adult services arrangements with the Probation Service*
- *Reviewing and agreeing the remand strategy with the local authorities*

3 OUR PRACTICE AND PERFORMANCE

3.1 Strengthening our Pathways, Intervention and Risk Planning

- *Staff training*
- *Developing programmes*

3.2 Strengthening and increasing restorative approaches

- *Review how we deliver victim liaison and restorative processes*
- *Revise policy and guidance*

3.3 Promoting and understanding the child first approach in our practice

- *Training and awareness*
- *Developing a service child first policy*

3.4 Improving our resettlement offer

- *Resettlement deep dive report*
- *Resettlement policy*

4 OUR GOVERNANCE

4.1 How we hear and respond to the voice of the child, our stakeholders and staff

- *Review how the management board hear the voice of the service users*
- *Relaunch the staff survey*

4.2 Understanding and Communicating Our Vision, principles and priorities

- *Promoting the vision, principles and priorities in the service*
- *Linking appraisals to the priorities and principles*

4.3 Responding to national and local standards, guidance and learning

- *Implement the National Standards improvement plan*
- *Develop process to measure impact of learning from reviews and audits*

5 COVID-19 SERVICE RECOVERY AND TRANSFORMATION

- *Continued implementation of the recovery and transformation plan*

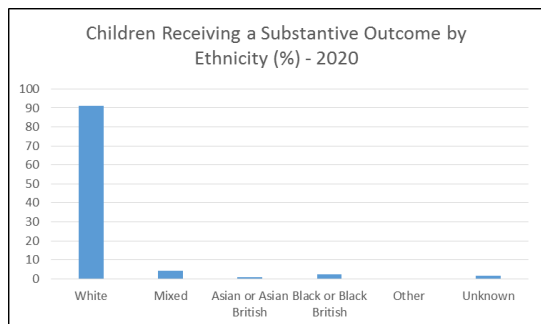
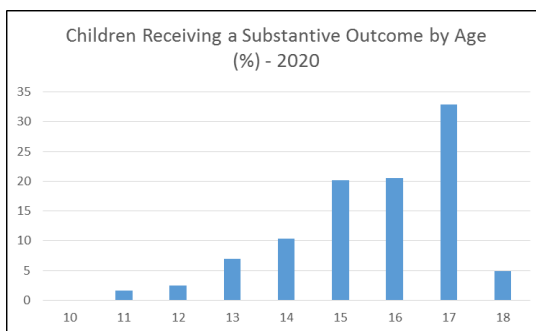
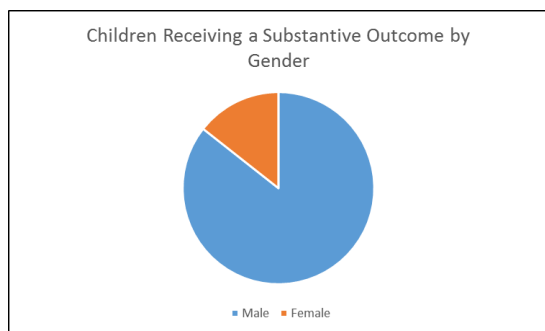
3.0 Review of 2020/21

3.1 Children Receiving Youth Justice Outcomes 2020

3.1.1 Substantive Youth Justice System Disposals 2020

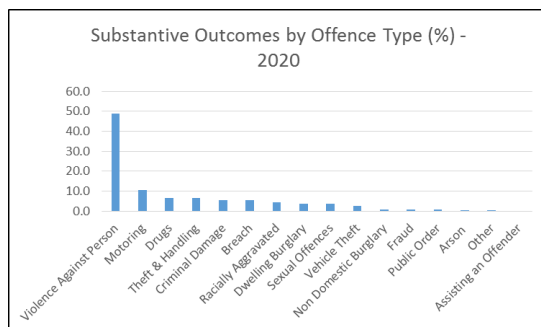
A total of 243 West Mercia children, were made subject to 277 substantive youth justice system disposals (cautions or convictions) during 2020. Of the children receiving substantive youth justice outcomes 14% were female and 86% male.

The majority, 79%, of children receiving substantive outcomes were aged 15 years or older. No 10 year olds were made subject to substantive outcome, and 11 and 12 year olds accounted for 4% of outcomes.

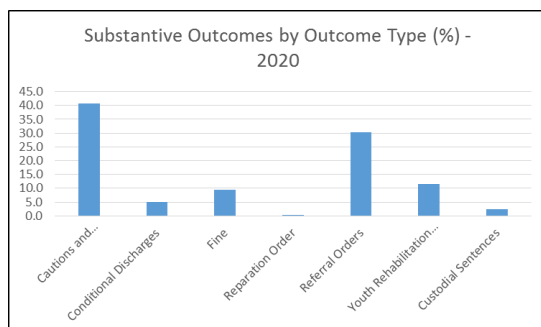


The proportion of children who received a substantive outcome who were white was 91%, with children from BAME groups accounting for 7% of outcomes. According to the mid 2011 population data (the latest available) BAME children accounted for 6% of the youth population in West Mercia.

Looked after children accounted for 19% of children receiving substantive outcomes.



Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 49% of the outcomes, motoring offences for 10%, drug related offences 7%, theft and handling 7%. These four offence group types accounting for 73% of all outcomes.

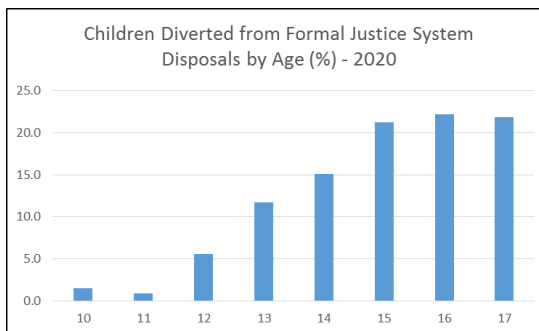
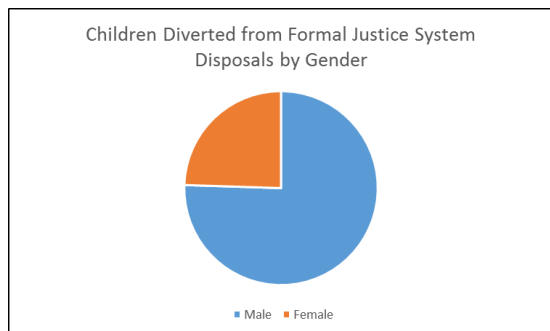


Youth cautions of all types (caution, caution supported by a voluntary intervention and conditional cautions) accounted for 41% of outcomes, Referral Orders 30% of outcomes and Youth Rehabilitation Orders 12% of outcomes. Custodial sentences formed 2.5% of outcomes.

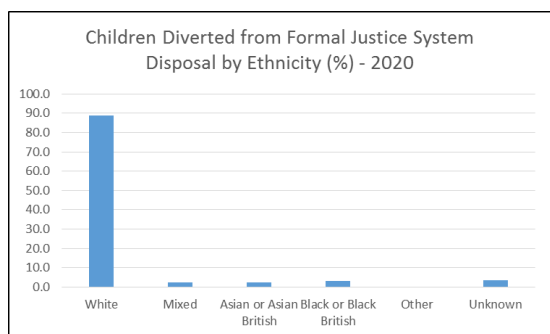
3.1.2 Children Diverted from Formal Youth Justice System Disposals

Children who have admitted an offence and who might be suitable for an out of court disposal are referred to a joint agency decision panel, included in the range of options available to the joint agency panels are informal disposals, which allow for the matter to be dealt with without the child receiving a criminal record for that offence.

In 2020, 325 children were diverted from formal justice system disposals through the issuing of 338 informal disposals. Of the children receiving informal disposals 76% were male and 24% were female.

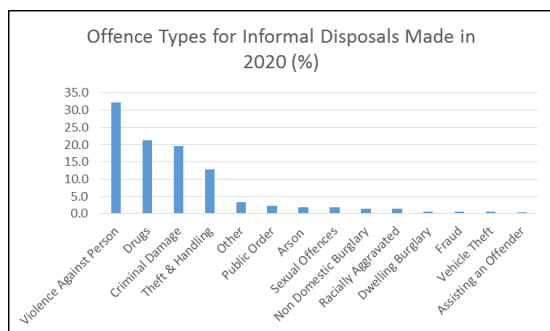


The majority, 65%, of children receiving informal disposals were aged 15 years or older. Children aged 12 and under accounted for 8% of the informal disposals including 10 year olds who accounted for 1%.



The proportion of children who received an informal disposal who were white was 89%, with children from BAME groups accounting for 7% of informal disposals. According to the mid 2011 population data (the latest available) BAME children accounted for 6% of the youth population in West Mercia.

Looked after children accounted for 4% of children diverted from formal justice system disposals.

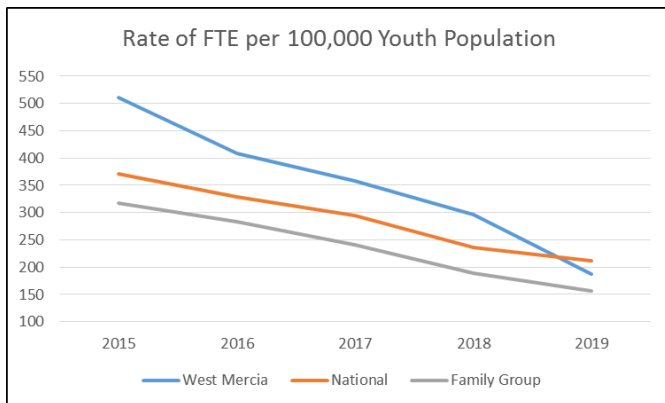


Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 32% of informal disposals, drug related offences for 21%, criminal damage 20% and theft and handling 13%. These four offence group types accounting for 86% of all informal disposals.

3.2 Performance

The Youth Justice Service is subject to three national outcome indicators:

(i) First Time Entrants



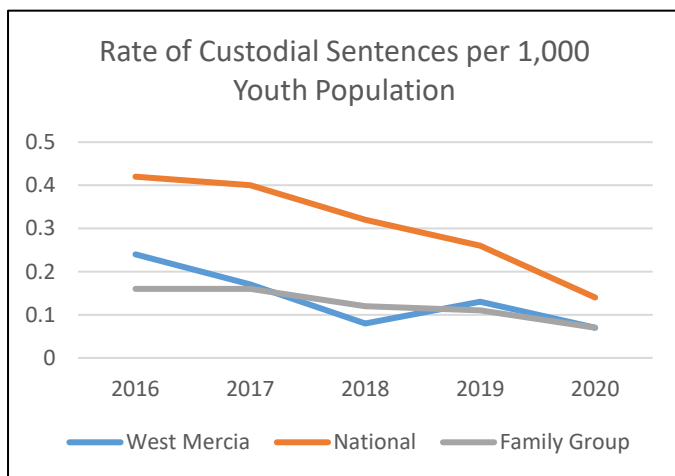
This measure is expressed as the number of first time entrants (young people receiving their first formal youth justice sanction, either a caution or conviction) per 100,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the number the better the performance.

