



WEST MERCIA YOUTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP



YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN



2022/23



Preface

Youth Justice Plan Guidance

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 2022/23.

The directions of the Secretary of State for the Youth Justice Plan (YJP) are delegated to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) who published the guidance and requirements for the 2022/23 YJP in mid-March 2022.

Marking a departure from previous years, where general guidance for the content of plan was provided, leaving the format, style and other content of the plan to be determined at the local level, for 2022/23 the format for the plan is prescribed, the contents under each subheading in the plan template are also prescribed and plan submitted on a given template.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An EIA has been completed on the Youth Justice Delivery Plan for 22/23. The EIA has not identified any significant impacts of the action plan on children, staff or victims who are from the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, however the assessment has identified that there is a potential impact for children from BAME backgrounds as nationally children from BAME backgrounds are over represented in the youth justice system. Although in West Mercia this is not significant with children from BAME backgrounds accounting for 7% of the offending population, and 6% of the general population, this requires regular monitoring, and greater analysis. There is an action in the youth justice plan to provide more regular and detailed reporting on groups of service users over represented in the youth justice system

Youth Justice Plan – West Mercia

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Service | West Mercia Youth Justice Service |
| Service Manager/ Lead | Keith Barham |
| Chair of YJS Board | Jo Britton |

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1. Introduction, vision and strategy

Forward by the Chair of the 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 continued to be difficult due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions placed on the service as a result but 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. Despite the capacity issues caused by the remote working arrangements, the service has still been able to progress most of the activity set out in last year's plan, those activities that have been delayed have been rolled forward into this year's plan.

In January 2022 the partnership was inspected by HMI Probation, and we welcomed this opportunity for external scrutiny to assist us on our improvement journey. The report will be published in May, and a comprehensive improvement plan will be put in place to respond to the recommendations and findings of the inspection. This will form the basis of our service and partnership improvement plans over the next two years.

The priorities and improvement plans outlined in this Youth Justice Plan are the result of a partnership planning workshop involving the management board members and the leadership team. The plan was approved, subject to amendments, by the Youth Justice Service Management Board on 4th May 2022.

Jo Britton
Chair – West Mercia Youth Justice Management Board
Executive Director of Children Services, Telford and Wrekin Council

Executive Summary

The previous year has been challenging due to the continuing restrictions on working arrangements due to Covid-19. This has resulted in three continuing risks to service delivery; increased caseloads, additional demands on operational managers and the effect the Covid-19 working arrangements have had on staff.

Despite this, service performance against the three national outcome indicators continues to be good. The performance in relation to the rate of young people receiving a custodial sentence is 0.09 custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population, and this rate is below the national rate of 0.11. The proportion of young people re-offending is 26.7% which is significantly lower the national rate at 34.2%. The first time entrant (FTE) rate for the annual period ending September 21 is at 98 FTE per 100,000 compared to the national rate of 156.

Although there is not a significant over representation of BAME children in the overall offending population in West Mercia, we recognise that we need to better understand all of those groups of children that may be over represented in the youth justice cohort, and to improve our practice in meeting the diverse needs of children in youth justice system.

The YJB vision is of a child first youth justice system, and during 22/23 the service will continue work to further understand and embed a child first approach in practice.

Responding to the findings of the HMI Probation inspection of the service will be one of the main priorities for 22/23, and will include work to improve the delivery and oversight of practice and service governance and leadership.

The youth justice partnership have identified the following priorities and key actions for 2022/23

People Themes:

- Supporting Staff Development, Wellbeing and Morale
 - *Training and development plan*
 - *Response to the staff survey*
 - *Staff recognition*
 - *Team development*

Practice Themes:

- Embedding Child First in Practice
 - *Child First Champions*
 - *Development of a child first policy*
 - *Awareness briefings*
- Improving the Resettlement Offer
 - *Training*
 - *Policy review/deep dive*
 - *Appointment of a board champion*
- Improving the intervention and risk plans for our service users
 - *Training*
 - *Revising QA framework*
- Strengthening our restorative approaches
 - *Responding to the restorative health check*

Partnership Themes:

- Strengthening opportunities for emotional and mental health for service users
 - *Complete health needs and provision review*
- Improving our work with partner agencies and ensuring the service is embedded across the four areas
 - *Agree the transition protocol*

Governance, Leadership and Management Themes:

- Responding to the recommendations and findings of service inspection
 - *Development and implementation of an inspection improvement plan*
- Improving quality and consistency of practice across the service
 - *Revising QA framework*
 - *Scrutiny process for out of court disposals*
- Supporting, valuing and addressing diversity
 - *Training*
 - *Regular and detailed reporting*
 - *Amendments to the OoCD assessment tool*
- Hearing the voice of the child
 - *Process for the management board to understand the lived experience of children in the YJS*

Vision

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:

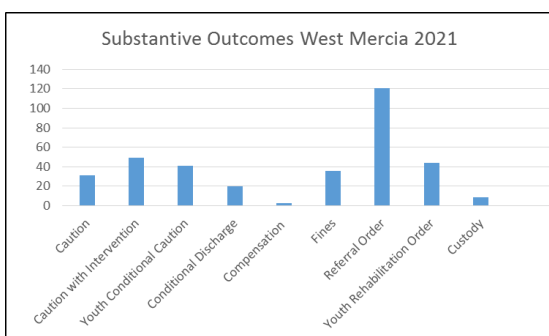
Together, preventing offending and improving lives

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*

2. Local context

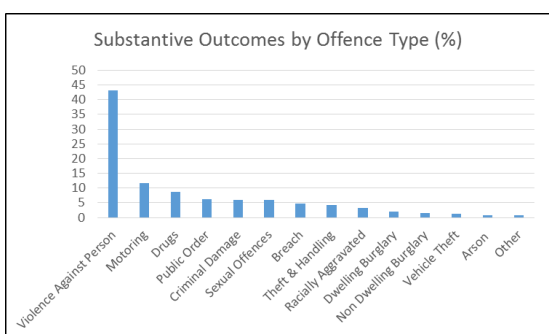
The West Mercia Youth Justice Service operates across the four Local Authority areas of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Worcestershire, covering a youth population of approximately 115,388 (10 to 17 year olds). The area is large and predominantly rural covering 2,868 square miles.



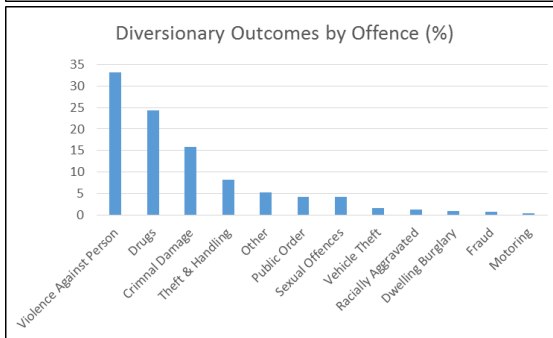
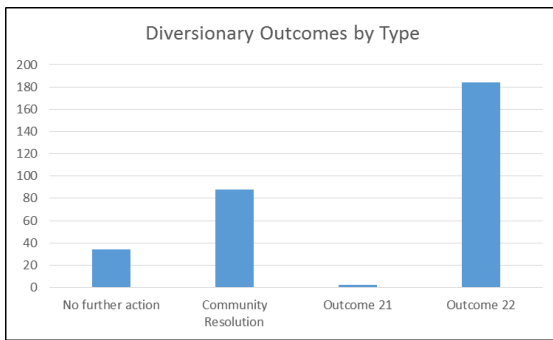
During 2021 255 substantive outcomes (cautions or convictions) were made on children in West Mercia, 96 (38%) of these were cautions, 84 (33%) referral orders, 25 (10%) youth rehabilitation orders and 9 (4%) custodial sentences.

Males accounted for 88% of these outcomes and females 11%.

The three main offence types were violence against the person (48%), motoring offences (11%), and drug offences (9%) followed by public order offences, criminal damage and sexual offences each accounting for 6% of outcomes.



