

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> All
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> Camden Youth Justice Plan 2023-25 (SP/2023/15)	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Cabinet Member for Young People and Culture Cabinet Member for Safer Communities Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b>  Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Council	<b>DATE</b>  19 <sup>th</sup> December 2023  20 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
<b>STRATEGIC CONTEXT</b>  We Make Camden is our joint vision for the borough, developed in partnership with our community. The priorities set out within the Youth Justice Plan align with We Make Camden by focusing on tackling disproportionality, supporting children to have the best start in life and opportunities to reach their potential. The report has been informed by collaboration with children, parents and staff consultations to consider where we need to be focusing our attention to deliver brilliant services.  The Way We Work is the Council’s response to We Make Camden. The identified priorities seek to strengthen how we collaborate with children, families and communities, to make better connect and collaborate to ensure our statutory services deliver what residents need to feel safe, thrive and contribute to their community.	
<b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b>  This report is a condition of our Youth Justice Board grant. It outlines the priorities for the Youth Justice Service over the next 2 years 2023-25. It provides an overview of progress from the previous plan, references national and regional priorities and how we seek to deliver on our priorities.  The report is being presented to Cabinet for recommendation to Council because it must be signed off by full Council under Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000.  <b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b>  No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report  <b>Contact Officer:</b>	

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the report and make any recommendations to Cabinet.

The Cabinet is asked to recommend the Council to approve the Youth Justice Plan 2023-2025.

The Council is recommended to approve the Youth Justice Plan 2023-25.

Signed:



Tim Aldridge  
Executive Director  
Children and Learning

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## 1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) is a non – departmental public body created by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to oversee the youth justice system for England and Wales. It is sponsored by the Ministry of Justice and its Board members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice.
- 1.2. The YJB's primary function is to monitor the operation of the youth justice system and the provision of youth justice services. Within England and Wales, it is responsible for:
  - using information and evidence to form an expert view of how to get the best outcomes for children who offend and for victims of crime.
  - advising the Secretary of State for Justice and those working in youth justice services about how well the system is operating, and how improvements can be made.
  - identifying and sharing best practice
  - promoting the voice of the child
  - commissioning research and publishing information in connection with good practice
  - monitoring the youth justice system and the provision of youth justice services
  - making grants, with the approval of the Secretary of State, for the purposes of the operation of the youth justice system and services
  - providing information technology related assistance for the operation of the youth justice system and services.
- 1.3. Camden's Youth Justice Services (YJS) works with its key partners - police, children's Services, health services, probation, community safety and voluntary and private sector providers. The Youth Justice Service works across 3 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - reducing first time entrants to the Youth Justice System, Reducing Custody and Reducing Re-offending. The National Youth Justice Board also requires the Youth Justice Service look and address children from groups who are over-represented, prevention, diversion, education, restorative approaches and victims, detention in police custody, remands and constructive resettlement. Camden have been assessed by the Youth Justice Board oversight framework as strong performance, the highest rating.
- 1.4. Each year the Youth Justice Service is required to complete a Youth Justice Plan demonstrating its achievements over the past year and its priorities for the coming year as a condition of its grant from the National Youth Justice Board (YJB). For the first time, the YJB have noted this needs to have full Council sign off, when previously this was signed off by the Exec Director – this will be discussed at December Council meeting. The Youth Justice Plan covers the 2023-25 period and will be reviewed in 12 months. It supports We Make Camden ambitions by ensuring that Camden actively tackles injustice and inequality, creating safe, strong and open communities where everyone

can contribute, is aligned with the Community Wealth Fund objectives and supports the Youth Mission where every young person has access to economic opportunity that enables them to be safe and secure by 2025. The plan outlines the revised YJS, which have been agreed in partnership with staff, children, families.