The most recent published data is for the year 2019, where the West Mercia performance was 187, compared to a national performance of 211 and statistical neighbour performance of 157. The rate of 187 is lower than the national performance for the first time and represents a significant improvement on the performance in the

previous year when the rate was 297. The gap between both the West Mercia rate and the other two rates has been reducing since 2017. The range of rates nationally is from 62 to 645, placing the West Mercia performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

A revised joint decision arrangement for out of court disposals was implemented in phases across the four local authority area in West Mercia between June 2019 and March 2020, this will have contributed to reduction during 2019, but is expected to have a more significant effect in the year 2020/21 following the full implementation.

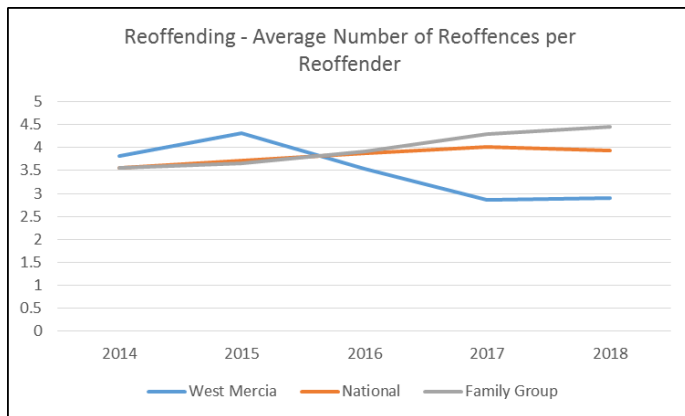
(i) Use of Custody



The use of custody indicator is expressed as the number of custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the rate the better the performance.

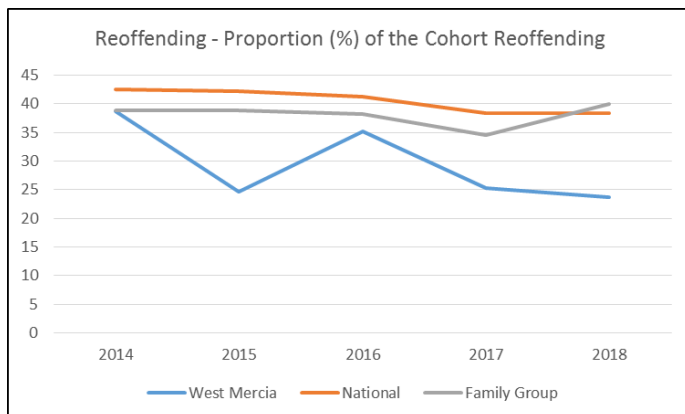
The most recently published data for this indicator is for 2020, where the West Mercia rate was 0.07, which compares favourably against the national rate, 0.17 and is the same as the statistical neighbour rate of 0.07. The range of rates nationally is between 0.00 and 0.55 placing the West Mercia performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

(ii) Reoffending



There are two measures for the re-offending indicator, both for the same cohort of offenders (all young people receiving a formal justice system disposal (caution or conviction) within a specified period of time). The cohort is then tracked for any re-offending within 12 months, the first measure (frequency measure) is the average number of re-offences per re-offender, and the second measure (binary measure) is the proportion of the cohort re-offending. For both measures a lower figure denotes better performance.

The most recently published data for this indicator is for the cohort identified in 2018.



The frequency measure for West Mercia is 2.91, which compares favourably against the national rate of 3.93 and statistical neighbour rate of 4.46. The range of rates nationally is from 2.00 to 8.97, placing the West Mercia in the top quartile of the performance range.

The binary measure for West Mercia is 23.7%, which compares favourably against the national rate of 38.4% and the statistical neighbour rate of 39.9%. The range of rates nationally is from 14.6% to 59.3% placing West Mercia in the top quartile of the performance range.

3.3 Service User Feedback

During 2020 the service has used an internet based survey, Viewpoint, to capture service user feedback. Responses to some key questions from the 70 surveys completed during 2020 are outlined below:-

- 85% of children said that the YOT took their views seriously
- 70% rated the service provided to them as very good
- 72% felt that they had enough say in what went into their intervention plan
- 97% said they got the help they needed to stop offending.
- 92% said they got the help they needed to feel happier about what they thought of themselves or what others thought of them
- 67% reported being a lot less likely to offend and 12% said they were a bit less likely

3.4 Implementation of Revised Joint Decision Arrangements for Out of Court Disposals

The revised joint decision arrangements for out of court disposals were fully implemented across the service during 2020. Now all decision making for children who have admitted committing an offence, unless excluded due to seriousness of the offending, is through a joint agency panel led by the youth justice service and police, following an assessment by the youth justice service.

This revised process has brought into scope more children for joint decision making, and the panel has a range of informal disposals available to them allowing, where it is appropriate to do so, the panel to divert a child from formal justice system disposals. This will contribute to reducing the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system and contributes to the fourth tenet of the child first approach (see section 3.3).

3.5 National Standards Self-Assessment

The partnership submission on the readiness self-assessment in respect of the 2019 National Standards for Youth Justice was completed and submitted to the YJB in May 2020, along with the improvement plan.

We reached the following assessments for each standard:

NS 1: Out of Court Disposals	Strategic Standards: Requires Improvement
	Operational Standards: Requires Improvement
NS2: At Court	Strategic Standards: Requires Improvement
	Operational Standards: Requires Improvement
NS3: In the Community	Strategic Standards: Requires Improvement
	Operational Standards: Good
NS4: Secure Settings	Strategic Standards: Requires Improvement
	Operational Standards: Good
NS5: Transitions and Resettlement	Strategic Standards: Requires Improvement
	Operational Standards: Good

The assessment and evidence supporting the self-assessed results has subsequently been moderated by the YJB who found that the self-assessment offered an evidence based reflection of judgements against service standards.

Progress against the improvement plan is being monitored quarterly by the partnership management board and the continued implementation, review and revision of the National Standards action plan is included in the delivery plan for 21/22. Additional actions under other priority areas in the delivery plan will also contribute to meeting National Standards, in particular actions associated with improving resettlement practice and transitions from youth to adult services.

3.6 Covid-19

In March 2020 the service put in place a Covid-19 business continuity plan to ensure that the service could continue to offer a service to the children in the youth justice system, their families and victims. The plan centred on developing a range of methods to meaningfully engage with children remotely, although certain activities were suspended completely, in the main those which brought children together in groups or in contact with community groups. Partnership staff were not generally redeployed and remained within the youth justice service. The service put in place a Covid-19 operating plan for staff which has been regularly updated since.

West Mercia was one of seven YOTs select by HMI Probation for the thematic review of the work of youth offending services during the COVID-19 pandemic which took place in June and July 2020. The inspection was positive about the ways in which YOTs had adapted their service delivery models and methods of engaging children, with some children preferring or becoming better engaged through remote methods. The partnership took the learning from the inspection into account during the most recent lockdown, in particular ensuring the inclusion of youth justice service open cases in the vulnerable groups to be targeted for the offer of onsite schooling.

The partnership put in place a Covid-19 recovery plan which has led to the partial reopening of offices, increasing the number of face to contacts with children, assessments informed by home visits and reintroducing the activities that were initially suspended under the initial contingency plan. According to assessed needs and the child's ability to engage remotely, including having the equipment to do so, some remote engagement continues on a case by case basis, and as part of blended delivery model. The recovery plan has only been implemented to the point that Government restrictions have allowed.

The leadership team and management board have monitored key processes during the Covid-19 period, including frequency of contact with children and timeliness of panel meetings, high risk case planning meetings and assessments and performance against these measures has been good.

West Mercia Youth Justice Plan 21/22

The contingency plan has been kept under review and revised following changes in Government advice and restrictions, but the partnership is keen to look at service transformation based on the learning from the Covid-19 period, including those in terms of remote working for staff, the blended approach to service delivery to children and fostering and maintaining the spirit of creativity and innovation that was apparent in the early months of the lockdown. Covid-19 recovery and service transformation is one of our key priorities for 21/22, and will involve a full review and revision of the recovery and transformation plan.

4.0 Youth Justice Plan 2021/22

4.1 Vision and Underlying Principles

The West Mercia Youth Justice Partnership have agreed a vision statement and underpinning principles for the service following a joint workshop with the service's management team and a staff consultation.

Vision:

Together, preventing offending and improving lives

Underlying Principles:

- *Ensure that we secure best practice, innovation and outstanding quality in all we do*
- *Reducing demand by preventing offending and effectively managing the risks posed by those who have offended*
- *Offer the best value for money by combining resources*
- *Work with victims and communities to repair harm from offending*
- *Recognising the capacity of young people to grow and develop with the right support*
- *Listen to children's and victim's opinions and use them to shape what we do*
- *Building resilience within families and local communities*
- *Recognise the important role families play in preventing children from getting involved in crime*
- *Grow and sustain a positive and stable workforce*

One of our key priorities for 2021/22 is understanding and communicating our vision, principles and priorities.

4.2 Risks and Challenges to Service Delivery

The following risks to service delivery and development have been identified for 2021/22:-

1. Effective case management is compromised due to increased caseloads.
Some teams have experienced an increase in open cases, partly due to the full implementation of the revised joint decision making model for Out of Court Disposals during 2020 and due to the backlog of Court cases caused by first lockdown, now coming through the system in parallel with new cases.

The short term mitigation has been to increase capacity in those teams affected through the use temporary increases in hours for staff on less than full time contracts. This may be a temporary issue, but will need to be monitored, and if the changes in the balance of cases between the service teams is sustained, a reconfiguration of the distribution of resources between the teams will be required in the longer term.
2. Additional demands on operational managers leading to burn out or negatively impacting on their well-being; and
3. Additional demands on operational managers negatively impacting on timely service improvement activity.
It was a finding in the thematic inspection of YOTs response to Covid-19, that whilst caseloads for staff were manageable team managers have been stretched. Although travel time has been reduced, management supervision of staff and cases has taken much more time. This continues to be the case, with managers trying to balance these increased demands alongside their partnership and service development responsibilities.

Mitigations in place for risk 2, include the access to welfare support and occupational health services, agreement to defer non-priority service development work and the short term reduction of report requirements from the management board. Mitigations for risk 3 include a temporary increase in capacity in 21/22 to work on identified service development actions.

4. Effective case management compromised due to the effect of Covid-19 restrictions and working arrangements on service staff

The past year has affected staff differently, but the inability to bring teams together, other than by phone conferences has had a negative effect on staff morale and effective team working. As such the partnership had identified rebuilding teams and increasing staff morale as a key priority for 21/22 and actions are included in the delivery plan.

