

# SUNDERLAND YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

## YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2013/14 to 2015/16

### CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	2
Introduction	4
Achievements in 2012/13	5
Context	
• National Context	11
• National Standards	11
• Quality and Inspection	12
• Local Context	12
○ Structure and Governance	13
○ Strategic Approaches and Local Partnership Arrangements	13
Outcomes	
• Strategic Priorities	16
• First Time Entrants	16
• Reducing Reoffending	17
• Maintaining Low Levels of Custodial Sentencing	17
Service Development Priorities 2013/14	
• A Preventative Approach	18
• Reducing Reoffending	19
• A Family Approach	19
• A Restorative Justice Approach	20
• Service Evaluation	20
Opportunities and Challenges	21
Resourcing and Value for Money	22
Glossary	26
How to Contact Us	27

## FOREWORD

On behalf of Sunderland Youth Offending Service (YOS) Management Board, we are pleased to introduce the service's three year strategic Youth Justice Plan for 2013/14 to 2015/16.

Over the past year, the service has seen significant changes in the both the local and wider strategic landscape, most notably in relation to Sunderland's Strengthening Families approach, the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) 2012, the appointment of Police Crime Commissioners and revised youth justice national standards.

The service's historical successes in delivering effective outcomes for children and young people has continued with significant reductions in first time entrants and reoffending and at the same time has made positive impacts on families, victims and the wider community.

The creativity, innovation and passion of staff continue to drive the service through a transformation which will enable it to embed a whole family approach to its work with children young people and their families and carers and an extended restorative justice offer across the City.

The LASPO Act has made a number of significant changes to how children and young people are dealt with in the earliest part of the criminal justice system. This has helped to further strengthen the service's relationships with Northumbria Police and partners delivering specialist services. The changes to out of court disposals firmly embeds an early intervention approach to dealing with young people at the earliest opportunity, aiming to ensure outcomes are both proportionate to the crime committed as well as being effective in reducing the risk of further offending. The historical successes with key partners of the service's prevention agenda and the already established Liaison and Diversion project have created the innovative working practices needed to successfully support the LASPO changes.

As both a criminal justice agency and a children's service, partnership working continues to be at the heart of our approach to tackle offending, ensuring public protection and safeguarding children. This plan sets out how the Sunderland Youth Offending Service partnership will work effectively with partners to prevent young people entering the youth justice system, to continue to reduce reoffending and support families, victims and the wider community. The partnership has identified 5 key priorities across this year and beyond to 2015/16 which will define the service's approach to both core statutory youth justice approaches but also how the service will support the City's wider strategic priorities across the strengthening families agenda, community cohesion, community safety, health and wellbeing, community resilience and the priorities of the Police Crime Commissioner.

The YOS Management Board continues to be seen as a strong and committed partnership in the city and will lead and support the service throughout the next three years to develop and maintain its partnership working to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people who offend and who are at risk of offending.

The significant achievements of the YOS during 2012/13 have demonstrated how the service has been able to adapt and realign its resources to meet the ongoing future challenges to prevent offending and reduce reoffending in the City, with the support of its key partners.

**Cllr Patricia Smith**

Portfolio Holder for Children and Learning City of Sunderland Council

**Keith Moore**

Chair of the Sunderland Youth Offending Service Management Board  
Executive Director of Children's Services

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## INTRODUCTION

Sunderland Youth Offending Service is a multi-agency service comprising of the four statutory agencies of Police, Probation, Health and the Local Authority. The service works in partnership with other key agencies such as the area courts and specialist service providers including child mental health, substance misuse, accommodation, etc.

The principal aim of the service is **to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people**. In doing so, the service works in partnership to deliver both statutory and non-statutory services to:

- Young people aged 10-17 who, because of potential or actual offending have become involved in the criminal justice system;
- Children and young people identified as at risk of offending;
- Families of children and young people offending or at risk of offending; and
- Victims of young people who have offended.

The role and responsibilities of local Youth Offending Teams/Services (YOT/YOS) was set down by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It also included the requirement for each local area to produce an annual Youth Justice Plan setting out how youth justice services will be delivered in the local area.

This plan is a 3-year plan which will allow to YOS to embed its longer term strategic approach to reducing offending and re-offending. It sets out the strategic priorities of how both statutory and non statutory youth justice services will be delivered in Sunderland across 2013/14 to 2015/16 and outlines individual service development priorities for the forthcoming year. The detail on how these priorities will be implemented will be included within a delivery plan, which will be refreshed on an annual basis.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2012/13**

### **What we have achieved**

#### ***Celebrating continuing success with creative and innovative projects***

Historically, Sunderland YOS has received praise and accolades for its innovation and positive approach to expanding and improving the services it provides to children, young people and their families and carers and victims.

The service continues to maintain excellent performance against the national priorities set by the Youth Justice Board:

- First time entrants have reduced by 65% since 2010. In 2012/13 in particular early intervention approaches have contributed to a 31% decrease in FTEs
- The overall number of young people reoffending has reduced by 55% between 2009/10 (442 young people) and 2011/12 (198 young people), as measured against the tracked sample cohort.
- Use of custody has been maintained at a low rate of 0.67. This represents a 19% reduction in the number of custodial disposals since 2010.

At the end of 2012/13, only 1.6% of the overall 10 to 17 population in Sunderland received a substantive outcome in the year, against a position of 3.9% at the end of 2009/10.