The majority children receiving a substantive outcome were aged between 15 and 17 (82%), with 16 and 17 year olds accounting for 63% of the outcomes. There no children under the age of 12 receiving a substantive outcome and 12 year olds only accounted for 1.6% of the outcomes.



A further 308 children who had offended were diverted from substantive outcomes through the joint decision making arrangements for out of court disposals. Of these 308, 184 (60%) received an Outcome 22, an informal disposal where the child participates in an intervention, and as a result the offence is recorded as a no further action, 88 (29%) a community resolution, 34 (11%) received no further action and 2 received an Outcome 21, which is similar to an Outcome 22, but is for specific offences.

Males accounted for 80% of the out of court outcomes and females for 20%.

The four main offence types were violence against the person (33%), drug offences (24%), criminal damage (16%) and theft and handling (8%).

The majority of young people receiving a diversionary outcome were aged between 15 and 17 (62%), with 13 and 14 years accounting for 28% of the outcomes, 31 (10%) of the children were aged under 14, with 12 aged 11 and 3 aged 10.

3. Child First

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 work to do to before we could claim that a child first approach has been fully embedded in practice. The service also needs to further develop trauma informed practice.

A service conference had been planned for January 2022, where one of the main keynote presentations was to have been made by a sector expert on the child first approach and this was to have been used as the springboard for further development of the service's child first strategy. Unfortunately the conference had to be postponed until June 2022 due to the Covid-19 situation at the time.

In addition to the conference planned for June 2022, the service will be appointing child first champions in 2022/23 who will have the opportunity to undertake the Child First Effective Practice Award, and will assist in further developing the service's child first approach.

4. Voice of the child

One method the service uses to elicit the view of children is the self-assessment, which opens the discussion for the child's contribution to the assessment and planning process. These help identify the needs, strengths, interventions and exit strategies for the child.

The service invites specific feedback from children through an end of order questionnaire (EoOQ). These are reviewed by the case worker when completed and if they contain content that contains imminent concerns, for example the young person not feeling safe, then this is dealt with straight away, informing the management of risk.

The EoOQs are collated at local level each quarter and compiled into an area report. The report is shared with the area team for feedback / suggestions. All area reports and worker feedback suggestions are then discussed in the service's Participation Group quarterly meetings. The Participation Group Lead reports the outcomes of the feedback into the leadership team, highlighting local and service wide issues and trends, and where negative or good practice has been referenced.

In addition to the EoOQ the service has a child friendly comments, compliments and complaints process called "Tell Us". Every child is advised of the process, and given a business card with relevant information about "Tell Us" on it. Responses to "Tell Us" can be made via a form, a dedicated phone number, a dedicated email address and via service's website. Responses received through "Tell Us" are fed through to the participation group, or if they are a complaint handled under the services complaints procedure.

Some tangible examples of how feedback from children has been used to make changes are:-

- Redecoration/refurbishment of reception areas and interview rooms in some locations based on feedback provided
- Changes in intervention programmes and sourcing of new intervention programmes
- Following feedback from children after their experiences of having interventions delivered virtually during the Covid-19 lockdown, a move to a hybrid model of contact for some children
- Changes to the out of court disposal assessment template following feedback from children about their views being fed into the decision making process

The service website is currently being developed to have a secure area that children can access where they will be able to access resources and also submit feedback via the EoOQ.

Children will be providing feedback into the service's staff conference through a video.

Pre-Covid children have attended the management board to talk about their experiences and views on the service and the board have received reports on children's feedback, but the board recognise that they and the service need to better hear the voice of the child and understand their lived experience.

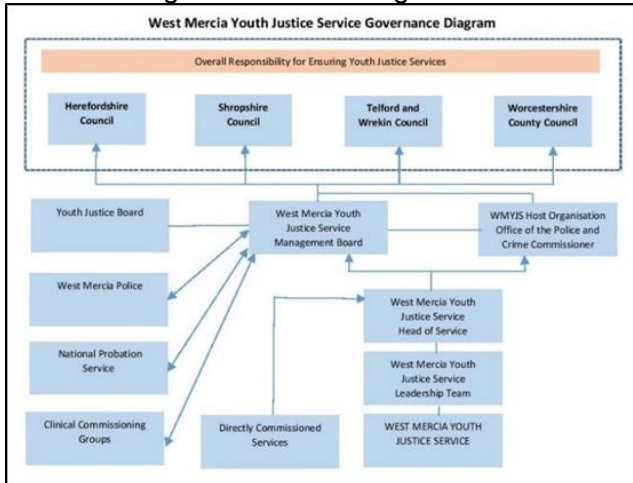
The service and board additionally need to better understand why some groups of children are overrepresented in the YJS, their lived experience, work to reduce the over representation, and ensure there is a sufficient focus on diversity and meeting individual needs including working with protected characteristics, identity, neurodiversity and inclusion.

5. Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

Governance

Since 2016, following a review of the hosting arrangements for the Youth Justice Service, the service has been hosted and 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 diagram below outlines the governance arrangements of West Mercia Youth Justice Service.



All of the statutory agencies (Local Authorities, Police, Probation and Clinical Commissioning Groups) are represented on the Management Board and the full membership, at 1st April 2022 is provided in Appendix 1 of this plan. The Board is currently chaired by the Director of Children Services, Telford and Wrekin Council. The Board meets every two months and monitors the performance and quality of the service through regular reporting.

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 children in the youth justice system.

The Head of Service is day to day managed by the Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, but has a dual accountability to both the Chief Executive of the OPCC and the Chair of the Management Board.

Partnerships

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

WMYJS is a member of relevant groups under the Safeguarding Children Partnerships in each of the four local authority areas, the children and young peoples' strategic partnerships or equivalent, where these exist, and the 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 and 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 and reducing re-offending groups.

Structure

A structural diagram of the service is provided at Appendix 2 of this plan.

The West Mercia Youth Justice Service comprises four multi-agency service delivery teams, aligned to the Local Authority areas, which 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 based team comprises the following types of posts:

- Team Manager
- Senior Practitioner
- Youth Justice Officers and Assistant Youth Justice Officers
- Education, Training and Employment Officer
- Substance Misuse Officer
- Victim Liaison Officer
- Police Officer (secondment)
- Mental Health Worker (secondment)

The current partnership contribution from health is under review, with an aim to ensure the provision meets the needs of children worked with by the Youth Justice Service and to provide consistency of provision across the area.

Under a national allocation formula the Probation Service contribute two posts to the service, a Probation Officer and a Probation Service Officer. The Probation Officer is located in the Worcestershire Team, but deals with the transition arrangements for any child transferring from the Youth Justice Service to Probation across Worcestershire and Herefordshire. The Probation Service Officer post, currently vacant, will work across the Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin teams.

WMYJS is compliant with the minimum staffing requirements outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. There are five registered Social Workers within the staffing group.

6. Resources and services

The Youth Offending Service has a complex budget structure comprising of partner agency cash, seconded staff and the Youth Justice (YOT) Grant from the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. The table below outlines the provisional contributions for 2022/23, as some contributions were still to be confirmed at the point this youth justice plan was agreed.

| Agency | Staffing Costs – Secondees (£) | Payments in kind (£) | Other Delegated Funds (3) | Total |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Local Authorities | | | 1,179,999 | 1,179,999 |
| Police Service | 247,503 | | 63,000 | 310,503 |
| National Probation Service | 65,580 | | 5,000 | 70,580 |
| Health | 135,106 | | 36,894 | 172,000 |
| Police and Crime Commissioner | | | 180,293 | 180,293 |
| YJB – Youth Justice Grant | | | 1,208,232 | 1,208,232 |
| Other (movement from reserves) | | | 59,642 | 59,642 |
| Total | 448,189 | | 2,733,060 | 3,181,249 |

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 forms 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 22/23, 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 2022/23 is provided below; the expenditure against the Youth Justice Grant is included in this budget.

| Category | Budget (£) |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Employee Costs | 2,189,910 |
| Other Employee Costs | 30,000 |
| Premises | 182,105 |
| Supplies and Services | 33,415 |
| ICT | 97,118 |
| Third Party Payments | 127,452 |
| Transport | 73,060 |
| TOTAL | 2,733,060 |

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.