4.3 Child First Approach in Practice

The YJB's vision of a child first youth justice system is one where services:

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

Even though activities can be identified which would demonstrate the service has begun to adopt a Child First approach, for example the implementation of the joint decision arrangements for Out of Court Disposals and where appropriate the diversion of children from formal justice system disposals, there is still much to do to before we could claim that a child first approach has been embedded in practice.

Promoting and understanding child first approach in our work has, therefore, been adopted as one of the 12 main priorities for the service for 2021/22.

4.4 Work with Parents and Carers

The service piloted an approach for support for parents of service users during the last quarter of 20/21, called Kitchen Table Talks, provided by a third sector organisation. The service is extending this pilot into the first six months of the 21/22.

4.5 Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains a key area of focus for the service. WMYJS has a key role in safeguarding young people, in terms of assessing and reducing the risk of harm to young people either from their own behaviour or the actions of others and reducing the risk of harm they may pose to others. The service continues to be active members of the children safeguarding partnership arrangements in each of the local authorities and there is a S11 action plan in place.

4.6 Exploitation, Peer on Peer Abuse and Serious Violence

County line type activity and child criminal exploitation has been identified as a growing issue across West Mercia. In 2020 the service identified 101 children at risk of county lines or criminal exploitation out of the 275 that had an assessment completed. The service will, through the pre-court joint decision making arrangements, seek to avoid the criminalisation of young people on the edges of this activity.

The service works as part of the child exploitation strategy and operation groups and the Serious Organised Crime Joint Agency Groups (SOCJAG) to address the issues of county lines type activity, organised crime group and gang West Mercia Youth Justice Plan 21/22

activities. Exploitation is a priority across all four local authority areas and the service contributes to the partnership work in each of local authority areas, including Get Safe Strategic and Operational Groups in Worcestershire, the Child Exploitation Strategy and Operational Groups in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Herefordshire, and is a contributing partner in the work on Harmful Sexual Behaviour and peer on peer abuse in Herefordshire.

Serious violent crime is not a significant issue in West Mercia currently, however we recognise that this may become an emerging issue associated with serious organised crime and the service will, as a result, be developing weapon crime programmes. The service is a contributing partner in West Mercia Police's knife crime prevention programme, Steer Clear. The service will continue to monitor data in relation to serious violent crime and will respond accordingly if this becomes a more serious issue.

4.7 Ethnic Disproportionality

In West Mercia there is a small disproportion in the number of BAME children in the youth offending population over the percentage of BAME children within the youth population. BAME children make up 7% of the offending population but only 6% of the 10-17 year old population. Analysis of the BAME group shows that black children are over represented in the BAME offending population compared to the general population and Asian children are under-represented (2019 data).

Local analysis of cases dealt with through the joint decision making panels show that BAME children were diverted from formal justice system disposals in 57% of cases compared to white children, 40%. In terms of custodial remands in the period November 2019 to October 2020 there were 9 children made subject to 10 remands to YDA and one child was Black and 9 were White. In the same period there were 6 custodial sentences all were for White children. Given the low numbers of children made subject to custodial remands and sentences it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions in relation to any ethnic over representation at this stage in the system in West Mercia.

We recognise there needs to more granular level of analysis before we are able to identify any actions required to address any identified disproportionality within West Mercia and there are actions in the National Standards improvement plan to address this.

4.8 Links to the YJB Strategic Plan 2021-24

The vision identified in the YJB strategic plan for 2021 – 24 is for a child first youth justice system which sees children as children, treats them fairly and helps them to build on their strengths so they can make a constructive contribution to society. We will work during 21/22 to ensure we understand the child first approach and ensure that is translated into practice.

4.9 Priorities for 2021/22

Priorities

The youth justice partnership has identified the following priorities for 2021/22.

- 1 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
- 2 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
- 3 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

4 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

5 COVID-19 SERVICE RECOVERY AND TRANSFORMATION

The Priorities in detail

OUR PEOPLE

1.1 Rebuilding Teams and Increasing Staff Morale following Covid-19 working arrangements

The contingencies put in place to deliver the service since March 2020 have had a detrimental effect on staff morale and the service teams. Working from home and remote working and management has affected staff in different ways and there has been no opportunity to bring whole teams together, other than through telephone conferencing. Since offices have been open to staff again the Covid-19 secure arrangements have meant that only small exclusive bubble groups have been able to go in at any one time. During 21/22 we will address this issue through team development training, staff recognition and a service conference.

1.2 Promoting staff engagement in service development and improvement

Staff surveys have identified that staff would like greater opportunity to contribute to decision making in the service and be better informed of decisions regarding service development. In 21/22 we will seek to involve staff in the Covid-19 recovery and transformation planning and investigate how staff are better able to contribute to leadership team discussions and decision making. We will put in place an internal communications plan.

OUR PARTNERSHIPS

2.1 Strengthening opportunities for emotional and mental health support for our service user

In 2020 57% of assessments on children in the service identified the child's emotional development and mental health as a factor against desistance. Following an emotional and mental health practice deep dive commissioned by the management board, and reported in July 2020, there is already an EMH action plan in place. In 21/22 we will continue to progress the action plan, review the health contribution in some of teams with the relevant clinical commissioning groups, provide staff training and develop our relationships with the Liaison and Diversion services across West Mercia.

2.2 Improving joint and integrated work with partner agencies

The service is always seeking to improve joint and integrated work with partner agencies. In particular in 21/22 we would seek to improve and agree a joint approach to remands with the local authorities and improve our transitions to adult services work with the Probation Service. The latter work will additionally contribute to the improvement plan for National Standard 5, Transitions.

OUR PRACTICE AND PERFORMANCE

3.1 Strengthening our Pathways, Intervention and Risk Planning

Scrutiny of practice has identified our intervention planning and risk planning to be an area for improvement. Through training we will identify a consistent view of what a good plan is, and through revised quality assurance processes drive and maintain improvements in planning. In addition to improving intervention planning we will seek to enhance the programmes available for staff to use and promote innovation and creativity.

3.2 Strengthening and increasing restorative approaches

We intend to review our arrangements for victim contact and delivery of restorative processes during 21/22, following the annual needs assessment identifying recording issues in respect of this work and a low use of direct restorative processes. Additionally in the staff survey undertaken to assist in informing the youth justice plan for 21/22, victim work and restorative approaches had the highest number of responses for an area of practice requiring development.

3.3 Promoting and understanding child first approach in our practice

The reasons for identifying this as one of our priorities for 2021/22 are well rehearsed in sections 3.3 and 3.6 of this plan.

3.4 Improving our resettlement offer

The service has recognised that resettlement is an area of practice that requires improvement and needs to be developed to make the service's resettlement offer more constructive. Work will include undertaking an audit and deep dive and the development of a policy and practice guidance. This will also contribute to our improvement plans for National Standard 5, Transitions.

OUR GOVERNANCE

4.1 How we hear and respond to the voice of the child, our stakeholders and staff

Although there is an end of order feedback process in place for children, we need to expand the feedback process for other service user groups. Some recent work piloted in West Mercia by a third sector organisation commissioned by the service has demonstrated the importance of seeking the views of parents and carers. In 21/22 we will identify, in particular, how the management board hears and takes account of the voice of the child, including their lived experience. We will also relaunch the staff survey and develop a process for the management board to receive feedback from the magistrates.

4.2 Understanding and Communicating Our Vision, principles and priorities

We need to ensure that the service staff and partners know what our vision, principles and priorities are, and how in particular the vision and underlying principles are translated into practice and impact on outcomes for children. This will be achieved through promoting these within the service and reinforcing through linking into appraisal objectives.

4.3 Responding to national and local standards, guidance and learning

Under this priority we will continue to implement and revise our national standards action plan, and develop a process of measuring the impact of learning from learning reviews and case audits on practice.

4.10 Delivery Plan 2021/22

Priority Area	OUR PEOPLE			
Sub Priority	Rebuilding Teams and Increasing Staff Morale following Covid-19 working arrangements		Promoting staff engagement in service development and improvement	
Planned Actions	Team development training Service Conference Developing a staff recognition scheme		Staff involvement in shaping post covid-19 service transformation Process for staff contribution to leadership team discussion/decisions Internal communication strategy	
Priority Area	OUR PARTNERSHIPS			
Sub Priority	Strengthening opportunities for emotional and mental health support for our service users		Improving joint and integrated work with partner agencies	
Planned Actions	Review of health needs and health provision to YJS with CCGs Implementation of EMH deep dive action plan Strengthen links/work with liaison and diversion		ChSC access to ChildView Developing and strengthening transition arrangements with NPS Joint YJS/Local Authority remand strategy	
Priority Area	OUR PRACTICE AND PERFORMANCE			
Sub Priority	Strengthening our Pathways, Intervention and Risk Planning	Strengthening and increasing restorative approaches	Promoting and understanding the child first approach in our practice	Improving our resettlement offer
Planned Actions	Training and development Revised QA approach Developing programmes and innovative approaches	Review the structure and approaches to deliver victim work and restorative approaches within the service to include, recording, QA and training. Promote policy and guidance	Staff briefings and communications Training Child First Policy/Guidance	Resettlement deep dive Resettlement policy and guidance
Priority Area	OUR GOVERNANCE			
Sub Priority	How we hear and respond to the voice of the child, our stakeholders and staff	Understanding and Communicating Our Vision, Principles and Priorities		Responding to national and local standards, guidance and learning
Planned Actions	Review the process of how the management board hear and respond to the voice of the child Re-launch the staff survey Process to gain feedback from the courts/magistrates into the management board and team	Promoting the vision, principles and priorities within the service Reinforce through linking vision, principles and priorities to appraisals		Implement, review and revise our national standards action plan, with a focus on NS 4 and 5 Develop a process to measure impact from learning reviews and case audits on practice
Priority Area	COVID-19 SERVICE RECOVERY AND TRANSFORMATION			
Planned Actions	Review, revise and implement the covid-19 recovery and transformation plan			

Resources

Income and Partnership Resources

The Youth Offending Service has a complex budget structure comprising of partner agency cash, seconded staff and in kind contributions and the Youth Justice (YOT) Grant from the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. The table below outlines the agreed contributions for 2021/22.

Agency	Staffing Costs – Secondees (£) ¹	Payments in kind (£)	Other Delegated Funds (3)	Total
Local Authorities ²			1,179,999	1,179,999
Police Service	242,650		63,000	305,650
National Probation Service	64,294		5,000	69,294
Health	132,457		36,894	169,351
Police and Crime Commissioner			110,293	110,293
YJB – Youth Justice Grant			1,314,743	1,314,743
Other (movement from reserves)				
Total	439,401		2,779,929	3,219,330

The YJB Youth Justice (YOT) Grant

The YJB Youth Justice (YOT) Grant is provided for the provision of youth justice services with an aim of achieving the following outcomes; reducing re-offending, reducing first time entrants, reducing the use of custody, effective public protection and effective safeguarding. The grant will form part of the overall pooled partnership budget for WMYJS.

