

## **CABINET MEETING – 9th July 2008**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I**

**Title of Report:**

YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2008/2009

**Author(s):**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**Purpose of Report:**

The Youth Justice Plan is an Article 4 plan which requires full Council approval.

The report informs Council via Cabinet of the background, purpose and intentions of the Youth Justice Plan and provides the final draft intended for submission to the Youth Justice Board and its subsequent publication and distribution.

**Description of Decision:**

That Council be recommended to approve the contents of the Youth Justice Plan for 2008 / 2009.

The report will need also to be considered by Children's Services Review Committee.

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?** Yes

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

The Youth Justice Plan is an Article 4 plan under the Constitution of the Council and is the primary document for YOT partnerships to set out how they will deliver against the Youth Justice Board (YJB) performance management framework for Youth Offending Teams (YOT's) and is a key source for local planning.

The deadline for submission to the YJB is 11<sup>th</sup> August 2008 and the YJB has until 13 October 2008 to ratify the plan. Hence the need to seek Cabinet approval to submission of the plan to the YJB prior to full Council approval.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

The alternative option is not to submit the Youth Justice Plan by the deadline of 11th August 2008. This would result in a breach of the Council's Constitution and have a negative impact on local youth justice planning.

**Is this a “Key Decision” as defined  
in the Constitution?**

Yes

**Is it included in the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Relevant Review Committee:**

**Children’s Services  
Review Committee**

**YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2008/2009**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The Youth Justice Plan is an Article 4 plan which requires full Council approval.

The report informs Council via Cabinet of the background, purpose and intentions of the Youth Justice Plan and provides the final draft intended for submission to the Youth Justice Board and its subsequent publication and distribution.

**DESCRIPTION OF DECISION (RECOMMENDATIONS)**

2. That Council be recommended to approve the contents of the Youth Justice Plan for 2008 / 2009.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) oversees the youth justice system in England and Wales and works to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people under the age of 18.
4. The YJB is required to monitor and report on the performance of the youth justice system to the Home Secretary. It does this through Youth Justice Plans submitted annually by each Youth Offending Team (YOT) and through the collection of performance data. Regional Teams of the YJB receive submission of the Youth Justice Plan.
5. The Youth Justice Plan is an article 4 plan under the Constitution of Sunderland City Council.
6. Sunderland Youth Offending Service has published Youth Offending Plans since 2001. This is the 8<sup>th</sup> plan to be published within the local area.
7. In late 2007 and during the first 4 months of 2008 the Youth Justice Board reviewed the whole performance framework and radically revised the youth justice planning guidance. The new framework reflects the new streamlined and simplified performance framework that supports the LAA process (six of the YJB indicators are included in the national indicator set). This led to severe delay in the YJB issuing the new revised Youth Justice Planning template and the completion

guidance required by YOT's in order for a plan to be developed and written.

8. Guidance was finally received on 14th April 2008 at which point it was possible to begin actively developing the plan in consultation with YOT staff members and key partners (an inclusive process of developing the plan through consultation and involvement of staff and partners being a clear expectation under the new arrangements). The template for submission of the plan was received on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008.
9. The plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board by the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2008 for validation by 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008. The report seeks approval of Cabinet to the submission of the Youth Justice Plan 2008/2009 to the YJB by the submission date of 11th August 2008 *prior* to the plan being approved by full Council in September 2008. The report will also need to be considered by Children's Services Review Committee. The YJB will be informed of the need for full council approval in September 2008.
10. The new Youth Justice Planning Framework requires YOT's to make a self-assessment of effectiveness in achieving the principle aim of the youth justice system which is to *prevent offending by children and young persons*. YOT's are required to report on the outcomes they achieve in their local areas and the framework emphasises the 'story of place' as being important in planning and delivering services that meet local need and address local problems.