As both a children's service and a criminal justice agency, Sunderland YOS is committed to delivering life changing outcomes for children and young people who offend, for those at risk of offending and for their families, whilst also ensuring that justice is done for the victims of their offending and the wider community affected by youth crime.

#### **Youth Justice Board – Performance Rating**

Sunderland YOS partnership continues to perform very well against all 3 national indicators and continues to be considered a high performing partnership.

***“Sunderland continues to demonstrate significant progress in several areas of their partnership work around youth justice.” YJB – March 2013***

## **In 2012/13 we also achieved.....**

The service continues to build on its first decade of successes and expand to support youth justice priorities, corporate priorities and a number of partnership priorities. Key partnership developments include:

- **Liaison and Diversion Pathfinder Project**

Liaison and Diversion pathfinders were established to implement a formal process of undertaking early assessment of children and young people on the edge of the criminal justice system with a specific focus in considering physical and mental health problems including speech, language, communication, learning disability, emotional and mental health) and a range of other related difficulties such as school, family and wider health issues (substance misuse).

The Government has made a commitment to having diversion services in place (for children and for adults) in all local areas by November 2014, subject to business case approval. Sunderland YOS received national pathfinder status in August 2011 to deliver diversion services, based on its successful delivery of the early youth crime assessment project funded by Youth Crime Action Plan resources. Sunderland's developing practice and dataset is being used to inform a robust business case that is to be presented to Ministers to support a national roll out.

Between May and November 2012 393 young people were eligible for assessment through the pathfinder project and of those 106 accepted the interventions offered resulting in 149 referrals being made across partnership and specialist services in the period including ETE/Connexions, Parenting/Family Intervention Project, Offending Behaviour, Wear Kids, Safeguarding, health and mental health services and substance misuse.

Led by a high level Strategic Steering Group, significant developments to date include:

- Improving the service's ability to identify specific learning disability and speech, language and communication needs of young people through the pathfinder project by developing and implementing a range of screening tools for identification of these needs.
- Creating and embedding appropriate referral routes needed with the Community Support Team in order to better support and assess the needs of children on the edge of care.
- Strengthening the partnership with the new South of Tyne Children and Young People's Service for Mental Health (CYPS) by evidencing the need of those young people through the pathfinder pilot which has ensured that children and young people's needs are identified early and they can access the service as soon as they need it.
- Strengthening the role of the public health nurse within the YOS ensuring children's health needs are assessed early in order that they can be signposted to the services they may need.

- Established links with the Adult Diversion pilot in Sunderland in order that service developments can be shared and effective transition plans agreed for young people on the cusp of 18.

“John” was arrested for theft and was assessed through the Liaison and Diversion scheme which identified mild to moderate emotional health difficulties and speech problems in relation to a stammer. “John” was to attend an interview for a position as an apprentice and his anxieties were aggravating his stammer. John gave consent to undergo a brief intervention from the Speech and Language Team (SALT) and for YOS staff to support his parents in liaising with the training provider to inform them of his speech difficulties. After working with SALT “John” was successful at interview, the police took no further action in relation to the offence and “John” has not offended since.

## • Early Intervention

The LASPO Act has introduced significant changes to early disposals with the final warnings being replaced by the Youth Caution and Youth Conditional Caution. The service’s final warning delivery model, supported by Liaison and Diversion practice, which encompasses an early assessment and intervention approach jointly with Northumbria Police with a restorative justice disposal, has enabled the YOS to be extremely well placed to support the change in practice to the delivery of cautions.

In line with good practice identified within the *Youth Out-of-Court Disposals Guide for Police and Youth Offending Services*, published by the YJB and Ministry of Justice, the YOS will establish annual scrutiny panels with relevant criminal justice partners, to review the decision making process that underpins conditional cautions, looking at cases which are exceptional, controversial, involve non-compliance and are successful.

## • Strengthening Families

Sunderland’s Strengthening Families Strategy has received national praise and particular recognition by Louise Casey, Director General for Troubled Families as best practice. The YOS FIP plays a direct and key role in the delivery of the local Strategy.

***“I was really impressed by the work of Sunderland FIP and it’s clear your team are extremely skilled and have a really positive relationship with the families you are working with”***

Louise Casey, Director General, Troubled Families

Based on its historical successes in delivering a family intervention model, the YOS Family Intervention Project (FIP) has expanded, with the support of additional resources from the Strengthening Families Strategic Board (Family Focus<sup>1</sup>) to deliver the intensive offer to families within the city on behalf of partners. The Team has expanded from 3 to 7 full time key workers and is

<sup>1</sup> Part of the Troubled Families national initiative.

using the family wheel<sup>2</sup> to evaluate progress and outcomes being achieved for families referred, alongside a negative costings tool to demonstrate the efficiencies created.

***"(She) makes me feel like I have the strength to get through any problems that I have."***

Parent supported by FIP

Since April 1st 2012, 34 new families have been engaged by FIP. Of those, 9 cases have been closed. Cost benefit analysis demonstrates that £211,967.99 has been saved by for the local authority by FIP between April and December 2012 by keeping young people out of care and getting them back into school; reducing families' anti-social behaviour and offending and getting them closer to the job market.