7. Progress on previous plan

The following progress has been made against the actions outlined in the Youth Justice Plan 2021/22;

- A deep dive report on resettlement was considered by the management board, and this has led to the service and board agreeing a new resettlement policy which became operational in January 2022. Training for practitioners on the policy and on resettlement practice is in progress.
- A revised quality assurance tool for assessment and planning was put in place.
- Revised processes for gaining feedback from the courts were implemented.
- The emotional and mental health action plan from the deep dive report was completed.
- Initiated, with partners, a review of the health needs and provision.
- Staff consultations on Covid-19 recovery were undertaken.
- A staff survey was conducted. This had led to the establishment of a staff engagement group to put in place an improvement plan from the findings of the survey, and to progress three outstanding actions from the 21/22 plan of putting in place a process for staff to contribute to leadership discussions, developing a staff recognition scheme and an internal communications plan.
- Provided restorative approaches training for key groups of staff.
- Commissioned a restorative justice health check from an independent sector expert organisation.
- Established a group to review and develop intervention programmes.
- Publicised the service vision and underlying principles within the service through the development of a “vision unpacked” briefing paper.
- The revision of the transitions protocol is in progress.

The following actions have been delayed;

- The staff conference, was originally planned for January 2022, but has been postponed until June due to the Covid-19 situation in January. The conference was to have been the springboard for the work planned to raise awareness of the child first approach to practice (see section 3 of this plan).
- The work on a remand strategy has been delayed due to capacity issues.
- The team development training was originally scheduled for March 2022, but due to high levels of leave has been postponed until June 2022.
- Possible solutions for providing access for children’s social care to the services client information system are still being investigated.

Outstanding actions from 21/22 have been carried forward into the priorities and action plan for 22/23 as outlined in section 13 of this plan.

8. Performance and priorities

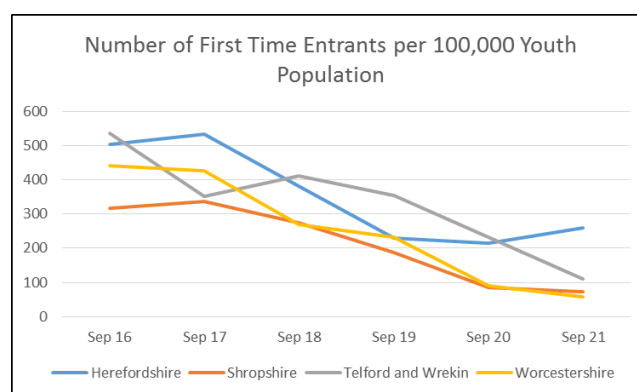
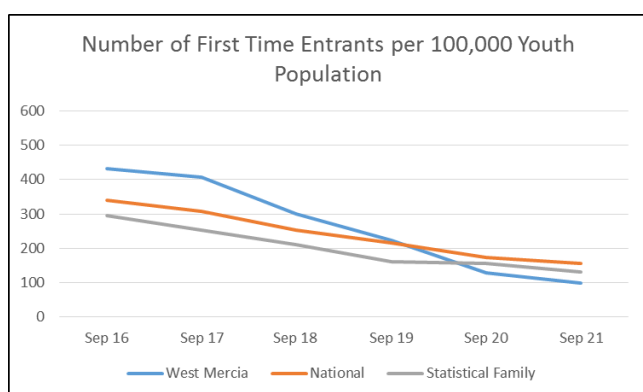
(i) National Outcome Measures

There are three national outcome measures, first time entrants to the youth justice system, use of custody and reoffending.

First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System (FTE)

The FTE indicator is expressed as the number of first time entrants per 100,000 youth population for comparison purposes. It should be noted that in two areas with relatively small youth populations in West Mercia, Herefordshire and Telford and Wrekin, small changes in the actual number of first time entrants have a disproportionate effect on the rate per 100,000 when compared to areas with larger youth populations.

The most recent data for FTEs is for the year October 2020 to September 2021.



| First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System per 100,000 Youth Population | | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Period | Sep 16 | Sep 17 | Sep 18 | Sep 19 | Sep 20 | Sep 21 |
| West Mercia | 433 | 408 | 300 | 222 | 128 | 98 |
| National | 341 | 309 | 253 | 216 | 174 | 156 |
| Statistical Family | 296 | 253 | 211 | 160 | 156 | 132 |
| Herefordshire | 503 | 534 | 380 | 228 | 214 | 259 |
| Shropshire | 317 | 337 | 273 | 188 | 86 | 73 |
| Telford and Wrekin | 535 | 351 | 412 | 355 | 232 | 111 |
| Worcestershire | 441 | 426 | 270 | 232 | 91 | 59 |

FTEs have been reducing since 2009, and since 2017 the West Mercia rate has been reducing more rapidly than the national and statistical neighbour rates, and in 2020, for the first time, the West Mercia rate was lower than both the national and statistical family rates. One area within West Mercia, Herefordshire, has a higher rate than the national rate.

Although the Herefordshire rate increased in 2021 compared to 2020, the overall trend since 2016 is still a reduction and the increase in the rate relates to an additional 12 children becoming FTEs in 2021 compared to 2020.

Part of the reason for the higher rate in Herefordshire is likely to be a combination of the proportion of children coming to the notice of system, 0.68% of the youth population compared to the other areas (which vary between 0.4% and 0.5% of the population) combined with the lowest overall rate of diversion from formal disposals at 38%, compared to other areas which range between 53% and

77%. It is planned to undertake analysis on the reasons for the higher rate of FTEs in Herefordshire and the inconsistencies of diversion rates between the areas.

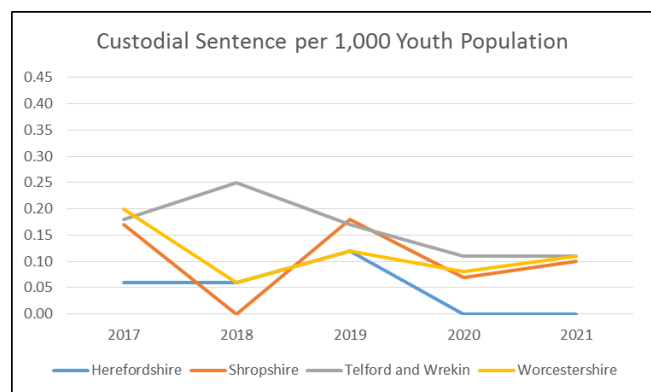
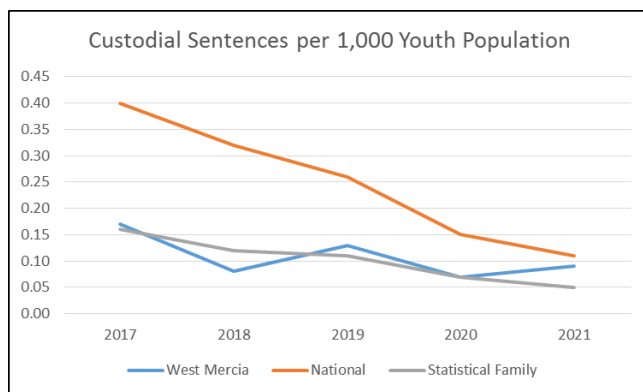
Nationally the FTE rates range from 50 to 440 (median 155), placing West Mercia in the top quartile of the performance range.

The reduction in the FTE rates since 2019 have been contributed to by the implementation of a revised joint decision process for out of court disposals across the four local authority areas between June 2019 and March 2020. The new arrangements bring more children into scope for having their behaviour dealt with through informal out of court disposal interventions rather than formal criminal justice system sanctions.

In the year October 2020 to September 2021 392 cases were considered by the joint decision making arrangements, and 263 of these, 67%, were diverted from formal justice system outcomes.