## **CURRENT POSITION**

11. Sunderland Youth Offending Service (YOS), is a multi-agency service that works with Northumbria Police, National Probation Service, Sunderland Health Authority, Sunderland Housing Group and Sunderland City Council. Representatives of these agencies form a YOS Board, which governs the YOS.
12. Sunderland has once again delivered outstanding performance achieving the highest performance level rating in the national performance tables (one of only 8 YOT's to achieve a level 5 performance rating out of 156 YOT's nationally). In addition :-
  - Through working in partnership with others Sunderland City Council and its partners have achieved Beacon status for reducing re-offending across both youth and adults.
  - Reducing re-offending (the Rate of Proven Re-offending – National Indicator 19) is identified as a priority under the Local Area Agreement (LAA). In the most recent youth re-offending performance returns submitted to the YJB Sunderland made an

overall reduction of 8.5%, far exceeding the 5% target set by the YJB.

- For the most recent audit of compliance with national standards Sunderland achieved an excellent performance of 98.4%.
- Sunderland YOS achieved an excellent outcome from the national Joint Inspection of the YOS (published in May 2007). Sunderland achieved the highest possible rating of 4 for Management and Leadership. The report concluded that the YOS *“benefited from both a strong Management Board and Senior Management Team.*

13. The YOS has prepared its Youth Justice Plan for 2008/2009. The plan sets out the strategic aims of the YOS Board and the operational delivery plan for the YOS to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people in Sunderland and to support their families and victims of their offending. Specifically, the plan sets out:

A. **The national and local context of Youth Justice:** this section sets out strategic aims and priorities of the local youth justice in England and Wales and the local aims and priorities for Sunderland YOS. It sets out the positioning of the YOS within the local authority, the context of the YOS as a criminal justice agency working with partners to promote community safety and crime reduction and the context of the YOS in relation to its integration into local Children’s Trust arrangements.

B. **Use of resources and value for money:** this section sets out the financial, staff, programme and ICT resources that have been used to deliver quality youth justice services.

C. **First time entrants:** this section assesses the extent to which the YOT partnership has contributed to reducing first time entrants to the youth justice system and reducing any disproportionality including children and young people from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. It also covers :-

- i. Contribution of partnership to reducing re-offending.
- ii. Contribution of partnership to reducing use of custodial remands.
- iii. Contribution of partnership to addressing risk of serious harm.
- iv. Contribution of partnership to keeping children and young people safe from harm.
- v. Contribution of partnership to improving public confidence in the fairness and effectiveness of dealing with youth crime in the Criminal Justice System.
- vi. Contribution of partnership to improving satisfaction in the Criminal Justice System for those who have been victims of youth crime.

**D. Business change and innovation:** this section sets out the key business changes on the horizon for Youth Offending Teams and Services nationally in 2008-09, including the Youth Rehabilitation Order and 'Simple, Speedy, Summary Criminal Justice' as well as the workforce development strategy and a risk to future delivery assessment from the Youth Offending Service Management Board Chair.

14. Sunderland Youth Justice Plan 2008/2009 is intended for submission to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, for publication on the YOS website and for circulation to partner agencies.

## **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

15. The Youth Justice Plan is an Article 4 plan under the Constitution of the Council and is the primary document for YOT partnerships to set out how they will deliver against the YJBs performance management framework for YOTs and is a key source for local planning.
16. The deadline for submission to the YJB is 11<sup>th</sup> August 2008 and the final validation deadline by the YJB is 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008.
17. It is therefore not possible to put the report before full Council prior to this submission deadline.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

18. The alternative option is not to submit the Youth Justice Plan within YJB timescales. This would result in a breach of the Council's Constitution and have a negative impact on local youth justice planning.

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATIONS**

19. The YOS Board, YOS Strategic Managers, YOS Operational Managers Corporate Performance Team and Community Safety Team have been consulted on the plan and have provided input accordingly.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

20. Sunderland YOS has a complex budget structure made up of partner agency cash and in-kind financial contributions, core government funding from the YJB for England and Wales and a range of time limited funding. The Youth Justice Plan is funded from the YOS core budget.

## **LEGAL ISSUES**

21. The plan is an Article 4 plan under the Constitution of Sunderland City Council.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

22. Youth Justice Plan 2007/2008.  
Youth Justice Planning Framework 2008/2009.  
Cabinet Report April 2007 re Youth Justice Plan 2007/08.