What did the FIP achieve for you?  
*"How good they are and the changes they help you make in family and the confidence they give you"*  
Parent supported by FIP

The FIP Team now also have a key role to support Family Focus with its communication strategy; deliver key worker training and co-deliver the Teen Triple P and Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities parenting programmes with internal and external partners. An extension of their partnership with the Tyne and Fire and Rescue Service to extend the nationally recognised Phoenix Project has enabled that project to extend to include parents and carers.

- **Compliance Panels**

Sunderland YOS introduced compliance panels in June 2012 in response to the high rate of breach on Youth Rehabilitation Orders (YRO) and custody cases.

The compliance panel process provides the YOS with the ability to ensure that every effort has been made to support young people's compliance with their court orders and promote flexible ways of engaging young people. Evaluation shows that the use of breach within YRO and custody cases has reduced from 70% of cases during 2011, to 38% of cases during 2012. This has directly impacted and reduced the need for staff resources in both the YOS and the

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<sup>2</sup> The Family Wheel is the family assessment tool being used with families by Sunderland Family Focus which is designed to provide key workers with a simple yet effective way of monitoring family change and the measurement of outcomes by applying a systematic way of analysing, understanding and recording what is happening to families and the wider context of the community in which they live. The wheel can also track progress and change across multiple and inter-linked needs and issues which makes it particularly suited to engaging and supporting families identified under Family Focus.



court system by keeping young people out of the court process and tackling potential breach issues when they arise without having to return young people to court. Compliance panels have not only reduced the need for young people to go to court but that tackling potential breach issues as they arise by promoting compliance and engagement with their orders avoids the need to return young people to court.

As the panels include a review of the restorative justice element of a young person's order, they have significantly developed stronger focus upon the wishes of victims and joined up working relationships between case management and restorative justice teams. The compliance panels also strengthened the opportunities for young people/ carers to give direct feedback to the YOS about the quality of service provided, thereby contributing to Sunderland Council's Participation agenda.

The YJB have produced a national compliance panel framework to help YOTs manage and monitor compliance. The YJB also has a national directory of emerging practice. Sunderland YOS compliance panels are referenced in both documents as examples of innovative/good practice in promoting compliance.

- **Restorative Justice**

The service's Restorative Justice Team continues to deliver an award winning restorative justice service enabling young people to face the consequences of their offending and payback to their individual victims and wider community. In 2012/13 the Team were shortlisted for the Northumbria Youth Justice Award for their innovative project "*A present from Sunderland*", a collaboration between the YOS, young people, the community and cultural services of the City Council. The Team consistently exceed internal service target expectations for victim satisfaction by achieving over 90% of victims satisfied with the service they received and exceeded the target for 2012/13 to increase direct restorative justice opportunities between young people and their victims.

The ongoing success of the RJ approach in the service is being developed into a traded business model, thereby offering local partners and organisations the opportunity to deliver RJ and victim best practice.

## **Case Study**

### **A Present from Sunderland – Restorative Justice**

Linking with the regeneration of the Roker area in Sunderland, the YOS and Cultural services joined forces with Helix Arts in August 2012. The young people involved in the project on community payback led on the community consultation and worked alongside a local community group to develop ideas leading to the development of a leaflet/Roker Beach Activity Kit for young children highlighting local historical and cultural venues. As part of the project a range of “souvenirs” were also designed by the young people. The focus for the work was driven by the local community, councillors and courts as part of community payback and making amends to victims of their offending behaviour.

The souvenirs are to be sold in the tourist centres and local shops to generate income for future. The brand '*a present from Sunderland*' will now be taken forward as a model in other areas of Sunderland for projects, and the YOS is looking to present them as gifts to cultural and business partners visiting Sunderland in the future. Of the group of young people who produced these objects, more than 90% have not re-offended. One young person has been offered a reference by the artists for any future art courses he may wish to apply for.

- **Wrap Around Services**

Sunderland YOS have extended its wrap around service (Intensive Resettlement Support - IRS) to support engagement with education, training and employment and offering additional support for young people assessed through the Liaison and Diversion scheme. In addition, young people who have received formal IRS support will be tracked at 1 month, 3 months and 6 month intervals after closure to check progress and offer additional support if a need is identified, in order to achieve longer term sustainable reductions in their re-offending.

- **“One” Plans**

In line with the Justice Green Paper, Trial National Standards and Munro Review, Sunderland YOS introduced 'one plans' which incorporate the elements of both risk management and vulnerability management plans for a young person allowing for a more streamlined and effective risk management approach within the service in line with YJB guidance.

The development of these plans is identified as an example of good practice by the YJB and is included on the YJB Effective Practice website.

## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

### **National Context**

At a national level, the work of the YOS is overseen by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) which is a non-departmental public body created by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to oversee the youth justice system for England and Wales. The YJB is now sponsored by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and its Board members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice. The YJB also receives funding from the Home Office (HO) and from the Department for Education, via the MoJ.

Principally the YJB supports local youth offending services to deliver against the three national youth justice outcome indicators set by government:

- reducing first time entrants to the criminal justice system
- reducing reoffending; and
- reducing the use of custody.

The “Breaking the Cycle” government consultation moved away from setting specific national targets in relation to the outcomes above. Instead, it set in place a framework for self-assessment for use by local professionals and a sector-led peer review process, enabling high performing YOTs to pass on their skills and expertise. The YJB are continuing to develop this approach, providing more transparent and easily accessible data to help local youth justice services benchmark their performance and direct their resources to deliver the three youth justice outcomes.