Use of Custody

The national outcome indicator for use of custody is the number of custodial sentences per 1,000 youth population. The most recent data for this indicator is for the calendar year 2021.



| Number of Custodial Sentences per 1,000 Youth Population | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| Period | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
| West Mercia | 0.17 | 0.08 | 0.13 | 0.07 | 0.09 |
| National | 0.40 | 0.32 | 0.26 | 0.15 | 0.11 |
| Statistical Family | 0.16 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.07 | 0.05 |
| Herefordshire | 0.06 | 0.06 | 0.12 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Shropshire | 0.17 | 0.00 | 0.18 | 0.07 | 0.10 |
| Telford and Wrekin | 0.18 | 0.25 | 0.17 | 0.11 | 0.11 |
| Worcestershire | 0.20 | 0.06 | 0.12 | 0.08 | 0.11 |

West Mercia is a low use of custody area, in 2021 the rate of custodial sentences was 0.09, representing 11 custodial sentences across West Mercia. This is a slight increase on the previous year where the rate was 0.07 and the number of sentences 8. The current rate compares favourably to the national rate of 0.11 and is slightly higher than the statistical neighbour group rate of 0.05. As the graphs of the West Mercia areas demonstrate the rates are volatile over time due to the very small numbers of custodial sentences made in each area. In 2021 there were no custodial sentences made on Herefordshire children, 3 on Shropshire Children, 2 on Telford and Wrekin Children and 6 on Worcestershire children.

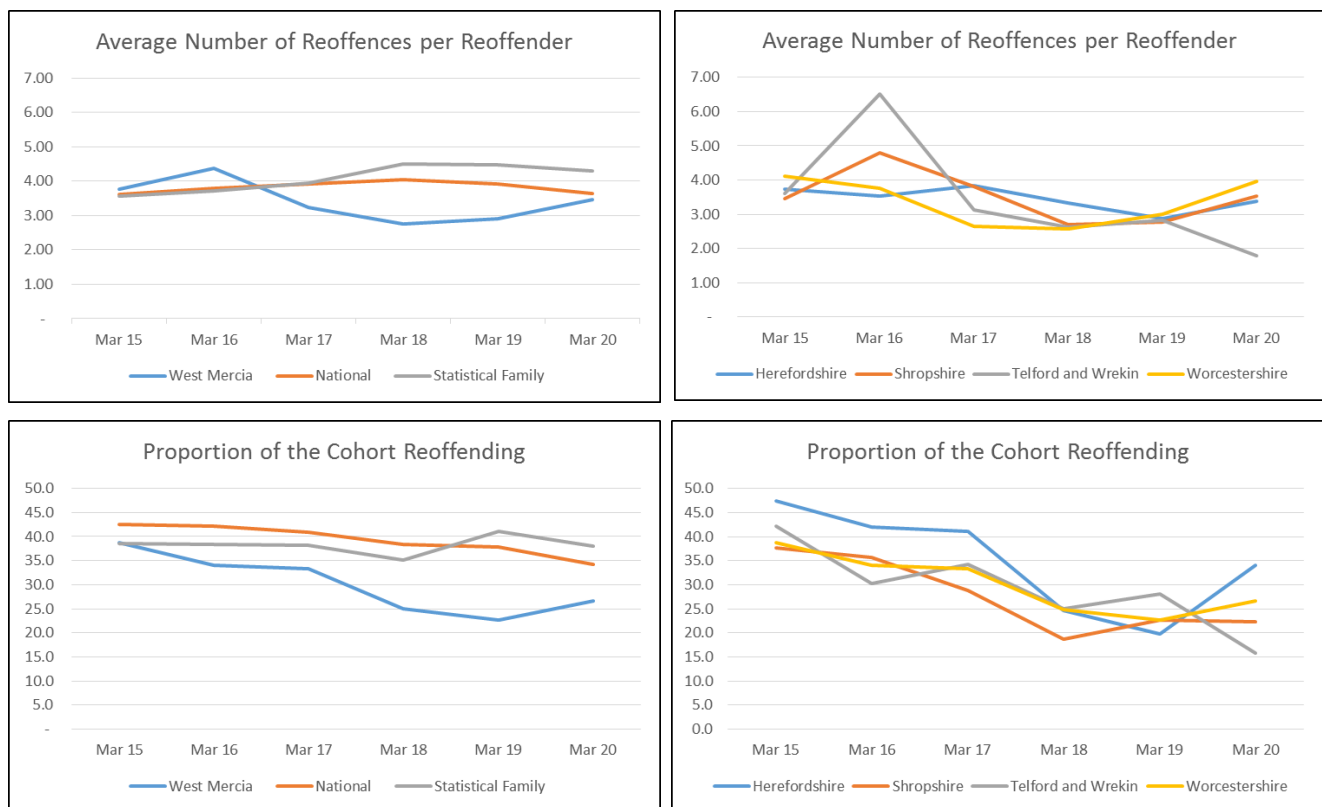
The youth justice service seeks to avoid custodial sentences through the offer of the community based alternative of Intensive Supervision and Surveillance. This programme is a combination of an intensive, up to 25 hours a week, intervention programme and an electronically monitored curfew.

In 2021 the service developed a new resettlement policy in relation to the service provided to children transitioning from custody back into the community, the policy became operational in 2022, and staff training in resettlement is ongoing.

Reoffending

There are two measures used for the reoffending indicator both for the same cohort of children, which is all children receiving a substantive youth justice disposal (caution or conviction) within a 12 month period. The members of the cohort are tracked for twelve months, even if they become an adult during that period, for any proven reoffending. The two measures are the average number of reoffences per reoffender and the proportion (percentage) of the cohort who reoffend.

The most recent data is for the cohort identified in the period April 2019 to March 2020.



| Average Number of Reoffences per Reoffender | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Period | Mar 15 | Mar 16 | Mar 17 | Mar 18 | Mar 19 | Mar 20 |
| West Mercia | 3.78 | 4.38 | 3.23 | 2.75 | 2.90 | 3.46 |
| National | 3.61 | 3.79 | 3.92 | 4.05 | 3.91 | 3.65 |
| Statistical Family | 3.57 | 3.71 | 3.95 | 4.51 | 4.48 | 4.29 |
| Herefordshire | 3.72 | 3.54 | 3.83 | 3.33 | 2.88 | 3.39 |
| Shropshire | 3.46 | 4.80 | 3.81 | 2.70 | 2.77 | 3.53 |
| Telford and Wrekin | 3.60 | 6.53 | 3.12 | 2.63 | 2.81 | 1.79 |
| Worcestershire | 4.11 | 3.77 | 2.65 | 2.56 | 3.00 | 3.96 |

| Proportion of the Cohort Reoffending (%) | | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Period | Mar 15 | Mar 16 | Mar 17 | Mar 18 | Mar 19 | Mar 20 |
| West Mercia | 38.7 | 34.0 | 33.4 | 24.9 | 22.6 | 26.7 |
| National | 42.6 | 42.2 | 40.9 | 38.4 | 37.8 | 34.2 |
| Statistical Family | 38.5 | 38.4 | 38.2 | 35.2 | 41.1 | 38.1 |
| Herefordshire | 47.5 | 41.9 | 41.0 | 24.6 | 19.8 | 34.0 |
| Shropshire | 37.7 | 35.7 | 28.9 | 18.7 | 22.7 | 22.4 |
| Telford and Wrekin | 42.2 | 30.3 | 34.2 | 25.0 | 28.1 | 15.7 |
| Worcestershire | 38.7 | 34.0 | 33.4 | 24.9 | 22.6 | 26.7 |

The frequency rate (average number of reoffences per reoffender) for West Mercia for the April 19 to March 20 cohort, 3.46 is similar but slightly better than the national rate, 3.65 and better than the statistical neighbour rate of 4.29. The frequency rate in West Mercia has been reducing since the March 2015 cohort. The rates for April 19 to March 20 across all four local authority areas in West Mercia are lower than the statistical neighbour rate and three areas, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin, have rates lower than the national rate. The graph outlining the rates for the four West Mercia areas demonstrate how volatile this particular measure is over time. Part of the reason for this is that the actual number of reoffenders are quite small, so a few individuals who are persistently reoffending within these cohorts significantly affect the overall average of reoffences per reoffender.