The grant, partner contributions and available resources will be used to deliver youth justice services across West Mercia, to implement our improvement plan against the priorities identified for 21/22, to improve or sustain the current performance against the three national outcome measures, improve compliance with National Standards and aid the services recovery and transformation from Covid-19.

The outline draft budget for 2021/22 is provided below; the expenditure against the Youth Justice Grant is included in this budget.

Category	Budget (£)
Employee Costs	2,135,062
Other Employee Costs	31,668
Premises	165,500
Supplies and Services	39,198
ICT	97,458
Third Party Payments	238,925
Transport	72,118
TOTAL	2,779,929

Commissioned Services

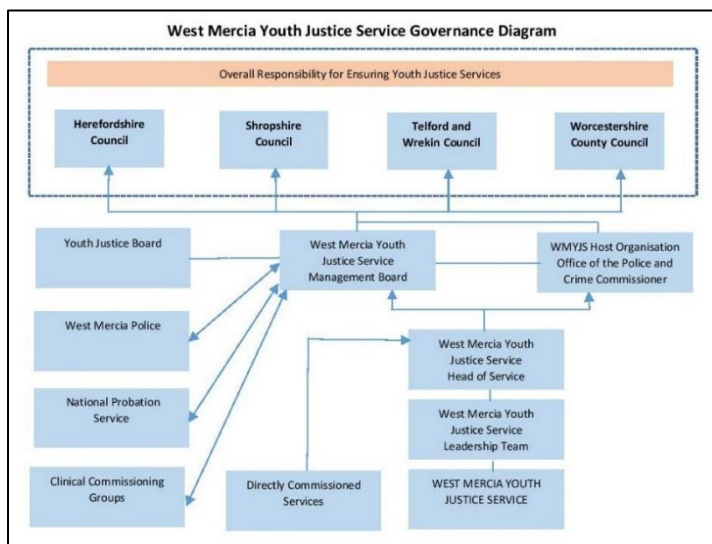
The Youth Justice Service only has one outsourced service, the provision of Appropriate Adults for young people in Police custody. The service is provided by a local voluntary sector organisation YSS. Quarterly contract monitoring and compliance meetings are held with YSS.

¹ Seconded staff figures are draft and based on 20/21, confirmation had not been received at the time the plan was prepared

² Where YOTs cover more than one local authority area YJB Youth Justice Plan guidance requires the totality of local authority contributions to be described as a single figure.

Governance, Leadership, Partnership Arrangements and Structure

WMYJS is managed on behalf of the Local Authorities and the WMYJS partnership by the Office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The Youth Justice Service is accountable to the WMYJS Management Board and the Management Board is accountable to each of the Local Authorities for the commissioning and delivery of youth justice services. The partnership Youth Justice Plan is approved by the Management Board and by each of the four top tier Councils. The diagram below outlines the governance arrangements of West Mercia Youth Justice Service.



The Management Board meets every two months and monitors the performance and quality of the service through regular reporting. Where necessary the Management Board will monitor compliance with the YJB Grant conditions through exception reports.

The Management Board has considered a number of thematic deep dives and practice presentations, the purpose of which is to identify any issues, in particular with regards to provision of services and multi-agency working, and agree actions for the Management Board or individual board members in order to improve services for young people in the youth justice system.

The Management Board has a process in place to provide oversight to safeguarding or public protection case learning reviews.

Management Board members ensure that, where relevant, commissioning across partner agencies takes account of the needs of young people in or at risk of entering the youth justice system, and where appropriate explore joint commissioning arrangements.

The Youth Justice Service Management Board is currently chaired by the Director of Children Services for Shropshire Council. The Membership of the Board at 1st April 2021 is outlined in the table below:

Agency	Representative	Role
Worcestershire County Council and Worcestershire Children First	Tina Russell	Interim Director of Children Services
Shropshire Council	Karen Bradshaw	Director of Children Services
Telford and Wrekin Council	Jo Britton	Director of Children Services
Herefordshire Council	Catherine Knowles	Director of Children and Families
National Probation Service	Jackie Stevenson	Head of West Mercia Delivery Unit
West Mercia Police	Supt Mo Lansdale	Head of Criminal Justice
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group	Jade Brooks	Director of Operations
Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Telford and Wrekin Commissioning Group	Zena Young	Executive Director of Quality
Office for the West Mercia PCC	Andy Champness	Chief Executive
Member providing Children Social Care Advice	Tina Knight	Service Delivery Manager, Telford and Wrekin Council

Partnerships

Management Board representative understanding their dual role when sitting on other partnership and governance boards, and where appropriate will advocate on behalf of children in the youth justice or the work of the youth justice service on those boards.

WMYJS is a member of relevant groups under the Safeguarding Children Partnerships in each of four local authority areas and children and young peoples’ strategic partnerships or equivalent partnerships where these exist and early help partnerships. The service is also represented on West Mercia Police’s children and young people strategic board.

WMYJS is represented on the Crime and Disorder reduction partnerships at the unitary or top tier authority level. WMYJS is an active member of the West Mercia Criminal Justice Board, the West Mercia Crime Reduction Board, the PCCs Victim and Witness Board and the MAPPA Strategic Management Board.

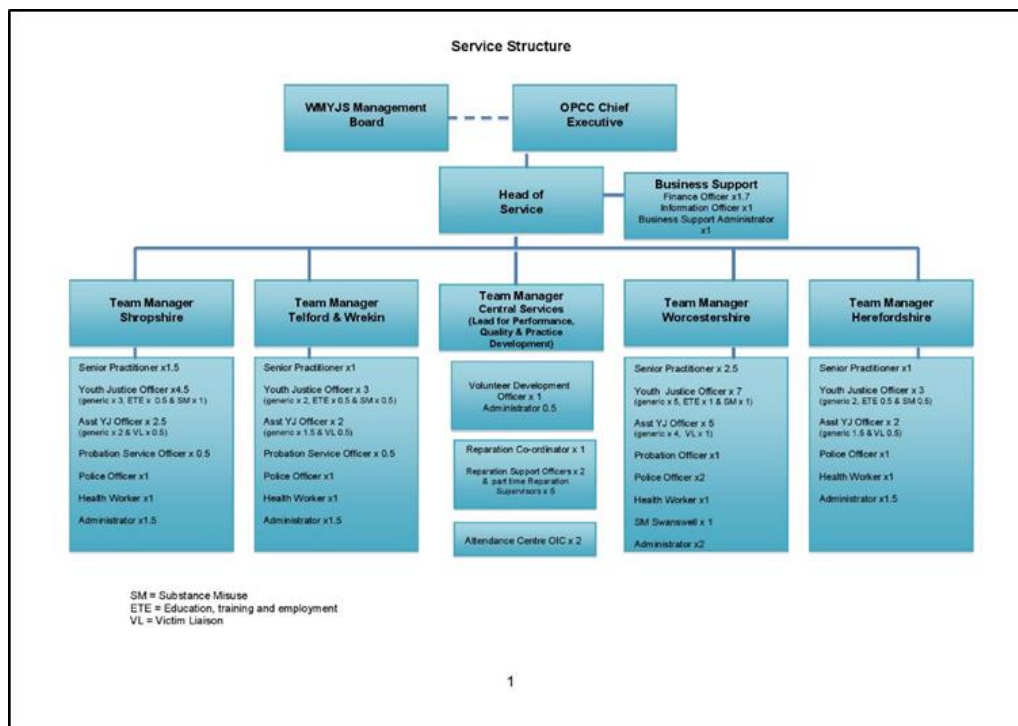
At an operational level the service is represented on the Channel Panels established as part of the Prevent Strategy, the Serious and Organised Crime Joint Agency Groups, the Child Exploitation Operational Groups. Depending on the local area the service team managers attend other multi-agency meetings according to the needs of the local area, for example Corporate Parenting Boards, SEND meetings, MASH partnership groups, Liaison and Diversion Scheme meetings and reducing re-offending groups.

Structure and Staffing of the Youth Justice Service

The West Mercia Youth Justice Service comprises four multi-agency service delivery teams, aligned to the Local Authority areas to deliver the majority of services. The reparation service and volunteer services are co-ordinated centrally across the whole service, as are the finance and data and information functions.

Each area team comprises senior practitioners, youth justice and assistant youth justice officer posts, education, training and employment officers, victim & liaison officers, seconded probation staff, seconded police officers and seconded health staff.

WMYJS is compliant with the minimum staffing requirements outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as can be seen from the structural diagram below. There are five registered Social Workers within the staffing group.



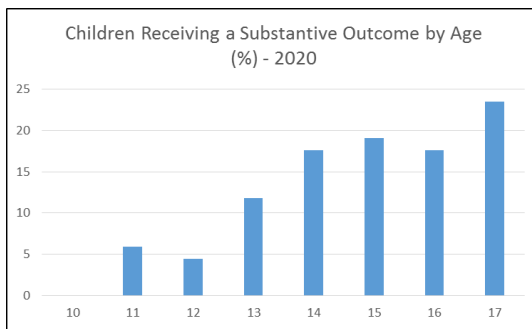
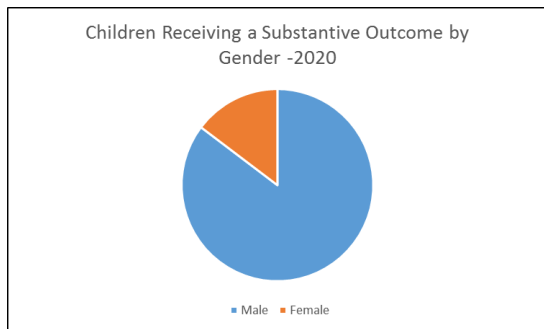
Herefordshire Local Information

2.1 Children Receiving Youth Justice Outcomes 2020

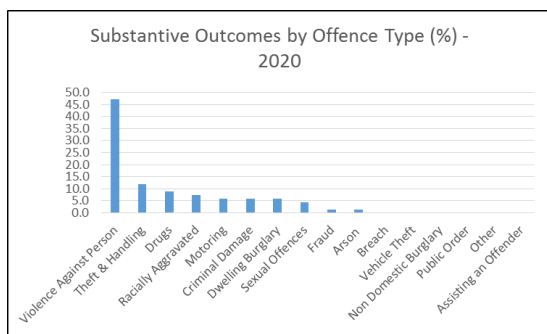
2.1.1 Substantive Youth Justice System Disposals 2020

A total of 68 Herefordshire children, were made subject to 68 substantive youth justice system disposals (cautions or convictions) during 2020. Of the children receiving substantive youth justice outcomes 15% were female and 85% male.

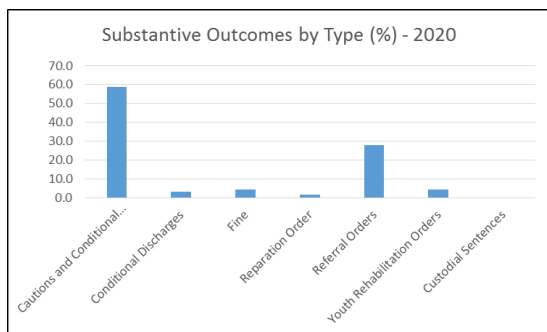
The majority, 60%, of children receiving substantive outcomes were aged 15 years or older. No 10 year olds were made subject to substantive outcomes, and 11 and 12 year olds accounted for 10% of outcomes.