The framework for self assessment is designed to be flexible for local use and is aligned with other assessment processes including Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation risk-led inspection. As recommended by the YJB, Sunderland YOS has used this tool to identify areas of good practice and areas for improvement. This assessment, alongside staff and partnership consultation, provides a focus for the YOS’ service development priorities and individual delivery plan targets for 2013/14 and beyond.

### **National Standards**

Following the trialling of a more flexible set of national standards for youth justice provision in 2012/13, revised national standards have now been published. These are set and agreed by the Secretary of State to set minimum expectations for youth justice service delivery and practice, consistent with ensuring;

- delivery of effective practice in youth justice services
- safeguarding of children and young people who come into contact with youth justice services
- protection of the public from the harmful activities of children and young people who offend

In defining these standards the Secretary of State also requires that:

- where possible and appropriate, youth justice services are afforded the maximum freedom and flexibility to adapt their practice to local context
- the public have confidence that children and young people subject to statutory supervision by youth justice services are fairly punished and are supported to reform their lives.

The recent revisions to the standards are necessary to assist the introduction of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012 and the introduction of AssetPlus, the new assessment, planning and interventions framework, due to replace the current system (Asset) from April 2014. The standards have been updated with the latest developments in resettlement, restorative justice and work with victims.

Sunderland YOS trialled the national standards on behalf of the YJB and fed back on the pilot thus helping to shape the revised national standards.

## **Quality and Inspection**

Sunderland YOS is committed to delivering a quality service to children, young people, families and victims, to ensure that best outcomes are achieved. A quality assurance process is embedded at individual, management and service level using a number of tools and methodologies including case file audits, thematic reviews, supervision and management oversight. The YOS quality assurance approach is prioritised and monitored through the service's delivery plan and supported by regular performance reporting.

The new inspection framework tool is being used in the service to guide and improve practice. Alongside this, the service will also be piloting the "Index of Excellence" approach to review the service at a strategic and operational level during 2013/14.

## **Local Context**

### **Structure and Governance**

Youth Offending Teams were set up under the statutory provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The act set down the requirement for a local youth offending teams comprising the four statutory agencies of: the Local Authority (including Children's Services Social Care and Education), Police, Probation and Health. Accompanying the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998 was an inter-departmental circular on 'Establishing Youth Offending Teams' that set out the requirements for a governing chief officer steering group. In 2004 the YJB published "*Sustaining the Success: Extending the Guidance, Establishing Youth Offending Teams*", that set down the requirements for steering groups to transfer into governing YOT Management Boards. The role and responsibilities of Youth Offending Teams and their governing Management Boards have since, and continue to be, regulated by National Standards for Youth Justice Services.

Sunderland YOS Management Board is chaired by the Executive Director of Children's Services with a direct link to the Chief Executive of the local authority. The Sunderland YOS Management Board comprises representatives of the statutory partners as well as other local partners such as the area court (see Appendix 1 for membership).

The multi-agency Sunderland YOS Management Board is identified as a 'significant partnership' for Sunderland and it also provides the strategic links with other significant partnerships, and their associated strategic plans across children's services, criminal justice and community safety.

The Youth Offending Service sits within the council's safeguarding structure of Sunderland's Children's Services, providing effective links and joint working relationships with children's social care.

### **Strategic Approaches and Local Partnership Arrangements**

The work of the YOS cuts across and supports the delivery a number of high level strategies in the city including community safety, strengthening families, health and wellbeing, child and family poverty and community resilience. For example, it will have a positive impact on the mental health and emotional wellbeing of young people, thereby supporting objective 2 within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy to ensure all children and young people are provided with the best start in life. This is not just about early years, but throughout childhood and adolescence. The Youth Justice Plan is aligned to a number of key strategic partnerships, outcomes and priorities. This plan includes illustrations of how the work of the YOS is already embedding (and will look for further opportunities to embed) a number of city-wide strategic principles such as:

- § **Prevention:** by identifying young people at risk of offending at the earliest opportunity and ensuring that a young person should not have to come to the attention of statutory YOS services to get the services and support they need. The service has recently embedded links into the City's Risk and Resilience locality working arrangements following transition of the YOS Wear Kids prevention team into that structure.
- § **Early intervention:** by supporting the early intervention agenda, critical relationships have been strengthened with Northumbria Police and specialist providers to deliver successfully on the changes to the out of court disposal framework<sup>3</sup>. The changes to youth justice services with the implementation of the LASPO Act have enabled the service to transform its delivery and practice in early assessment and diversion through the successful delivery of Triage and the Liaison and Diversion scheme.
- § **A whole family approach:** The service's Family Intervention Project (FIP) team has played a key role in shaping and delivering the intensive intervention

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<sup>3</sup> The Out of Court Disposal framework introduced by the LASPO Act replaces the Final Warning Scheme with a range of options which offer a more proportionate approach to low level offending including Community Resolution, Youth Caution, Youth Conditional Caution, all of which include a restorative justice element.

offer of the Strengthening Families initiative and will continue to play a key role in embedding a whole family approach during 2013/14 and beyond.

§ **Joint working:** The YOS has a long history of partnership working in providing flexible and tailored services that respond to the needs of those at risk of offending, young offenders and their families, and to achieve better outcomes for victims and local communities. The YOS remains committed to working in partnership with others around numerous issues including safeguarding children, public protection, reducing child and family poverty, swift administration of justice, reducing teenage pregnancy, domestic abuse and teenage relationship abuse, and many other key outcomes that support the service's core outcomes of preventing offending and re-offending. The service has also helped shape and manage cost effective interventions through integrated services.