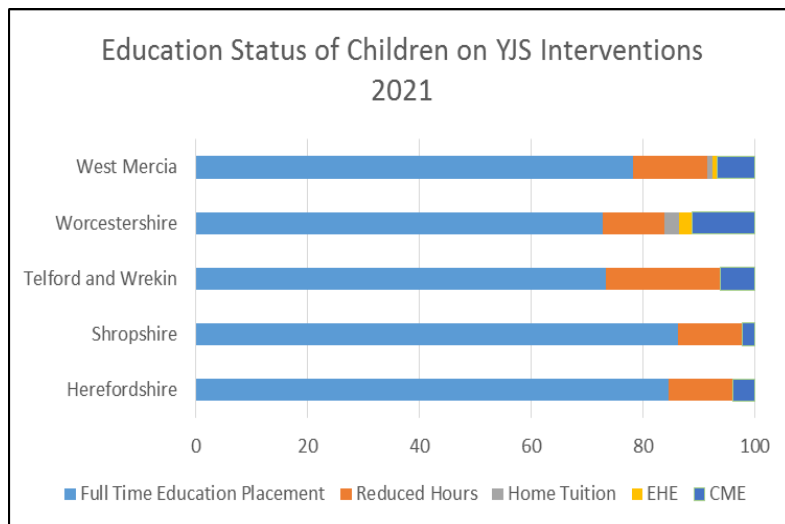
The proportion of children reoffending in West Mercia, 26.7%, is significantly lower than both England at 34.2% and the statistical family group at 38.1%. The proportion of children reoffending in all four local authority areas are also lower than the national and statistical neighbour group; Herefordshire at 34.0%, Shropshire at 22.4%, Telford and Wrekin at 15.7% and Worcestershire at 26.7%.

Promoting desistance from offending is the aim of the service’s work with children, interventions delivered to individual children are based on a comprehensive assessment of risks and needs using the national AssetPlus assessment and planning framework. Training has been provided to staff during 2021/22 on harmful sexual behaviour, suicide prevention programmes and restorative approaches.

(ii) Education

The service has 2.5 full time equivalent Education, Training and Employment Officers. These officers work to secure suitable ETE placements for children on intervention programmes with the service.

In 2021 the Youth Justice Service worked with 226 children of school age, and 207 (91%) were in an education placement, however 30 of these cases were on reduced timetables, meaning the number receiving a full time education was 177 (78%), 15 children (7%) were children missing education (CME).



The proportion receiving a full time education in each local authority area is as follows;

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Herefordshire | 85% |
| Shropshire | 86% |
| Telford and Wrekin | 74% |
| Worcestershire | 73% |

There were 22 children (9%) subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan (Herefordshire 9, Shropshire 2, Telford and Wrekin 1 and Worcestershire 10), 2 children (0.9%) were being electively home educated and 2 (0.9%) in receipt of home tuition.

Thirty of the children were receiving education in an alternative provision. Of the children not in full time education (those in alternative provision, home tuition and CME) 17% are looked after children and 8.5% are from BAME backgrounds.

Data from the 166 open cases in February 2022, showed that 35 (21%) of the cases were identified as having special education needs or disabilities (SEND). A deep dive report on children with SEND in the youth justice system in West Mercia has been prepared which will be considered by the service’s management board in 2022/23. The report has identified areas for improvement in terms of

developing clear partnership arrangements for children with SEND in the youth justice system, improving consistency of practice across the West Mercia area and ensuring the needs of children with SEND are better addressed in planning. Although three of the four areas in West Mercia have previously been awarded the Youth Justice SEND quality mark, these are now due for re-designation. Improvement work in terms of meeting the needs of children with SEND in the youth justice system will be incorporated in the work planned under the supporting, valuing and addressing diversity priority of this plan.

The management board receives regular reports on the ETE status of children open to the service and advised of any barriers or challenges to securing appropriate placements. There are meetings in each area between the Youth Justice Service and the Education Services, to cross reference information and ensure plans are in place to secure provision when necessary.

(iii) Over Represented Children

Within West Mercia the proportion of Black and minority ethnic (BAME) children in the offending population at 7% is slightly higher, but not statistically significant, when compared to the local BAME population at 6%. Black children, however, are overrepresented in the BAME offending group compared to the BAME general population at a 4 percentage point difference, although this is lower than the national difference of 7 percentage points. Overall there needs to be caution interpreting the ethnicity data, as the numbers are so low in the offending cohort, for example there were only 12 Black children in the overall cohort of 297.

During the period October 2020 – September 2021 there were 391 cases referred to the joint decision arrangements for Out of Court Disposals, 23 of whom were BAME children (6%). This is the same proportion of BAME children in the general population. Diversion from formal justice disposals through the use of informal interventions (Outcome 22) was 52% for both the White cohort and the BAME cohort. There was a slight difference in the overall diversion rate, including straight no further action decisions of 2 percentage points, where White children were diverted in 67% of cases compared with 65% for BAME children, however due to the low number of BAME children in the cohort (23), one child accounts for 4 percentage points. It is planned to scrutinise the decisions made for the 23 BAME children through a case audit.

During the same period as above, there were 8 custodial sentences, only one of these was on a child from a BAME background, for a murder committed outside of the West Mercia area. This young person had relocated to the West Mercia from the area in which the offence was committed.

Looked after children accounted for 23% of children receiving a substantive outcome, a caution or conviction, in 2021. Through the joint decision making arrangements for out of court disposals, where at all possible, looked after children are diverted from formal justice system disposals. In the period Oct 20 to Sep 21, 57% of the looked after children referred to the joint decision making arrangements were diverted from formal justice system disposals. There is a draft protocol in place to reduce the unnecessary criminalisation of looked after children.

The management board and service will be taking steps in 22/23 and 23/24 to better understand why some groups of children are over represented in the youth justice system.

(iv) Diversion

All children committing and admitting an offence are referred to the Joint Decision Making Panel (JDMP) for out of court disposals, unless they are excluded either due to the seriousness of the offence or other factors identified in the joint West Mercia Police and Youth Justice Service protocol and guidelines. One of the aims of the JDMP is to ensure that where possible those children who have committed low level offences are diverted away from the justice system and receive support for their desistance through informal disposals.

The JDMPs consist of representatives from the Police, Youth Justice Service, Community Panel Members and Social Care, and make the decisions based on an assessment of child conducted by a Youth Justice Officer and information from the victim.

The informal disposals, which may be delivered or part delivered by other agencies, are mainly delivered by the Youth Justice Service and are tailored to address the needs and risks identified in the assessment of the child.

In the period Oct 20 to Sep 21, there were 401 cases referred to the JDMPs across West Mercia and 272 (68%) of these cases were diverted from the formal justice system disposals through the use of no further action, Community Resolution or Outcome 22, 103 (26%) of cases received a Caution or Conditional Caution.

Data on the throughput and decisions of the JDMPs by gender, offence type and ethnicity is collated quarterly and provided to management board and West Mercia Police's children and young people's board.

There is an out of court scrutiny panel for all ages, at which a sample of youth cases are considered. The panel is chaired by the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and has representatives from the magistrates, CPS, Police and Youth Justice.

(v) Serious violence and exploitation

Serious violent crime is not a significant issue in West Mercia. Using the YJB definition of violence against the person offences, robbery and drug offences which have a gravity score of 5 or above, there were 27 serious violence offences involving 25 children in West Mercia in 2021 representing 5% of all offences. This compares to 38 offences in 2020, involving 30 children and representing 7% of all offences. The children involved in serious violence offences in 2021 represent 2.3 per 10,000 youth population, this compares to rates of 5.1 for the West Midlands region and 3.9 nationally.

We recognise, however, that this may become an emerging issue associated with serious organised crime and with the increase in knife and offensive weapon offences with a gravity factor less than 5 from 32 in 2020 to 41 in 2021. As a result the service has established a serious youth violence task and finish group to plan the service's response to serious violent crime. The service already has weapon crime programmes and is a contributing partner in West Mercia Police's knife crime prevention programme, Steer Clear.

In 2021 of 427 interventions, there was child exploitation identified in 12, participation in county lines in 17, 134 assessed as being at risk of exploitation and 17 where there was either suspected gang involvement or risk of gang involvement. The service will, through the pre-court joint decision making arrangements, seek to avoid the criminalisation of young people criminally exploited or on the edges of these activities.