- 1.5. Plans were required to be submitted with full sign off by the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Due to significant changes in the Senior Leadership team, we were unable to meet this deadline. Our plan was therefore submitted with the approval of the Board Chair with confirmation of full sign off submitted later. The 'sign off' by the Chair is an indication that the wider management board have approved the submitted plan and all sections outlined in the Youth Justice Plan Structure have been covered.
- 1.6. The Plan gives an overview of the work of the Youth Justice Service (YJS) in Camden and sets out details of performance over the past year. In Camden we continue to aspire to make Camden 'a better Borough, where no-one is left behind'. We continue to work together, in Partnership, to make our communities, families, and children safe; the Youth Justice Service has a key role to play by:
- Diverting children away from the Criminal Justice System, where appropriate
  - Helping prevent offending and reoffending
  - Reducing the use of custody
  - Contributing to multi-agency public protection and safeguarding
  - Adopting the Camden Resilient Families model of practice
- The YJS does this by working together with its key partners – the Police, Children's Services, Health Services, Probation, Community Safety and both voluntary and private sector providers - to deliver high quality and effective services to children, their families and the victims of offending.
- The overall effectiveness of the YJS continues to be monitored by the Government against three key National Indicators which are linked directly to the Service's core aims.

- 1.4 The National Youth Justice Board also has a Youth Justice Oversight Framework which monitors how local Youth Justice Services are performing. It focuses on ensuring priorities across the delivery of YJSs and wider system partners are aligned, identify effective practice or where individual YJSs may require support, providing an objective basis for decisions about when and how intervention is needed and driving improvement across the youth justice system through supporting the promotion of practice that delivers effective practice. Camden has been assessed by this framework as Performance Quadrant one – strong performance. This is the highest ranking. Camden are in the top quartile nationally of relevant oversight metrics, have strong plan and standards, financial compliance Youth Justice terms and conditions and a good or outstanding inspection outcomes. As a result of this, Camden are subject to the lightest oversight arrangements and are encouraged to share our work with peers and partners.

- 1.5 2022/23 has seen continued progress in both reducing the number of First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System and the reduction in the number of children receiving custodial sentences. There is still work to be done on reducing re-offending and this remains the YJS' priority moving forward. Local data shows that 24 children became first time entrants during April 2022 to March 2023. This is a 33% reduction on last year's figures. Local data shows no children received a custodial sentence this year compared to 2 children who received 3 custodial sentences in 2020/21. The most recent local data for October 2020 – September 2021 for re-offending shows 17.6%, 15 of the 85 children re-offended within the time period, a decrease on the previous year (Binary rate). There was a small increase in the number of reoffences from 2.38 to 3.53 (Frequency rate). YJS data shows that 30/55 (60%) of children were in Education, Training or Employment, at the end of their order, a small decrease from 43/66 (65%) in 2021/22.
- 1.6 Strong primary prevention of offending work will be embedded in the evolution of our Family Hubs work to include dedicated youth hubs. Camden is one of the 75 LAs in the first wave of family hubs. We have Family Hubs in five localities, broadly coterminous with Central North London IBC localities, and offering a range of primary prevention services. The longer term vision for family hubs is to develop our current youth centres into youth hubs using an 'affiliate' approach, where other community venues including schools, libraries and community centres are recognised as important local hubs for families and networked together under the Camden Family Hubs umbrella and will all work together to prevent young people entering the criminal justice system.

## 2. PROPOSAL AND REASONS

- 2.1. The Youth Justice Service (YJS) has 3 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Reducing First Time Entrants (to the Youth Justice System); Reducing Custody; and Reducing Re-offending. In addition, the Youth Justice Board (who oversee all Youth Justice Services across England and Wales) stipulate they must address, children from groups which are over-represented; prevention; Diversion; Education; Restorative approaches and victims; Detention in police custody; Remands; and Constructive resettlement. Camden's Youth Justice Plan covers the period 2023-25 and will be reviewed in 12 months. The YJS supports We Make Camden ambitions, *Camden actively tackles injustice and inequality, creating safe, strong and open communities where everyone can contribute*. The YJS also supports the Camden Youth Mission where every young person has access to economic opportunity that enables them to be safe and secure by 2025.

The revised YJS priorities for Camden for 2023/25, alongside the 3 KPIs, as agreed in partnership with staff, children, families, and the Board are:

- Maintain and continue the work on tackling Disproportionality.
- Improve and increase Education Training and Employment opportunities/interventions.
- Continue to invest in the staff teams' development and wellbeing.
- Evaluate and evidence Camden interventions and approaches.
- Continue to use feedback from children and families to improve the service.

- Strengthen the Prevention Approach provided within the YJS.
- Responding to social inequality where possible by offering practical advice, vouchers for food, exploring links with housing colleagues to signpost families.