§ **An asset based approach:** The implementation of the new AssetPlus assessment moves away from a primary focus on risk factors to a greater focus on ways in which a young person's positive influences can be enhanced. There will be a stronger focus on a young person's potential to change, opportunities for desistance, along with a greater degree of self-assessment by the young person, and new assessment tools to be completed by parents and carers. A stronger focus will also be placed on the promotion of restorative justice. The successes of the restorative justice approach within the service are being shaped into a business model that will see the service offering restorative justice and training to partners in the city and beyond, and this will make a key contribution to community resilience and community cohesion. The FIP's Family Wheel is also a strengths-based assessment, designed to identify and build on family strengths and help identify the support they need to achieve their aspirations and to empower families to change.

The YOS Management Board links into the Safer Sunderland Partnership which is the local Community Safety Partnership, by acting as a key delivery group in supporting delivery of the Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023 to ensure that "everyone in Sunderland will be, and feel, safe and secure".

The Youth Justice Plan will also support the delivery of a number of key outcomes in both the refreshed Sunderland Strategy and Sunderland City Council's corporate plan as illustrated in the table below.

<b>Sunderland Strategy Outcomes</b>	<b>Sunderland City Council Corporate Outcomes</b>
• A city which is, and feels even safer and more secure	• A city which is, and feels even safer and more secure (People)
• A city that cares for its most vulnerable	• A city that ensures people are able to look after themselves where possible (People)
• Lasting and resilient neighbourhoods	• A responsible, well looked after city that is adaptable to change (Place)

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The YOS Management Board is aligned with the Children's Trust and contributes to its vision to work together to improve the life chances and aspirations for each child and young person in Sunderland. It supports the Children's Trust to embed its principles of improving outcomes through early intervention and preventative approaches and effective multi-agency working. Through its Youth Justice Plan, the YOS Management Board is the responsible partnership for improving Priority Outcome 11 (Youth Offending) in the Children and Young People's Delivery Plan 2010-2013, the initial 3 year plan for implementing the Children and Young People Strategy 2010-2025. The 2013-16 plan will be in place in the autumn of 2013, and youth offending will continue to feature as a priority for the Children's Trust.

Sunderland YOS will work with the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria, alongside other Northumbria YOTs to share and deliver effective and innovative practice that prevent offending and reduce reoffending.

It is within this national and local context that the Sunderland Youth Justice Plan priorities are set.

## AIMS AND OUTCOMES

The principal aim of Sunderland Youth Offending Service is to:

***“Prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people”.***

The key outcomes for our principal aim are:-

1. maintaining the numbers of children and young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time (first time entrants) at current rates or lower
2. Maintaining re-offending by children and young people (proven rate of re-offending and frequency of re-offending) at current rates or lower

Additionally Sunderland Youth Offending Services is committed to preventing young people entering the secure estate (use of custody) and thus a third key outcome is:-

3. Maintaining low levels of custodial sentencing.

Targets and actions against each outcome have been identified below.

### **Entering the Youth Justice System (First Time Entrants)**

Preventing young people entering the Youth Justice System in the first place.

We will achieve this by:

- Working jointly with key partners, including the city's Risk and Resilience structure to deliver early intervention approaches that divert young people from the criminal justice system.
- Further development of the out of court disposal framework and the Liaison and Diversion pathfinder project to enable screening for risk and need at the earliest opportunity upon entry to the youth justice system and deliver appropriate restorative justice interventions.
- Ensuring that young people identified as at risk of offending are engaged in suitable Education, Training and Employment.
- Embedding a whole family approach to intervene early with families who have children at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

**Outcome Target:** To maintain first time entrants below a rate of 850 per 100,000 of the 10-17 population.



## Reducing Re-offending

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that young people who offend are engaged in suitable Education, Training and Employment.
- Ensuring that young people who offend are enabled to secure to suitable accommodation and are appropriately supported in relation to these needs.
- Supporting young people to access the health services they need, particularly mental health whilst working with the service and beyond.
- Ensuring the delivery of an effective whole family approach to the delivery of interventions with young people and their parents/carers.
- Continue to deliver evidence-based restorative justice interventions.
- Delivering an effective programme of offending behaviour intervention with impact and cost benefits measured through evaluation.
- Further develop the quality assurance programme of Sunderland Youth Offending Service case management to ensure the service is delivering best practice.
- Implementation of new national standards and continue the delivery of compliance panels.

**Outcome Target:** To maintain the percentage of young offenders re-offending below 37% and to maintain re-offending below a frequency rate of re-offences at a rate of 1.30.

## Maintaining low levels of custodial sentencing

We will achieve this by:

- Reviewing all cases of young people remanded or sentenced to ensure robust and appropriate court services are provided in all cases.
- Ensuring that the YOS offers credible community based alternatives for young people at risk of remand.
- Continuing to deliver successful and innovative alternatives to custody through the intensive supervision and surveillance scheme (ISS).

**Outcome Target:** To maintain custodial sentencing below a rate of 0.71 per 1,000 of the 10 to 17 Sunderland population.

## SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

To ensure that Sunderland Youth Offending Service is effectively responding to local and national priorities in relation to youth justice and wider key strategic agendas, the following five overarching service development priorities have been identified. These will be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis across the life of this strategy.

- A preventative approach to reducing reoffending
- Reducing Reoffending
- A family approach
- A restorative justice approach
- Service Evaluation

Improvement actions for each of these priorities are set out below. An annual delivery plan accompanies this strategic plan which contains more of the detail on how these priorities will be delivered.

### A PREVENTATIVE APPROACH TO REDUCING REOFFENDING

- Embed strategic and operational links with People and Place Boards.
- Through the Liaison and Diversion Strategy, raise awareness of the health needs of children and young people, improve identification and secure appropriate pathways to meet those needs.
- Further evaluate the delivery of wrap around advocate services to target the services where they are most effective and improve the engagement and compliance of young people working with the service.
- Work with key partners to ensure the effective delivery of the implications of the LASPO Act in relation to out of court disposals (cautions and conditional cautions).
- Maintain a focus on the specific needs of children looked after (LAC) who offend through the delivery of the YOS LAC Action Plan to develop targeted interventions and restorative justice approaches.
- Work with key partners to improve the transition of young people aged 17 and over in order to promote better engagement with adult services.
- Work with key partners to raise the profile of domestic violence and teenage relationship abuse and work towards the implementation of interventions that can meet individual need.
- Ensuring the preventative approach is embedded into partnership working so that children and young people receive the support they need as soon risk of offending are identified.

#### Outcome Target:

**Refine and secure the partnership relationships, both at a city wide and locality level, which will meet the needs of children and young people working with the service at the earliest stage to maintain the reductions in children offending in the city.**

## REDUCING REOFFENDING

- Review the service's approach to case management to ensure caseloads and responsibilities match appropriately to skill and grade of YOS practitioners
- Ensure offenders from minority groups, including female offenders, receive equitable interventions which address assessed needs and achieve equitable outcomes as the majority offending population.
- Improve the accommodation solutions for difficult to place young people in the City to support pathways out of re-offending.
- Review the current offer in relation to specialist offending behaviour interventions within the service to ensure individual and specialist needs are being met.
- Monitor the use of specialist offending behaviour interventions within the service to ensure they are delivering the best outcomes for those working with the service

### **Outcome Target:**

**To ensure that the YOS is providing effective and specialist interventions that achieve positive and best outcomes for reduced re-offending for children and young people.**

## A FAMILY APPROACH

- Ensure that all existing and new FIP Key Workers understand the needs of the City's 'Intensive' Family Focus families and are appropriately trained and supported to perform this role.
- Agree across the City the definitions of "Level 1" and "Level 2" family intervention and identify which YOS staff outside of FIP who can offer this intervention.
- Ensure that these staff understand the needs of the City's Level 1 and 2 Family Focus families and are appropriately trained and supported to perform this role.
- Ensure that YOS practitioners are supported to effectively engage with families to deliver voluntary family support to embed the whole family approach within the service.
- Ensure that YOS practitioners are supported to effectively identify key family issues including domestic violence, teenage relationship abuse, bullying and sexual offending.

### **Outcome Target:**

**To embed a whole family approach to services across the Youth Offending Service.**

## **A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE APPROACH**

- Develop and embed restorative justice approaches for out of court disposals and community resolution.
- Develop an effective restorative justice approach in relation to children looked after.
- Develop a cost effective business model for the delivery of restorative justice within the YOS and with external partners.
- Ensure restorative justice is effectively integrated into the whole family approach of the service.
- Further increase direct restorative justice between young people and their individual victims.
- Develop specialist victim modules to improve individual victim work with a focus on domestic violence, teenage relationship abuse, sexual offending, hate crime offences and young victims.

### **Outcome Target:**

**To deliver an innovative, transformational and targeted restorative justice service which meets the individual needs of all victims.**

## **SERVICE EVALUATION**

- Implement a service evaluation methodology that supports the service in better understanding the effectiveness of its statutory and voluntary interventions aimed at reducing offending and re-offending and ensure that service planning is evidence based.
- Refine the quality assurance process to ensure it reflects on inspection and relevant research reports in relation to effective practice and embed a reflective practice approach to ongoing professional learning.
- Embed a refined service user participation process to inform future service development.
- Maintain a focus on performance and needs analysis in line with service developments and practice agreed for 2013/14.

### **Outcome Target:**

**Through service evaluation and quality assurance, develop a better understanding of the most effective interventions in terms of impact and value for money that prevent offending and re-offending as well as fitting with the needs and wishes of the children and young people we work with.**

## **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

The landscape for youth justice services has and will continue to change over the lifetime of this plan. This brings both opportunities and challenges for 2013/14 and beyond.

Sunderland YOS has used a variety of means to identify and consider opportunities and challenges to the service including the YJB Self Assessment, national and best practice research (including thematic inspection), consideration of local and national priorities and a review of the YOS Partnership Risk Management plan.

### **Opportunities we have identified:**

- Strong YOS Management Board
- Opportunities for joint working supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Development of YOS Family Intervention Project in delivering Strengthening Families Intensive Offer city wide
- Successful and maintained performance on national indicators
- Out of court interventions including Liaison and Diversion pathfinder pilot
- Innovative restorative justice and victim work across the service and with key partners to embed early intervention approaches and improve community resilience
- To better understand and identify the assets available to the YOS in helping deliver its outcomes and key priorities
- Reducing demand by strengthening the whole family, preventative and early intervention approaches with those at risk of offending.