The service works as part of the child exploitation strategy and operational groups and the Serious Organised Crime Joint Agency Groups (SOCJAG) across the area to address the issues of county lines type activity, organised crime group and gang 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 and the Child Exploitation Strategic and Operational Groups in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Herefordshire.

(vi) Constructive Resettlement and the Use of Custody

The service and management board agreed a new resettlement policy, which is based on the principles of constructive resettlement at the end of 2021. Staff training on the policy and resettlement practice is currently in progress. There is still work to progress at a strategic level to ensure that the barriers to the successful delivery of the policy are addressed, in particular timely

identification of suitable accommodation for release and a review of the policy and practice has been planned for nine months after the policy became operational.

The use of custodial sentences is reported on in the section on the national outcome measures above.

During 2021 there were 15 remands to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) involving 12 individual children, four of these remands were due to children jointly charged with a murder.

Of the twelve children made subject to YDA, one was Vietnamese, one mixed heritage, one White other and 10 White British, children from BAME groups therefore account for 16% of children remanded. Six of the remands are still active, in three cases the child has either been made subject to bail or a community order, but re-remanded on breach, two have resulted in Youth Rehabilitation Orders on sentence and two in custodial sentences.

One of the actions being carried forward from 21/22 is the development of a new remand strategy and updating the remand protocols that are in place with each local authority.

(vii) Restorative Justice and Victims

The service has a Victim Policy and RJ Strategy, both of these are currently under review as part of the commissioned restorative approaches health check being undertaken by an independent sector expert organisation. The health check final report is expected early in 22/23. The service has 2.5 FTE Victim Liaison Officers (VLO), and victim contact for referrals to the joint decision arrangements for out of court disposals are undertaken by the service’s Police Officers.

In the period April 2021 to September 2021 228 victims were contacted and invited to participate in a restorative process, of those 76 (33.3%) accepted, the majority opting for a letter of apology (33) or indirect reparation (32).

| | Number of Victims Contacted | Number accepting a restorative outcome | Type of Restorative Outcome | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | | | Letter of Apology | Direct Reparation | Indirect Reparation | Face to Face Meeting |
| Herefordshire | 52 | 21 | 9 | 2 | 9 | 1 |
| Shropshire | 37 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 9 | 1 |
| Telford | 54 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Worcestershire | 85 | 28 | 12 | 3 | 12 | 1 |
| West Mercia | 228 | 76 | 33 | 7 | 32 | 4 |

In all cases where there is no victim, children are expected to take part in generic victim awareness work as part of their intervention to understand the impact of offending on themselves and others, in most cases there is also an expectation they will undertake community reparation, but this is decided on a case by case basis.

Victims are invited to complete a victim satisfaction form following the end of the intervention. This is currently being revised to better capture impact, and this will be informed by the outcome of the restorative health check. There is additionally a separate feedback form for victims involved in restorative justice conferences.

There were 48 victim feedback forms received in the past 12 months, of those 46 (96%) were positive about the support they received from the service’s VLOs or Police Officers. The two where there was negative feedback were cases which were considered by the joint decision arrangements for out of court disposals, and the negative feedback was only in relation to the disposal outcome.

Priorities

The priorities for 2022/23 have been determined through a joint workshop of the management board and the management team.

People Themes:

- Supporting Staff Development, Wellbeing and Morale

Two years of alternative working arrangements due to covid-19 has had an effect on staff morale. Team development training planned in 21/22 had to be postponed and is now taking place in first quarter of 22/23. A staff survey was conducted in 21/22, and a group established to put together an action plan from the responses from the survey, this work is carried forward into 22/23. The service will have a learning and development plan for 22/23.

Practice Themes:

- Embedding Child First in Practice

Work needs to continue to ensure that the child first approach is understood fully and reflected in practice, this also includes the promotion and development of trauma informed practice.

- Improving the Resettlement Offer

Although a new resettlement policy and guidance was put in place in at the end of 21/22 the service needs to ensure that the new guidance and approach becomes embedded in practice and that the pathways to support services to ensure successful resettlement are in place.

- Improving the intervention and risk plans for our service users

The service has identified risk and desistance planning as an area requiring improvement and work needs to be under taken to strengthen this area of work

- Strengthening our restorative approaches

A restorative health check was commissioned in 21/22, and will report in early in 22/23. The service will need to respond to the outcome of the health check, putting in place an improvement plan if required.

Partnership Themes:

- Strengthening opportunities for emotional and mental health for service users

Although there was good progress against this priority in 2021/22 with the completion of the EMH action plan, the review of health needs and provision of health services to the youth justice service is still in progress and requires completion during 2022/23.

- Improving our work with partner agencies and ensuring the service is embedded across the four areas

The service need to ensure that it is improving joint work with other agencies, in particular with the Probation Service in terms of the transition of children from the youth to adult system and also our work with Children's Social Care.

Governance, Leadership and Management Themes

- Responding to the recommendations and findings of service inspection

The partnership was subject to an inspection in January 2022 and the report will be published in May 2022. The partnership will need to respond to the recommendations and findings of the inspection plan through the development and implementation of an inspection improvement plan.

- Improving quality and consistency of practice across the service

The service needs to improve and develop the quality assurance of practice and promote consistency of practice in key areas of practice, including out of court disposal decision making.

- Supporting, valuing and addressing diversity

The service and board need to understand better the backgrounds of children who are over represented in the youth justice system and ensure that the diverse needs of service users are identified in assessment and adequately taken account of in their plans and the delivery of interventions.

- Hearing the voice of child

The service has feedback processes in place, but the board recognise that they and the service need to better hear the voice of the child, understand their lived experience, and to use this information to inform service planning.

Underpinning all the priorities will be a cross cutting theme of ensuring that that we deliver the best possible service within the resources available. Service capacity and structure will be considered as part of the governance review which will form part of the inspection improvement plan.

9. National standards

A new set of National Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System were published in 2019, these marked a departure from the previous set of standards in that they were not process standards, and were more qualitative in nature, and they contained, for the first time, standards for youth justice service management boards (strategic standards) in addition to standards relating to service delivery (operational standards).

The standards “define the minimum expectation for all agencies that provide statutory services to ensure good outcomes for children in the youth justice system” and “are intended to guide strategic and operational services’ understanding of *what* is expected, but do not prescribe how services should be designed and delivered.”

There are five standards; NS1 – Out of Court Disposals, NS2 – At Court, NS3 – In the Community, NS4 – In Secure and NS5 – Transitions and Resettlement. A self-assessment was undertaken against the standards and submitted to the Youth Justice Board in May 2020. The self-assessment identified improvements were required for the service and management board to fully comply with the five strategic standards and for two of the operational standards for NS1 and NS2.

An improvement plan was submitted to the Youth Justice Board with the self-assessment. The improvement plan has 49 actions and 39 (80%) of the actions have been completed. In 22/23 it is intended to review the outstanding actions including:-

| NS | Planned Action |
|----|---|
| 1 | Refresher training on desistance |
| 2 | Revised remand protocol and strategy |
| 2 | Development of a feedback survey for magistrates |
| 2 | Development of a disproportionality/diversity strategy |
| 3 | Review if and how management board members are involved in auditing |
| 3 | Assurance reporting on completion of orders |
| 3 | Monitoring involvement of other partner involvement in orders |
| 5 | Ensure that Probation Personnel are in place |

Any thematic case audits will continue to assess compliance with relevant national standards. It is expected that a further National Standards self-assessment will be required either late 22/23 or in 23/24.

10. Challenges, risks and issues

The following risks to service delivery and development have been identified for 2022/23:-

1. Effective case management is compromised due to increased case loads

Some teams have continued to experience 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.

The short term mitigation has been to increase capacity in those teams affected through the use of temporary increases in hours for staff on less than full time contracts and through some cross service working.

This was identified as a risk for 21/22, and at that time it was thought this may be a temporary issue, but the trend has continued throughout 21/22, so needs to be further 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. Limited management capacity affecting the ability of the management team to pursue development work in a timely manner and potentially affect their wellbeing

The role of the team manager is extensive and was further impacted by the working arrangements that have been in place for most of the previous two years due to Covid-19. There have been mitigations in place during this period of time, including a reduction in report requirements by the management board. The board will be considering the management capacity issues during 2022/23.