### **3. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

- 3.1. The Youth Justice Service request that the Plan and its priorities for 2023-25 are signed off by the Chair of the Youth Justice Service Management Board and full council. Amendments to the priorities can be submitted and considered if they are focussed on the core cohort of young people within the criminal justice system and focus on the 3 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - reducing first time entrants to the Youth Justice System, Reducing Custody and Reducing Re-offending.

### **4. WHAT ARE THE KEY IMPACTS / RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

- 4.1. Camden have been assessed by the Youth Justice Board oversight framework as having strong performance, the highest rating. Not approving the plan will put us in breach of the conditions of the grant with the Youth Justice Board and could harm our reputation and recognition as a high performing YJS. Failure to sign off the plan will also impact on the financial grant funding that the YJS provides and will impact on Camden's statutory capacity to provide the core services this cohort of vulnerable young people need. Not signing off this plan will also cause further delay in progression actions against the priorities, and we will be in breach of our commitment sent on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 to ensure full council sign off.
- 4.2. An additional risk will be identifying any more priorities to add to our new plan. This could weaken our resource and capacity to address the 3 core performance indicators and the 7 ones developed out of consultation with staff, children, families, and the Board.

### **5. CONSULTATION/ENGAGEMENT**

- 5.1. A YJS staff event was held on April 27<sup>th</sup> for staff to look at current priorities from the 2021 – 23 plan and to discuss new ideas and themes that could form part of the new priorities set for 2023 - 25. Ideas and challenges were discussed in small groups and fed back to the team. This information was collated by the management team to produce a presentation for the second consultation event. This was held on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, where Board members, partners, staff, children and parents were invited to discuss achievements and new priorities for the Service. The event focused on what the service would like to 'retain and rethink' in the service offer. The event included 'speed dating' style break out rooms, where all guests were invited to attend 3 different groups focussing on, Participation and Strategic Modernisation within Camden Youth Justice Service (YJS); Disproportionality; and How to Improve and increase Education, Training and Employment opportunities and interventions. Each group was led by a Team Manager who collated the

themes from the conversations and the feedback. Anonymous questionnaires were also sent to children and parents known to the service to gain further feedback. Once collated this information was used to propose the new priorities for the period 2023 – 25.

- 5.2. See Appendix 2 for a PowerPoint summary of the consultation findings. See appendix 3 for the list of attendees to the Priorities event. See appendix 4 for the PowerPoint presentation delivered to the consultation event. See appendix 5 for responses to the anonymous consultation questionnaire.
- 5.3. The Youth Justice plans identifies priorities to support mitigating inequalities that exist within Camden. There are specific priorities set to support children from Youth Justice backgrounds to remain in and secure education, training and employment opportunities. It also continues to have a specific priority on addressing and overrepresentation of particular groups within the youth justice service.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Camden Council has a statutory duty to submit an annual Youth Justice plan detailing the Youth Justice Service. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the agencies in the Youth Justice partnership to produce the plan. The Council has a duty after consultation with the partner agencies, to prepare an annual Youth Justice plan, which should detail how the Youth Justice Service is to be provided and funded, how it will operate, and what the functions it will be responsible for. In addition, the plan should include what steps the service will take to prevent offending behaviour and reduce reoffending. The Youth Justice plan must be signed off by the full council in accordance with Regulation 4 of the 'Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000'.
- 6.2 The Council must take into account in coming to any decision the Council's equality duties. In summary these legal obligations require the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to 1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; 2 to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; 3. Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not (which involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding). Under the Duty the relevant protected characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion, Sex, Sexual orientation. In respect of the first aim only i.e. reducing discrimination, etc the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership is also relevant.
- 6.3 In this case the attached EIA concludes that there is no potential for discrimination and all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations have been taken.

## **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. The Youth Justice Service is funded through existing local authority funding, Youth Justice Board grants and partnerships contributions. The plans within this report will be contained within the existing resource envelope.

## **8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no environmental implications for this Plan.

## **9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 9.1. Draft version of the report was signed off by the Camden's Youth Justice Service Board and submitted to the YJB on the 30/06/23. Plan is currently operational with the Youth Justice Service. A review to Cabinet will be submitted 2024 to demonstrate progress being made at the mid-way point.

## **10. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Camden's Youth Justice Plan 2023-25

- Progress on Previous Plan pages 4 – 5
- Priorities pages 8 – 13

Appendix 2: Summary Infograph version of the YJ Plan

**REPORT ENDS**