The opportunities identified are embedded within the service's development priorities for 2013/14 and will be refreshed annually as part of the delivery planning process that supports this Youth Justice Plan

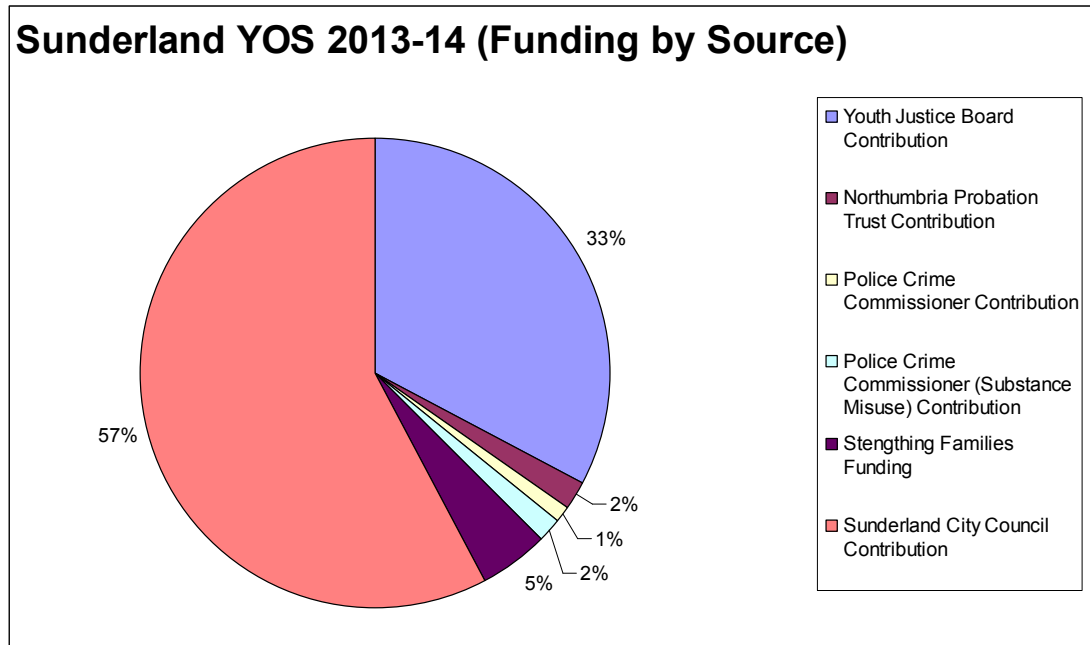
### **Challenges we have identified:**

- Future budget efficiencies
- Potential for increased costs linked to new remand framework for children
- Potential for reduced funding linked to payment by results
- Potential for fewer funding streams
- Increased competition for national grant funding
- Maintaining performance in reoffending
- Maintaining and strengthening the prevention and early intervention aspects of the service's delivery in the face of reducing resources
- Uncertainty over future policing agenda in relation to LASPO Act.

The challenges identified are embedded in the YOS Risk Management Plan which is reviewed and overseen by the YOS Management Board.

## RESOURCING AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The YOS budget for 2013/14 is made up of statutory partner agency funding and in kind contributions, core government funding from the Youth Justice Board and other grants. The chart below summarises each of the funding sources for the current financial year:



Within this budget, Sunderland YOS will deliver the core statutory youth justice service as set out by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and other subsequent legislation.

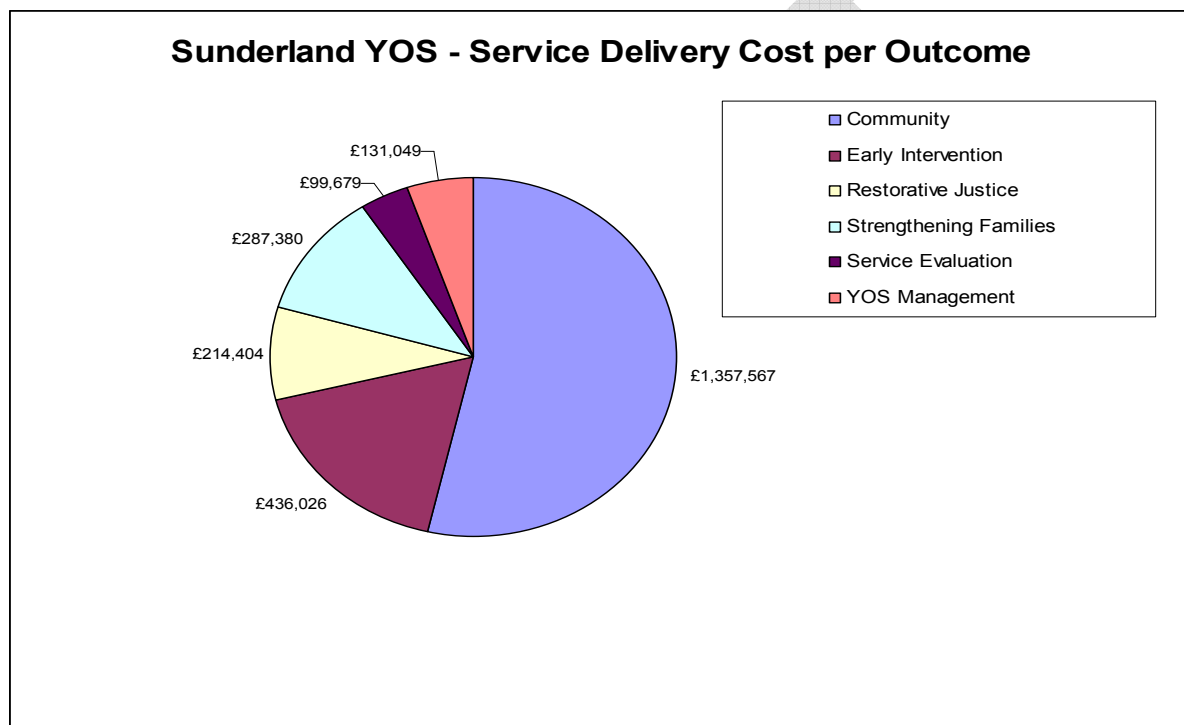
Northumbria YOTs have undertaken a significant amount of work with the Police Crime Commissioner for Northumbria, supported by the YJB, to make representations in relation to the successes achieved in relation to preventing offending and reducing reoffending.