Looked after children accounted for 18% of children receiving substantive outcomes.



Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 47% of the outcomes, theft and handling 12% and drug related offences 9%. These three offence group types accounting for 68% of all outcomes.

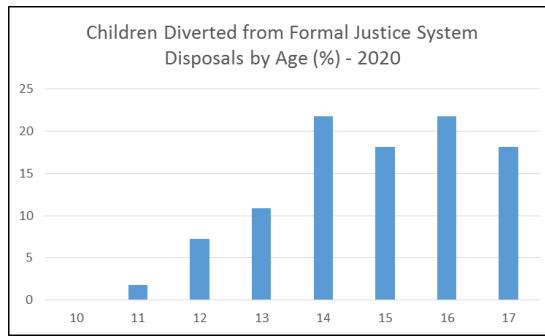
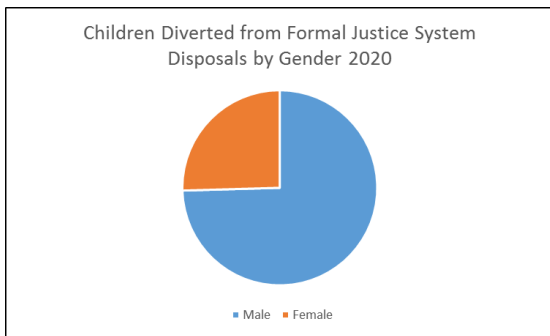


Youth cautions of all types (caution, caution supported by a voluntary intervention and conditional cautions) accounted for 59% of outcomes, Referral Orders 28% of outcomes and Youth Rehabilitation Orders 4% of outcomes. There were no custodial sentences.

2.1.2 Children Diverted from Formal Youth Justice System Disposals

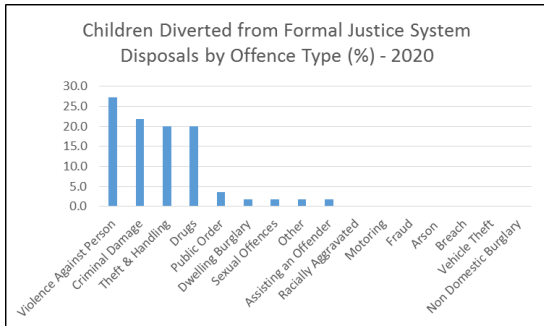
Children who have admitted an offence and who might be suitable for an out of court disposal are referred to a joint agency decision panel, included in the range of options available to the joint agency panels are informal disposals, which allow for the matter to be dealt with without the child receiving a criminal record for that offence.

In 2020, 55 children were diverted from formal justice system disposals through the issuing of 55 informal disposals. Of the children receiving informal disposals 75% were male and 25% were female.



The majority, 58%, of children receiving informal disposals were aged 15 years or older. Children aged 12 and under accounted for 9% of the informal disposals. There were no children aged 10 receiving an informal disposal.

Looked after children accounted for 6% of children diverted from formal justice system disposals.

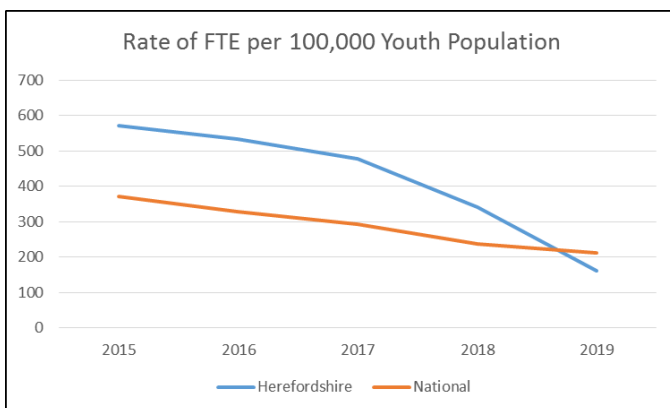


Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 27% of informal disposals, criminal damage for 22%, theft and handling 20% and drug related offences 20%. These four offence group types accounting for 89% of all informal disposals.

2.2 Performance

The Youth Justice Service is subject to three national outcome indicators

(ii) First Time Entrants



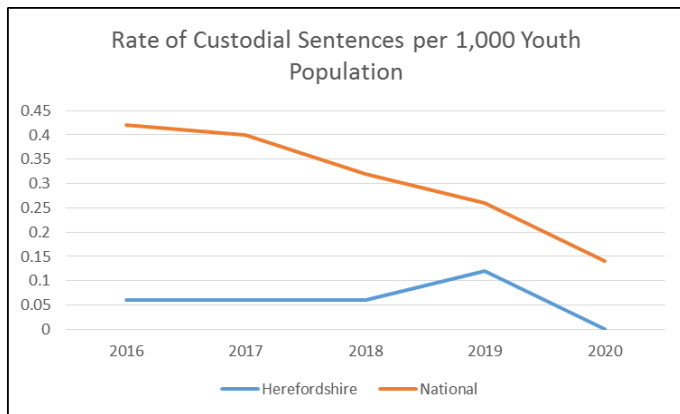
This measure is expressed as the number of first time entrants (young people receiving their first formal youth justice sanction, either a caution or conviction) per 100,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the number the better the performance.

The most recent published data is for the year 2019, where the Herefordshire performance was 162, compared to a national performance of 211. The rate of 162 is lower than the national performance for the first time and represents a significant improvement on the performance in the previous year when the rate was 341. The gap

between the Herefordshire rate and national rate has been reducing since 2017. The range of rates nationally is from 62 to 645, placing the Herefordshire performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

A revised joint decision arrangement for out of court disposals was implemented in Herefordshire in June 2019, this will have contributed to reduction during 2019, but is expected to have a more significant effect in the year 2020/21 following the full implementation.

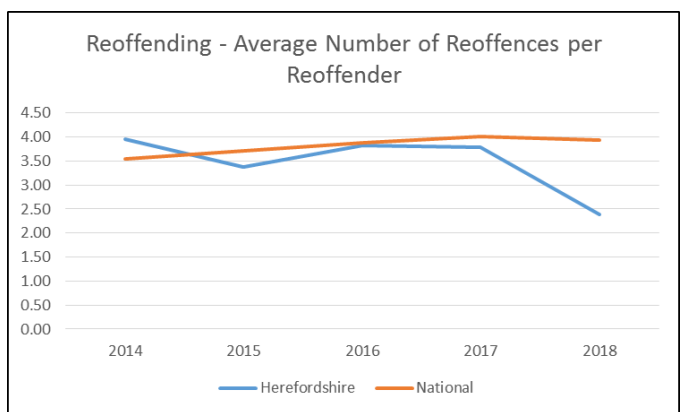
(iii) Use of Custody



The use of custody indicator is expressed as the number of custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the rate the better the performance.

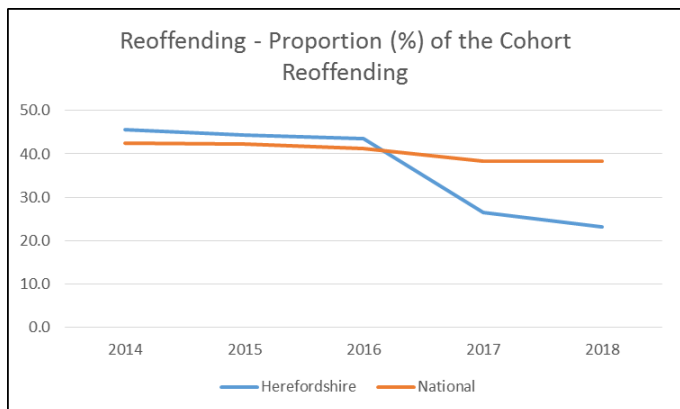
The most recently published data for this indicator is for 2020, where the Herefordshire rate was 0.00, as there were no custodial sentences made during 2020. The range of rates nationally is between 0.00 and 0.55 placing the Herefordshire performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

(iv) Reoffending



There are two measures for the re-offending indicator, both for the same cohort of offenders (all young people receiving a formal justice system disposal (caution or conviction) within a specified period of time). The cohort is then tracked for any re-offending within 12 months, the first measure (frequency measure) is the average number of re-offences per re-offender, and the second measure (binary measure) is the proportion of the cohort re-offending. For both measures a lower figure denotes better performance.

The most recently published data for this indicator is for the cohort identified in 2018.



The frequency measure for Herefordshire is 2.39, which compares favourably against the national rate of 3.93. The range of rates nationally is from 2.00 to 8.97, placing Herefordshire in the top quartile of the performance range.

The binary measure for Herefordshire is 23.2%, which compares favourably against the national rate of 38.4%. The range of rates nationally is from 14.6% to 59.3% placing Herefordshire in the top quartile of the performance range.

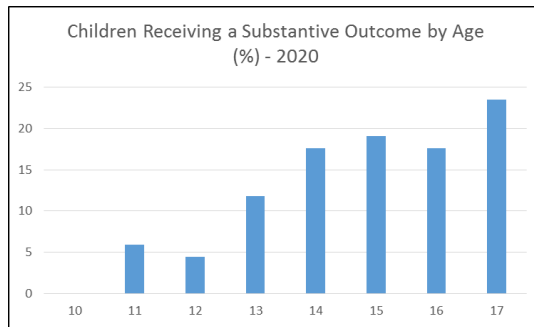
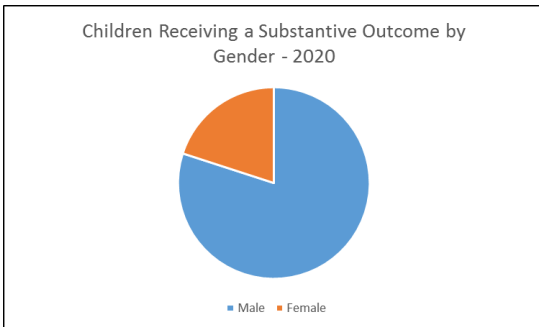
Shropshire Local Information

2.1 Children Receiving Youth Justice Outcomes 2020

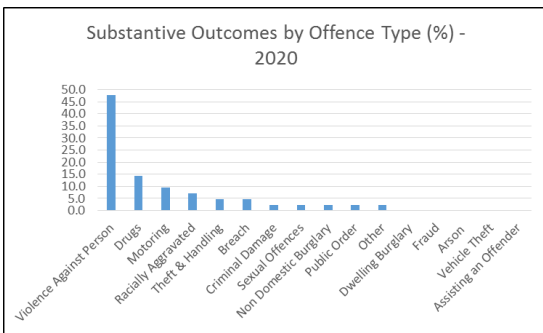
2.1.1 Substantive Youth Justice System Disposals 2020

A total of 40 Shropshire children, were made subject to 42 substantive youth justice system disposals (cautions or convictions) during 2020. Of the children receiving substantive youth justice outcomes 20% were female and 80% male.