3. Effective case management compromised due to lack of consistency and quality of management oversight

Although the report for the HMI Probation inspection on the service is yet to be published, feedback provided by inspectors indicated that over sight of practice was not making enough difference to the quality of practice. There is an action in the delivery plan in section 13 of this plan to revise the quality assurance framework.

4. Insufficient capacity to implement the inspection improvement plan

In addition to reviewing the sufficiency of management resource in the service (see point 3 above), there may be a need for a temporary increase in capacity in short term to implement the inspection improvement plan.

5. Significant proportion of other Local Authorities Children managed by the service

There are a significant number of independent sector children homes within the West Mercia area particularly in Shropshire and Herefordshire. The placement of children with criminal court orders by other authorities in these homes is outside of the control and influence of the service, therefore the service is unable to manage the volume of this additional work load demand. A connected risk, is children being placed within the area who are either particularly at risk of exploitation, or who have profile of committing very serious offences.

11. Service improvement plan

The improvement/action plan against the service priorities for 2022/23 is in section 13 of this Youth Justice Plan, "Looking Forward".

In some respects the service improvement plan for the next twelve to twenty four months will be in response the HMI Probation recommendations and findings from their inspection undertaken in January, which will be published in May 2022.

Key improvements will be required in the quality of assessment and planning, in particular responding to diverse needs, the management oversight of practice and work with other agencies to manage risks to from children in the youth justice system.

The operation of the out of disposal decision making arrangement and policy needs to be reviewed and cross service scrutiny put in place to ensure consistency in approach and outcomes for children between the four panels operating across West Mercia.

The service also needs to ensure that the recently implemented resettlement policy is embedded in practice, makes a difference for children transitioning from custody to the community and that barriers are removed to accessing provision required for successful resettlement, in particular timely identification of suitable accommodation for release.

There are actions in the delivery plan in section 13 of this plan to address these issues, and these are likely to be built on within the inspection improvement plan.

Links to the YJB Strategic Plan

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 continue to work during 22/23 to ensure we understand the child first approach and that it is translated into practice, and move towards further embedding a trauma informed approach to practice.

We have actions planned to improve the quality of practice in respect to identifying and responding to diverse needs and also in understanding better and responding to those groups of children who are over represented in the youth justice system.

Responses to Inspections and Learning Reviews

The Management Board consider the findings from HMI Probation thematic reports, and additionally consider the findings and recommendations of any other relevant reports from inspectorates, although the board has yet to consider the thematic reports published by HMI Probation in the latter part of 21/22.

In 22/23 the board will be agreeing and implementing an improvement plan in respect to the findings of partnership's inspection by HMI Probation.

In 2021/22 the board considered one learning review due to a serious incident where a child on a community order was a victim of a non-fatal stabbing. The learning review identified practice developments in respect of safety planning, defensible decision making, roles and responsibilities for care taking cases and seeking MAPPA advice. The board agreed an action plan to address the issues identified and a briefing document on the learning review was circulated to all staff.

Workforce Development

In 21/22 the service commissioned, initially for a two year period, an online training company to provide the safeguarding training for the service, and has made specific training courses from this provider mandatory, the mandatory courses being specific to each job role. Examples of the training courses that are mandatory for managers and practitioners are; Child Neglect, Assessing Mental Capacity, Deprivations of Liberty, Child Protection, Safeguarding and Child Exploitation.

Other training in 21/22 included Brook Traffic Light (Harmful sexual behaviour), AIM3 Assessment and Intervention (harmful sexual behaviour), Storm (suicide prevention), Restorative Approaches, Restorative Management and Supervision and Resettlement.

The service continues to use the Youth Justice Qualification Framework awards, allowing those Assistant Youth Justice Officers who do not hold a relevant qualification to undertake a Foundation Degree in Youth Justice as part the service's progression pathway.

The training plan for 22/23 is still in development, however there currently courses in calendar for resettlement and gang culture, knife crime, NRM and professional curiosity. Team development training for each team in the service, including the management team has also been commissioned and will take place in quarters 1 and 2 of the year.

Management Board Development

In 2022/23 the Management Board intends to undertake a full review of the governance structure, membership and operation and will ensure that YJB guidance "YJ Service Governance and Leadership", informs that process. Any development needs will be identified and addressed as part of the review.

12. Evidence-based practice and innovation

During 2021/22 the service has provided training to practitioners in three evidence based interventions; AIM3 assessment and intervention programme for young people demonstrating harmful behaviour, Storm suicide prevention programme and the Respect Young People's Programme for children who are abusive or violent to their parents.

In 21/22 the service developed a victim awareness programme for children, which is accredited by the OCN.

The service has established a programme development group which is looking to review current practice, develop new programmes and promote innovation.

13. Looking forward


The delivery plan against the priorities identified in this Youth Justice Plan is outlined below.

| Priority | Planned Activity | Owner |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Supporting Staff Development, Wellbeing and Morale | 22/23 Training and Development Plan | Learning & Development Group |
| | Response to the staff survey results | TM(SW)/Staff Engagement Group |
| | Internal communication Strategy | |
| | Staff Recognition Scheme | HoS |
| Embedding Child First in Practice | Team development training | HoS |
| | Appointment of child first champions in each team | SP (S) |
| | Development of CF policy/practice guidance | SP (S) |
| Improving the Resettlement Offer | CF awareness briefings | SP (S) |
| | Staff training | TM (W) |
| | Policy review/deep dive report | TM (W) |
| Improving the intervention and risk plans for our service users | Appointment of management board lead | TM (W) |
| | Staff training on planning | TM (S) |
| | Revising of QA framework to strengthen management oversight of planning | TM (SW) |
| Strengthening our restorative approaches | Put in place plan to address finding of the restorative health check | VDO/SP (W)/ TM (SW) |
| Strengthening opportunities for emotional and mental health for service users | Complete the health needs and health provision to the Youth Justice Service review | TM (S)/TM (W) |
| Improving our work with partner agencies | Agree the revised transitions protocol | TM (SW) |
| Improving quality and consistency of practice across the service | Revision of the quality assurance framework | TM (SW) |
| | Put in place cross service scrutiny of OoCD decision making | TM (H) |
| Supporting, valuing and addressing diversity | Staff training – working with diversity | TM (TW) |
| | More regular and detailed reporting on groups of service users over represented in the YJ system | TM (H) |
| | Amending OoCD assessment form to include diversity issues | TM (TW) |
| Hearing the voice of child | Put in place process for management board to hear the voice and lived experience of children in the YJ system | SP (W) |
| Responding to the recommendations and findings of service inspection | Development and implementation of an inspection improvement plan | HOS |

Action Owners:

| | |
|---------|---|
| HoS | Head of Service |
| TW (H) | Team Manager, Herefordshire |
| TW (S) | Team Manager, Shropshire |
| TW (TW) | Team Manager, Telford and Wrekin |
| TW (SW) | Team Manager – Service Wide |
| SP (W) | Senior Practitioner (Worcestershire – JP) |
| SP (S) | Senior Practitioner (Shropshire – JS) |
| VDO | Volunteer Development Officer |

14. Sign off, submission and approval

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Chair of YJS Board - name | Jo Britton |
| Signature |  |
| Date | 30 th June 2022 |

15. Appendix 1 - Management Board

The Management Board membership as at 1st April 2022

| Board Member | Title | Representing |
|------------------|--|---|
| Jo Britton | Executive Director of Children Services | Telford and Wrekin Council |
| Tina Russell | Chief Executive WCF and Director of Children Services | Worcestershire County Council and Worcestershire Children First |
| Daryl Freeman | Corporate Director for Children and Young People | Herefordshire Council |
| Tanya Miles | Executive Director of People | Shropshire Council |
| Nigel Webster | Superintendent | West Mercia Police |
| Jackie Stevenson | Head of Probation - Worcestershire | Probation Service |
| George Branch | Head of Probation – Herefordshire, Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin | Probation Service |
| Jade Brooks | Director of Operations | Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG |
| Zena Young | Executive Director of Nursing and Quality | Shropshire and Telford CCG |
| Gareth Boulton | Deputy Chief Executive | Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Tina Knight | Service Delivery Manager | Providing a social care perspective to the board |

