

YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGY 2024-2029

Committee name	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Nuzhat Ilyas – Children’s Services Directorate
Papers with report	- Cabinet Report Draft Youth Justice Strategy 2024-2029 - Hillingdon Youth Justice Service Draft Strategy 2024-2029
Ward	N/A

HEADLINES

This report presents the draft Hillingdon Youth Justice Service Strategy 2024-2029 which seeks to set out a clear vision and priorities for how youth justice services are delivered in the next five years.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee:

- 1. Notes the Draft Youth Justice Strategy; and**
- 2. Provides its comments as part of the consultation process.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Youth Justice Strategy was presented to Cabinet on 27.06.2024 where it was agreed that this strategy will go through public consultation for 6 weeks from 01.07.24 and will end on 11.08.24. This will include:

- Publication of the draft Youth Justice Service Strategy alongside an online survey questionnaire (Written copies/large print will be available on request)
- Publication of a child friendly Youth Justice Service Strategy to maximise consultation from Hillingdon children.
- A variety of methods to promote completion of the survey will be used including: All staff email, Hillingdon People, and social media.
- Consultation with the Select Committee on 17th July 2024.
- We will be seeking consultation from the wider strategic partnership that contribute to the prevention of offending behaviour, as well as residents who access youth justice services in Hillingdon. This includes the use of focus groups with children and families.

The Youth Justice Strategy builds on the success of the Youth Justice Service and sets a clear vision of how services are delivered to our residents, and key priorities over the next five years to continue to be responsive and meet changing demands and requirements.

The vision for the youth justice service is:

“We are committed to taking a child first approach to understanding the challenges faced by children and families including social deprivation, discrimination, trauma, unmet health needs,

and will actively empower children and families to improve outcomes by providing opportunities for every child to succeed. We take a “justice for all” approach by supporting victims, protecting the public and engaging our communities to divert children from entering the criminal justice system.”

Hillingdon Council is committed to putting residents first and reflects this commitment across the council’s plans and services. Our youth justice priorities are directly aligned with this commitment, which will be set out in further detail within the draft strategy. The five priorities are:

1. Prevention and Early Intervention - Addressing the root causes of offending behaviour and intervene at the earliest possible stage to prevent escalation and reduce the risk of future harm, ensuring the safety and security of our communities.
2. Over-representation and disproportionality – Addressing disproportionality in youth justice is crucial for ensuring fairness, equity, and justice within our society to reduce the barriers that prevent children from accessing support, thereby promoting trust in the system.
3. Child-centred practice - Recognising children as active participants in their own lives and advocates for their rights, well-being, and development, creating nurturing environments where every child can thrive.
4. Reducing re-offending - Providing rehabilitation, support, and positive development opportunities, we can break the cycle of offending and promote the reintegration of children into society.
5. Victims and restorative justice - Giving victims a voice and an active role in the justice process, empowering them and helping them to regain a sense of control over their lives, providing them with an opportunity to heal and recover from the harm they have experienced.

PERFORMANCE DATA

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is responsible for monitoring a number of key performance indicators and each local authority and youth justice partnership must submit quarterly data against each. It is a condition of the YJB Grant that it is used to achieve a positive reduction across all performance indicators with data being published by the Ministry of Justice on a quarterly basis.

The following three performance indicators have been embedded within services and so data has been captured over the years.

1. Reduction in First Time Entrants (FTE): children entering the criminal justice system for the first time receiving a disposal at court or a caution.
2. Reduction in Re-offending: monitoring of children who receive a substantiated outcome (not Triage) for a period of 12 months for any further offending and associated frequency.
3. Reduction in the use of custody: reduce the number of children who receive a custodial sentence.

Since April 2023 it has been a requirement of youth justice services to report on the following new key performance indicators, with the first nationally published data expected in Spring 2025.

1. Suitable Accommodation
2. Education, training, and employment

3. Special educational needs and disabilities
4. Mental health care and emotional wellbeing
5. Substance misuse
6. Out of court disposals
7. Links to wider services
8. Management board attendance
9. Serious violence
10. Victims

RESIDENT BENEFIT

In line with council priorities of 'safe and strong communities' our strategy is informed by the views of residents to ensure we are responsive to needs of our community. This strategy aims to improve positive outcomes by reducing the numbers of children coming into contact with CJS, and reduce the number of victims harmed, improving outcomes for residents.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This strategy will come at no additional cost to the Council. Please see finance comments on attached Cabinet report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services confirm that the Council is responsible for carrying out this function pursuant to section 38 and 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which requires each local authority to have youth justice services available in their area to the extent that is appropriate, and, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan. The guidance on Youth justice plans confirms that whilst the Act refers to an annual plan, it is recognised that planning over a longer period may be more effective. Therefore, Local partnerships may, if they choose, produce a plan over multiple years; in this case an annual update, covering progress against priorities, a summary of performance, any changes in demographics and legislation, and any additional reporting requirements. The report confirms that an annual update will be provided.

As set out in the cabinet report, the Council will need to ensure that any policies or decisions in relation to youth justice take account of requirements under the equalities and human rights legislation, including ensuring that policies and decisions do not discriminate against those with protected characteristics, and comply with the Local Authority's public sector equality duty (section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010).

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Public consultation

[Have your say on Hillingdon Council's youth justice plans - Hillingdon Council](#)

APPENDICES

- Cabinet Report Draft Youth Justice Strategy 2024-2029
- Hillingdon Youth Justice Service Draft Strategy 2024-2029