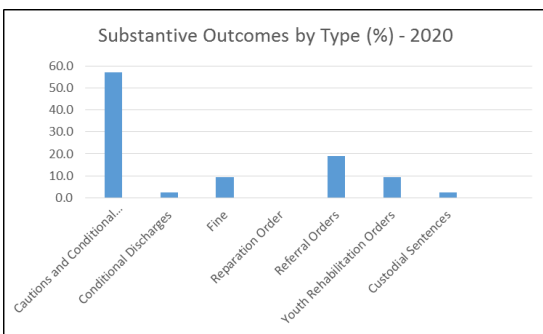
The majority, 60%, of children receiving substantive outcomes were aged 15 years or older. No 10 year olds were made subject to substantive outcomes, and 11 and 12 year olds accounted for 10% of outcomes.



Looked after children accounted for 18% of children receiving substantive outcomes.



Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 48% of the outcomes, drug related offences 14% and motoring offences 10%. These three offence group types accounting for 72% of all outcomes.

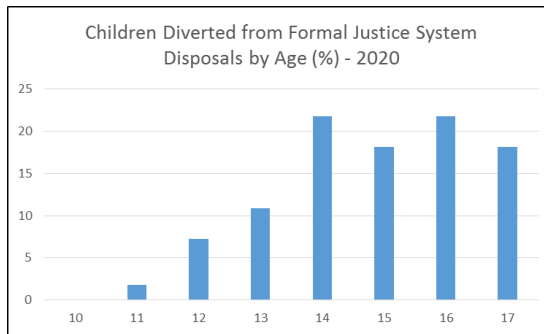
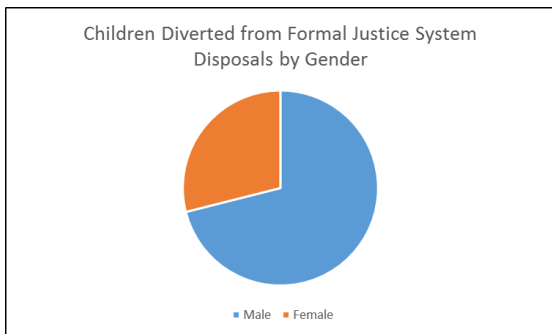


Youth cautions of all types (caution, caution supported by a voluntary intervention and conditional cautions) accounted for 57% of outcomes, Referral Orders 19% of outcomes and Youth Rehabilitation Orders 10% of outcomes. There was one custodial sentence.

2.1.2 Children Diverted from Formal Youth Justice System Disposals

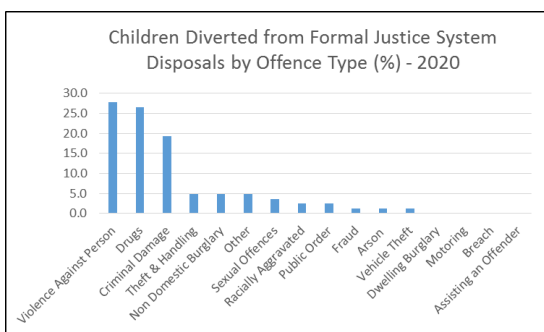
Children who have admitted an offence and who might be suitable for an out of court disposal are referred to a joint agency decision panel, included in the range of options available to the joint agency panels are informal disposals, which allow for the matter to be dealt with without the child receiving a criminal record for that offence.

In 2020, 77 children were diverted from formal justice system disposals through the issuing of 83 informal disposals. Of the children receiving informal disposals 71% were male and 29% were female.



The majority, 69%, of children receiving informal disposals were aged 15 years or older. Children aged 12 accounted for 3% of the informal disposals. There were no children under the age of 12 receiving an informal disposals.

Looked after children accounted for 3% of children diverted from formal justice system disposals.

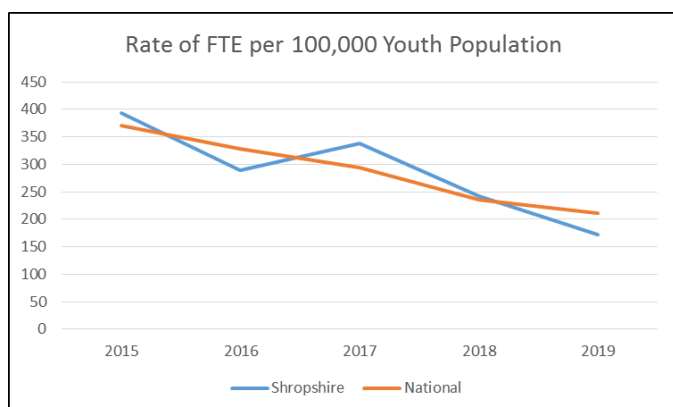


Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 28% of informal disposals, drug related offences 26% and criminal damage for 19%. These three offence group types accounting for 73% of all informal disposals.

2.2 Performance

The Youth Justice Service is subject to three national outcome indicators

(iii) First Time Entrants



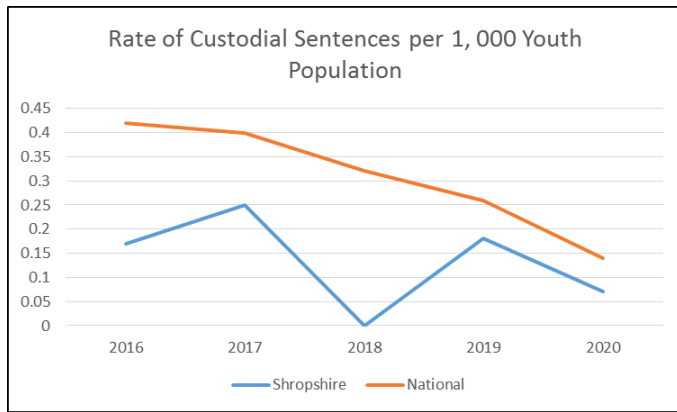
This measure is expressed as the number of first time entrants (young people receiving their first formal youth justice sanction, either a caution or conviction) per 100,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the number the better the performance.

The most recent published data is for the year 2019, where the Shropshire performance was 171, compared to a national performance of 211. The rate of 171 is lower than the national performance and represents an improvement on the performance in the previous year when the rate was 242. The range of rates nationally is

from 62 to 645, placing the Shropshire performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

A revised joint decision arrangement for out of court disposals was implemented in Shropshire in January 2020, this is expected to contribute to a further reduction in the number of first time entrants.

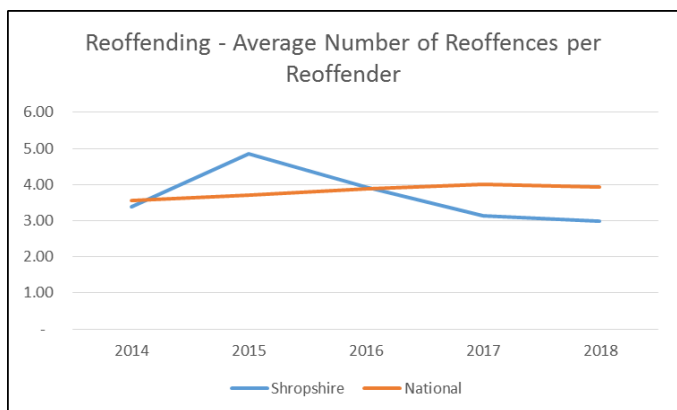
(v) Use of Custody



The use of custody indicator is expressed as the number of custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the rate the better the performance.

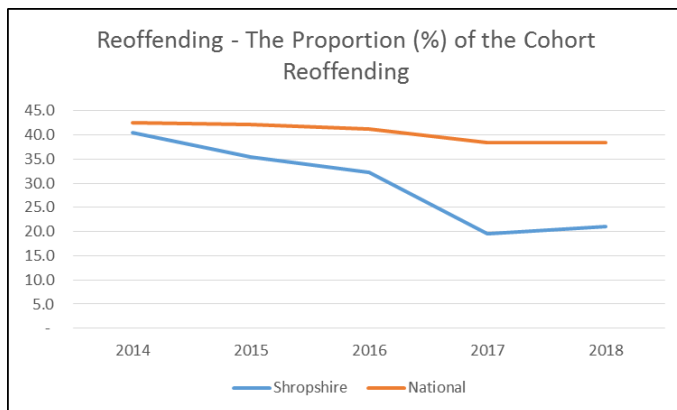
The most recently published data for this indicator is for 2020, where the Shropshire rate was 0.07, which is lower than the national rate of 0.14. The range of rates nationally is between 0.00 and 0.55 placing the Shropshire performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

(vi) Reoffending



There are two measures for the re-offending indicator, both for the same cohort of offenders (all young people receiving a formal justice system disposal (caution or conviction) within a specified period of time). The cohort is then tracked for any re-offending within 12 months, the first measure (frequency measure) is the average number of re-offences per re-offender, and the second measure (binary measure) is the proportion of the cohort re-offending. For both measures a lower figure denotes better performance.

The most recently published data for this indicator is for the cohort identified in 2018.



The frequency measure for Shropshire is 3.00, which compares favourably against the national rate of 3.93. The range of rates nationally is from 2.00 to 8.97, placing Shropshire in the top quartile of the performance range.

The binary measure for Shropshire is 21.1%, which compares favourably against the national rate of 38.4%. The range of rates nationally is from 14.6% to 59.3% placing Shropshire in the top quartile of the performance range.

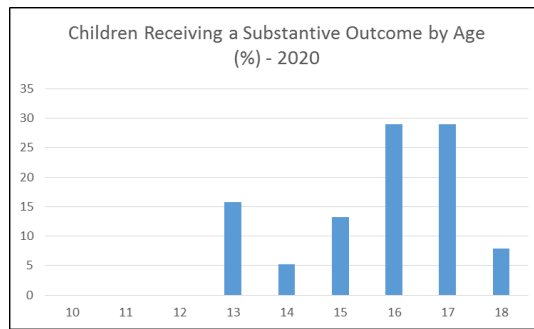
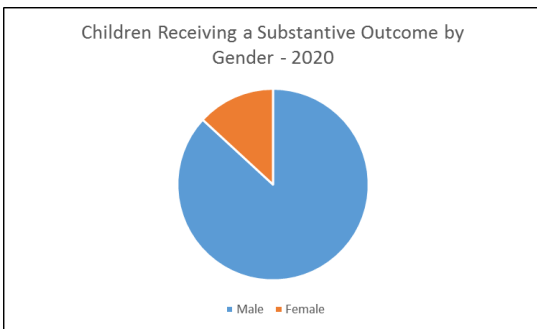
Telford and Wrekin Local Information

2.1 Children Receiving Youth Justice Outcomes 2020

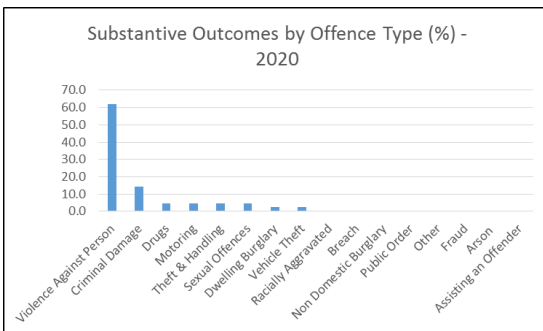
2.1.1 Substantive Youth Justice System Disposals 2020

A total of 38 Telford and Wrekin children, were made subject to 42 substantive youth justice system disposals (cautions or convictions) during 2020. Of the children receiving substantive youth justice outcomes 13% were female and 87% male.