The board attendance for 2021/22 is outlined in the table below.

| Name of Representative | Agency | May 2021 | July 2021 | Sept 2021 | Nov 2021 | Mar 2022 |
|--|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Karen Bradshaw (until Oct 2021) | Local Authority – Shropshire Council | Yes | Yes | Yes | | |
| Tanya Miles (from Oct 2021) | | | | | Yes | Yes |
| Cath Knowles (From April 2021 to September 2021) | Local Authority – Herefordshire Council | Yes | No | No, replaced by Matthew Sampson | | |
| Darryl Freeman (From Oct 2021) | | | | | Y | Y |
| Tina Russell | Local Authority – Worcestershire Council | Yes | No | No, Replaced by Emma Brittain | No, Replaced by Emma Brittain | Yes |
| Jo Britton | Local Authority – Telford and Wrekin Council | No, T&W represented by TN below | Yes | No T&W represented by TN below | Yes | Yes |
| Tina Knight | | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Morwenna Lansdale (from April 2021 to Feb 2022) | West Mercia Police | Yes | Yes | No | No, Replaced by Sarah Bennett | |
| Nigel Webster (from March 2022) | | | | | | No, Replaced by Sally Williams |
| Jade Brooks | Health – Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG | Yes | Yes | No | No | No, replaced by Hazel Braund |
| Zena Young | Health- Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin CCG | No, Replaced by Maria Hadley | Yes | No, Replaced by Maria Hadley | Yes | Yes |
| Jackie Stevenson | Probation Service | Yes | No, Replaced by Paul Woods | Yes | No, Replaced by David Cookson | Yes |
| George Branch | | | | | | Yes |
| Andy Champness (until February 2022) | Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner | Y | Y | N | N | |
| Gareth Boulton (from March 2022) | | | | | | Y |

Board meetings for 2022 have been scheduled for:-

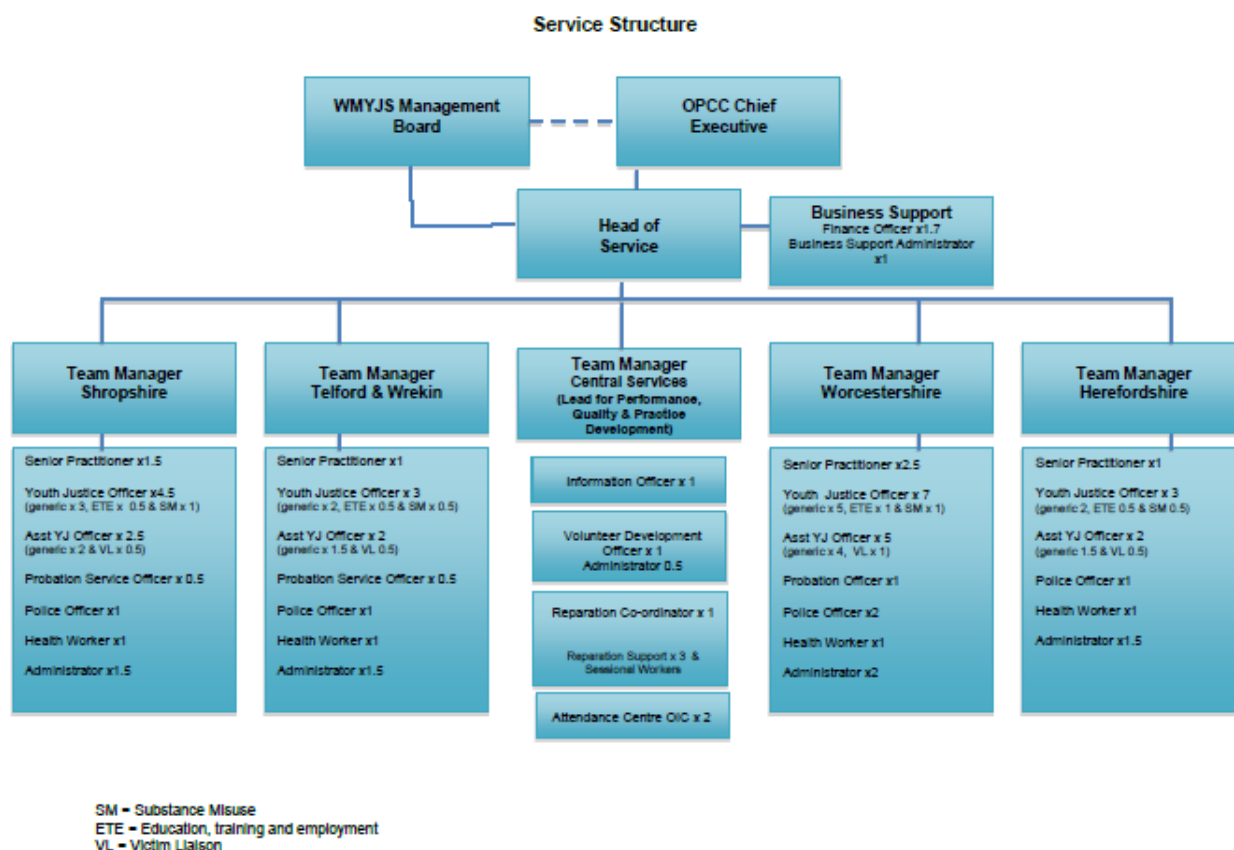
4th May 2022

13th July 2022

14th September 2022

16th November 2022

16. Appendix 2 – Service Structure Chart.



An explanation of the service structure is provided in section 5 of this plan. The Head of Service has a dual accountability to the Chief Executive of the OPCC, who provides the day to day management for the Head of Service, and to the Chair of the Management Board, particularly in regards to practice issues. The service has a dedicated Information Officer whose line manager is the Team Manager (Service Wide) who has the lead for quality and performance.

Staff by ethnicity and gender (number of individual people):

| Ethnicity | Managers Strategic | | Managers Operational | | Practitioners | | Administrative | | Sessional | | Student | | Referral Order Panel Volunteer | | Other Volunteer | | Total | |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------|----------------------|----------|---------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Asian | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 2 | | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Black | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 0 |
| Mixed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 |
| White | 1 | | | 4 | 20 | 38 | 1 | 11 | | | | | 9 | 20 | 1 | 3 | 32 | 76 |
| Any other ethnic group | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 0 | 2 |
| Not known | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 20 | 39 | 1 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 23 | 1 | 4 | 33 | 82 |

Staff by known disability (number of full time equivalent):

| | Strategic Manager | Operational Manager | Practitioners | Administration | Referral Order Panel Volunteer | Other Volunteer | Total |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Disabled (self-classified) | 0 | 0 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 0 | 0 | 2.8 |

Common youth justice terms

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ACE | Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices |
| AIM 2 and 3 | Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour |
| ASB | Anti-social behaviour |
| AssetPlus | Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour |
| CAMHS | Child and adolescent mental health services |
| CCE | Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity |
| Children | We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection. |
| Child First | A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion |
| Child looked-after | Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority |
| CME | Child Missing Education |
| Constructive resettlement | The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social |
| Contextual safeguarding | An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety |
| Community resolution | Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt |
| EHCP | Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs |
| ETE | Education, training or employment |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| EHE | Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school |
| EOTAS | Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting |
| FTE | First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal) |
| HMIP | Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services |
| HSB | Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves |
| JAC | Junior Attendance Centre |
| MAPPA | Multi agency public protection arrangements |
| MFH | Missing from Home |
| NRM | National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them |
| OOCD | Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court |
| Outcome 22/21 | An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending |
| Over-represented children | Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average |
| RHI | Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing |
| SEND | Special educational needs and disabilities |
| SLCN | Speech, Language and communication needs |
| STC | Secure training centre |
| SCH | Secure children's home |
| Young adult | We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service. |
| YJS | Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach |
| YOI | Young offender institution |