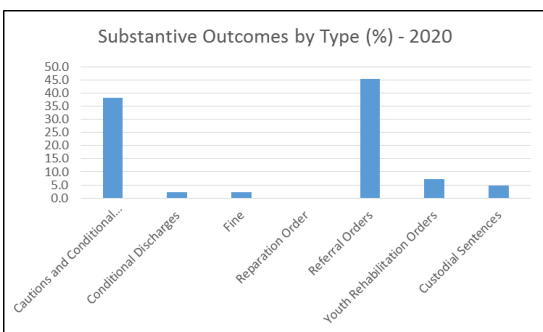
The majority, 79%, of children receiving substantive outcomes were aged 15 years or older. Children aged 13 accounted for 15% of substantive outcomes. No children aged 12 or under were made subject to substantive justice system outcomes in 2020.



Looked after children accounted for 11% of children receiving substantive outcomes.



Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 62% and criminal damage for 14%. Drug related offences, motoring offences, theft and handling and sexual offences each accounted for 5% of substantive outcomes.

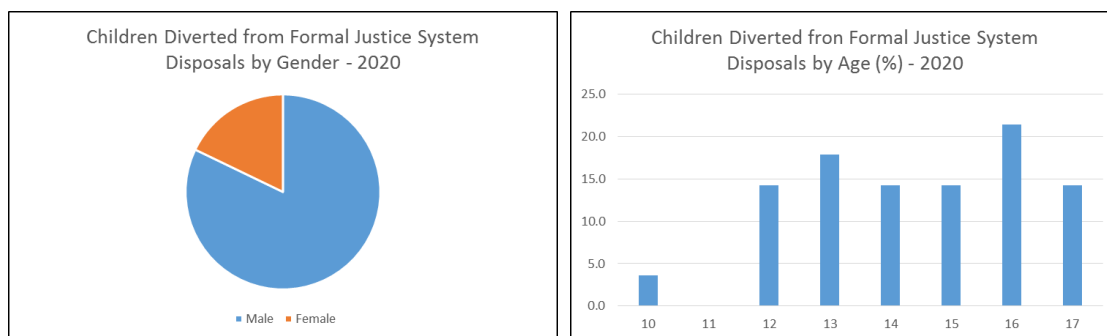


Youth cautions of all types (caution, caution supported by a voluntary intervention and conditional cautions) accounted for 38% of outcomes, Referral Orders 45% of outcomes and Youth Rehabilitation Orders 7% of outcomes. There were two custodial sentences accounting for 5% of outcomes.

2.1.2 Children Diverted from Formal Youth Justice System Disposals

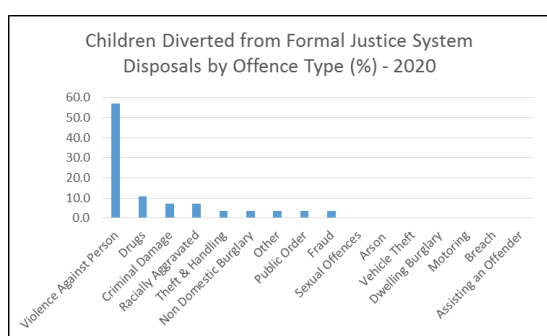
Children who have admitted an offence and who might be suitable for an out of court disposal are referred to a joint agency decision panel, included in the range of options available to the joint agency panels are informal disposals, which allow for the matter to be dealt with without the child receiving a criminal record for that offence.

In 2020, 28 children were diverted from formal justice system disposals through the issuing of 28 informal disposals. Of the children receiving informal disposals 61% were male and 39% were female.



Half of the children receiving informal disposals were aged 15 years or older. Children aged 12 and under accounted for 18% of the informal disposals.

Looked after children accounted for 7% of children diverted from formal justice system disposals.

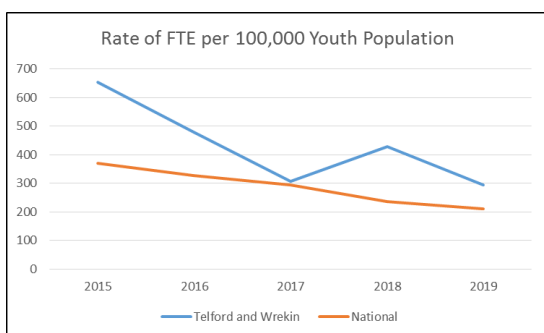


Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 57% of informal disposals, drug related offences for 11%, and criminal damage and racially aggravated offences for 7% each. These four offence group types accounting for 82% of all informal disposals.

2.2 Performance

The Youth Justice Service is subject to three national outcome indicators

(iv) First Time Entrants



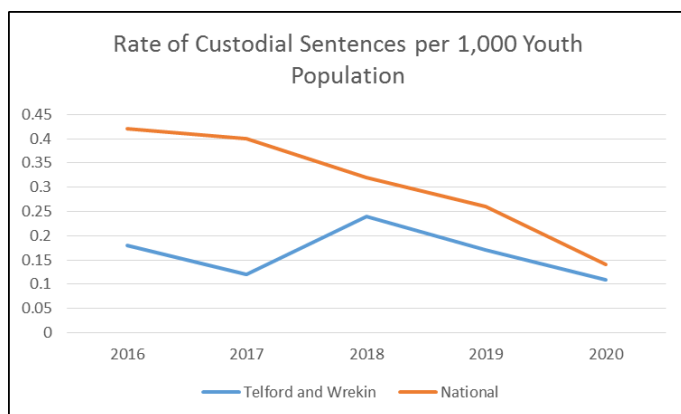
This measure is expressed as the number of first time entrants (young people receiving their first formal youth justice sanction, either a caution or conviction) per 100,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the number the better the performance.

The most recent published data is for the year 2019, where the Telford and Wrekin performance was 294, compared to a national performance of 211. Although the rate of 294 is higher than the national performance it does represent a significant improvement on the performance in the previous year when the rate was 429. The

range of rates nationally is from 62 to 645, placing the Telford and Wrekin performance in the second to top quartile of the performance range.

A revised joint decision arrangement for out of court disposals was implemented in Telford and Wrekin in March 2020, and this is expected to further reduce the numbers of first time entrants to the youth justice system.

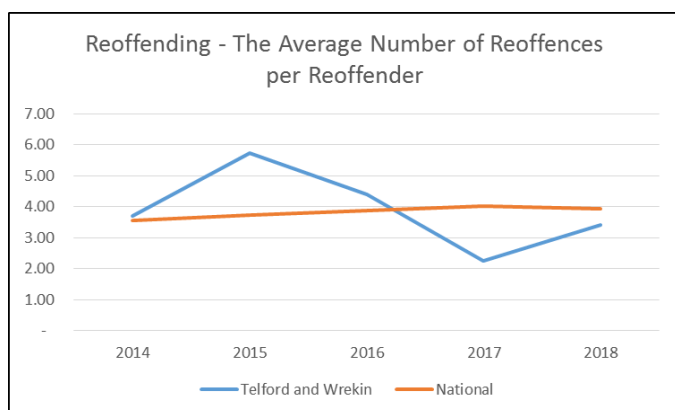
(vii) Use of Custody



The use of custody indicator is expressed as the number of custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the rate the better the performance.

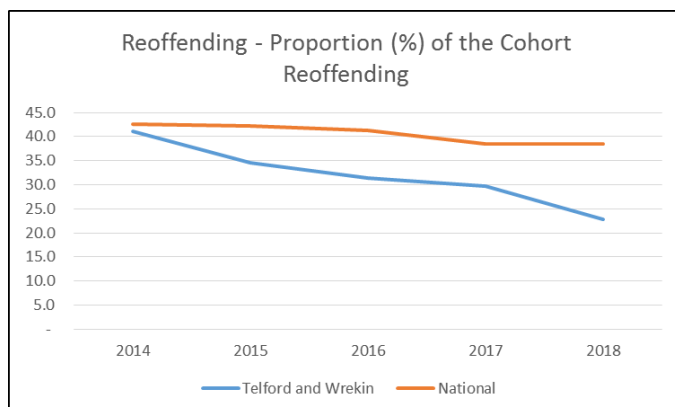
The most recently published data for this indicator is for 2020, where the Telford and Wrekin rate was 0.11, compared to a national rate of 0.14. The range of rates nationally is between 0.00 and 0.55 placing the Telford and Wrekin performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

(viii) Reoffending



There are two measures for the re-offending indicator, both for the same cohort of offenders (all young people receiving a formal justice system disposal (caution or conviction) within a specified period of time). The cohort is then tracked for any re-offending within 12 months, the first measure (frequency measure) is the average number of re-offences per re-offender, and the second measure (binary measure) is the proportion of the cohort re-offending. For both measures a lower figure denotes better performance.

The most recently published data for this indicator is for the cohort identified in 2018.



The frequency measure for Telford and Wrekin is 3.40, which compares favourably against the national rate of 3.93. The range of rates nationally is from 2.00 to 8.97, placing Telford and Wrekin in the top quartile of the performance range.

The binary measure for Telford and Wrekin is 22.7%, which compares favourably against the national rate of 38.4%. The range of rates nationally is from 14.6% to 59.3% placing Telford and Wrekin in the top quartile of the performance range.

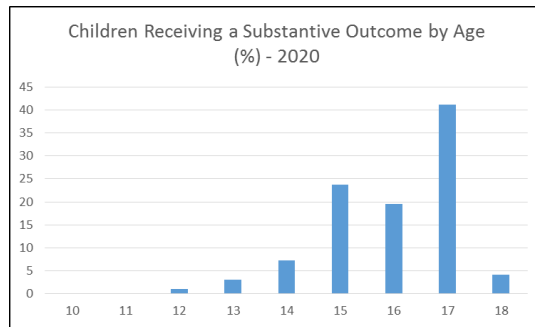
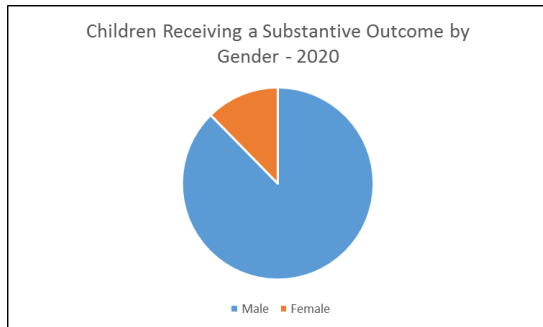
Worcestershire Local Information

2.1 Children Receiving Youth Justice Outcomes 2020

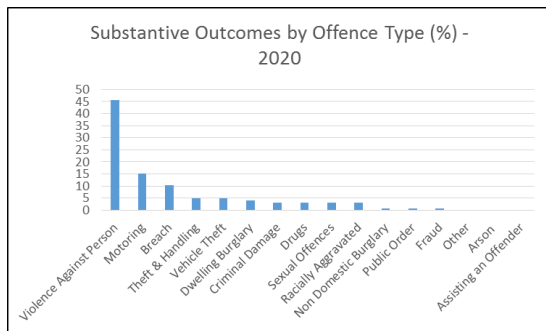
2.1.1 Substantive Youth Justice System Disposals 2020

A total of 97 Worcestershire children, were made subject to 125 substantive youth justice system disposals (cautions or convictions) during 2020. Of the children receiving substantive youth justice outcomes 12% were female and 89% male.

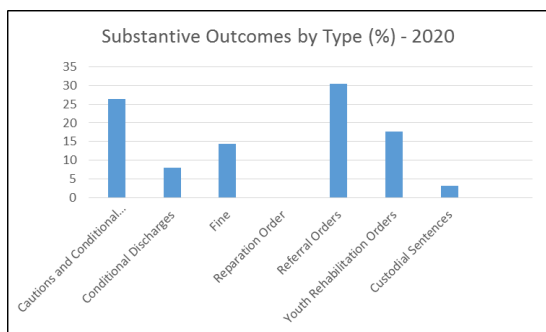
The majority, 89%, of children receiving substantive outcomes were aged 15 years or older. No children under the age of 12 were made subject to substantive outcomes, and 12 year olds accounted for 1% of outcomes.



Looked after children accounted for 21% of children receiving substantive outcomes.



Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 46% of the outcomes, motoring offences for 15% and breaches of orders 10%. These three offence group types accounting for 71% of all outcomes.

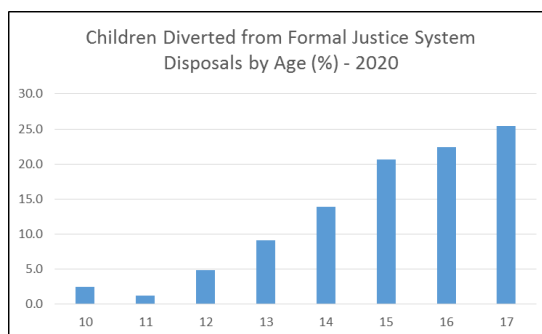
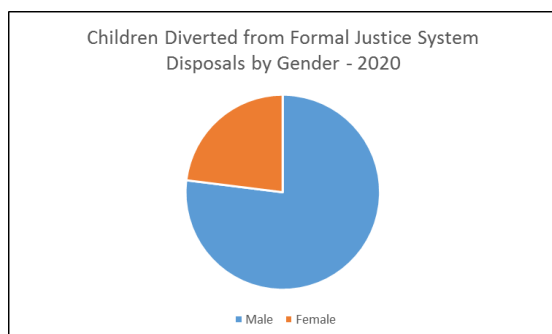


Youth cautions of all types (caution, caution supported by a voluntary intervention and conditional cautions) accounted for 26% of outcomes, Referral Orders 30% of outcomes, Youth Rehabilitation Orders 17% of outcomes and custodial sentences 3% of outcomes.

2.1.2 Children Diverted from Formal Youth Justice System Disposals

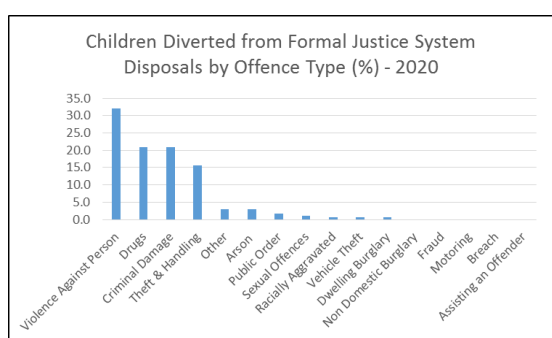
Children who have admitted an offence and who might be suitable for an out of court disposal are referred to a joint agency decision panel, included in the range of options available to the joint agency panels are informal disposals, which allow for the matter to be dealt with without the child receiving a criminal record for that offence.

In 2020, 165 children were diverted from formal justice system disposals through the issuing of 172 informal disposals. Of the children receiving informal disposals 77% were male and 23% were female.



The majority, 69%, of children receiving informal disposals were aged 15 years or older. Children aged 12 and under accounted for 9% of the informal disposals.

Looked after children accounted for 3% of children diverted from formal justice system disposals.

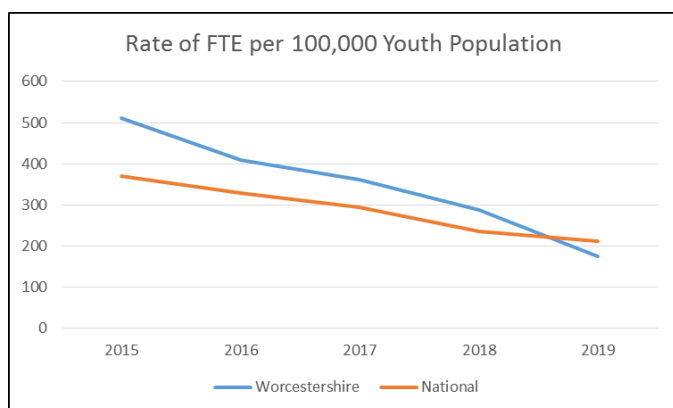


Offences from the offence group of violence against the person accounted for the primary offence for 32% of informal disposals, drug related offences 21%, criminal damage for 21% and theft and handling 16%. These four offence group types accounting for 90% of all informal disposals.

2.2 Performance

The Youth Justice Service is subject to three national outcome indicators

(v) First Time Entrants



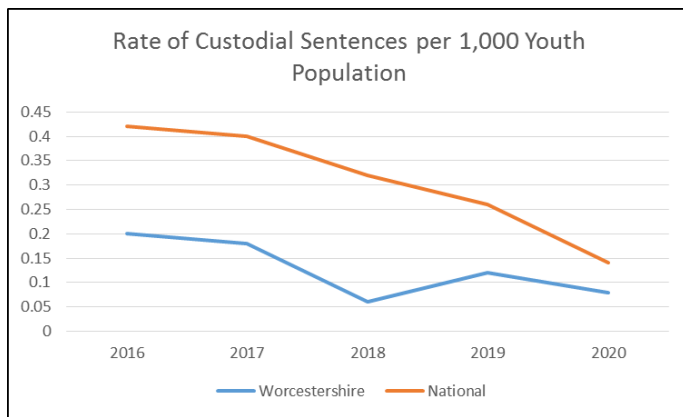
This measure is expressed as the number of first time entrants (young people receiving their first formal youth justice sanction, either a caution or conviction) per 100,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the number the better the performance.

The most recent published data is for the year 2019, where the Worcesterstershire performance was 175, compared to a national performance of 211. The rate of 175 is lower than the national performance for the first time and represents a significant improvement on the performance in the previous year when the rate was 287.

The gap between the Worcesterstershire rate and national rate has been reducing since 2015. The range of rates nationally is from 62 to 645, placing the Worcesterstershire performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

A revised joint decision arrangement for out of court disposals was implemented in Worcesterstershire in November 2019 and this is expected to contribute to a further reduction during 2020.

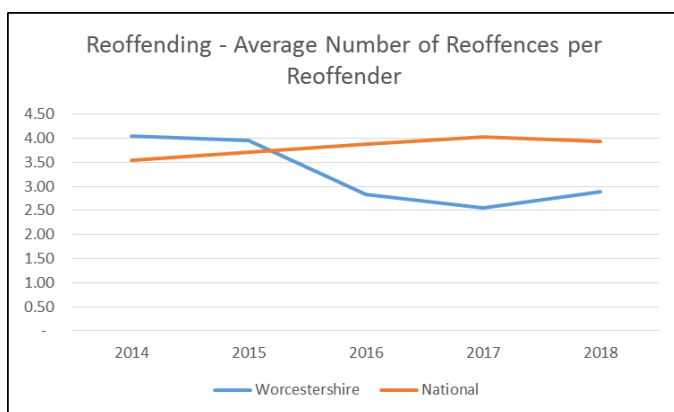
(ix) Use of Custody



The use of custody indicator is expressed as the number of custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population within a 12 month period. The lower the rate the better the performance.

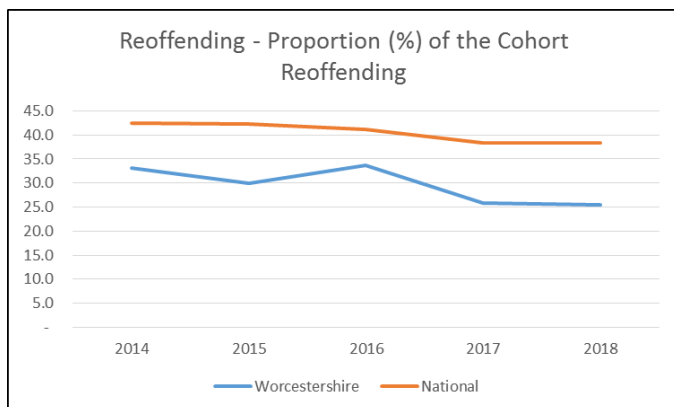
The most recently published data for this indicator is for 2020, where the Worcesterstershire rate was 0.08, which compares favourably against the national rate of 0.14. The range of rates nationally is between 0.00 and 0.55 placing the Worcesterstershire performance in the top quartile of the performance range.

(x) Reoffending



There are two measures for the re-offending indicator, both for the same cohort of offenders (all young people receiving a formal justice system disposal (caution or conviction) within a specified period of time). The cohort is then tracked for any re-offending within 12 months, the first measure (frequency measure) is the average number of re-offences per re-offender, and the second measure (binary measure) is the proportion of the cohort re-offending. For both measures a lower figure denotes better performance.

The most recently published data for this indicator is for the cohort identified in 2018.



The frequency measure for Worcesterstershire is 2.88, which compares favourably against the national rate of 3.93. The range of rates nationally is from 2.00 to 8.97, placing Worcesterstershire in the top quartile of the performance range.

The binary measure for Worcesterstershire is 25.5%, which compares favourably against the national rate of 38.4%. The range of rates nationally is from 14.6% to 59.3% placing Worcesterstershire in the top quartile of the performance range.