However, whilst there is a changing landscape in terms of funding, Sunderland YOS will continue to deliver the core statutory youth justice services as set out by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and other subsequent legislation. The core statutory youth justice services can be summarised as:

- The provision of appropriate adults to safeguard the interests of children and young people detained or questioned by police officers;
- The provision of voluntary interventions in respect of out of court disposals;
- The provision of court services including reports for the courts;
- Support for children and young people remanded;

- Assessment and supervision of children and young people sentenced by the court to youth justice disposals, and the provision of rehabilitation programmes;
- Supervision of young people sentenced to custody including post release interventions for Detention and Training Orders;
- The provision of restorative justice including information and support to victims of young offenders.

The chart below summarises the YOS budget spend in the individual areas of the service:



## Workforce and Specialist Resources

Sunderland YOS works with young people across both pre-court and post court intervention and ensures the delivery of court orders (both in the community and custody) in line with National Standards for Youth Justice, case management guidance and other areas of effective practice and statutory requirements.

In order to support the service's core full-time staff group (in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998), the service also recruits, trains and manages volunteer and sessional staff to support delivery of elements of the out of court functions and restorative justice. In order to effectively safeguard children and young people, Sunderland YOS facilitates and manages its own appropriate adult service and operates a fully staffed court rota and out of hours rota, including weekends and out of hours.

The service also continues to be well resourced in terms of maintaining all the multi-agency professionals required to form the local youth offending service (as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998) for 2013/14 including child mental health services, health, probation, substance misuse, accommodation and education, training and employment.

Additional to statutory responsibilities, Sunderland YOS provides and supports a range of specialist and award winning intervention programmes that are targeted at specific need and risk groups. These include:

- Phoenix Fire Safety Programme in Partnership with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.
- A Triage process with Northumbria Police that provides an out of court restorative justice approach to dealing with young people at the earliest possible opportunity; a project which will be evolving to support delivery of the Police Restorative Disposal which will offer a quick and proportionate response a young person's low-level offending and allows victims to have a voice in how the offence is resolved.
- Liaison and Diversion project, encompassing an early identification and assessment of the health needs of children and young people with Northumbria Police and other partners.
- A family intervention programme for hard to reach families that has evolved to support delivery of the Intensive Family Offer for the Strengthening Families strategy within the City.
- Resettlement after care provision for young people leaving custody.

These statutory and specialist provisions combine to form youth justice services across prevention, early intervention, enforced community based interventions and custody. They are also particularly important in contributing to the delivery of a number of strategic design principles in several of the city's key strategies including strengthening families, community safety, health and wellbeing, child and family poverty and community resilience through a focus on prevention, early intervention, joint working, taking a whole family approach and making better use of existing and new assets. For example, during 2012/13, Sunderland YOS Wear Kids (prevention and early intervention team) transitioned into the Risk and Resilience locality based structure which provides support and access to address the risks of offending as part of the city's Prevention Offer. Focussed partnership working with Wear Kids staff and local partners is supporting increasing referrals to the service which has been re-designed to offer both a brief and full intervention approach depending on needs of individual young people.

Sunderland YOS' restorative justice scheme supports victims of youth crime and enables young people who offend to repair the costs of their offending to their individual victims or to the wider community (community payback services). The RJ schemes works with representatives of local communities to target community payback where it can make the most difference.



The YOS Management Board maintains oversight of YOS resources through regular reports across the financial year.

### **Value for Money**

Sunderland YOS has a strong performance management culture and effective performance management arrangements to ensure the value of services is effectively measured. Over the forthcoming year Sunderland YOS will enhance this capacity through the further development of cost benefit models that link performance and financial information to develop a greater understanding of the social return on investment. Key service developments for 2013/14 also include further qualitative analysis on outcomes in areas of the service such as compliance panels, offending behaviour interventions and strengthening families.

This will help to demonstrate the value of the work carried out and will enable Sunderland YOS to demonstrate best value, and will be well placed to respond to the shift towards Payment by Results, as well as the opportunity of developing effective partnership working with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Sunderland YOS will continue to build on existing successful cost benefit analysis models such as negative outcomes cost analysis and Family Wheel approach used within the YOS' FIP and will work with the YJB evaluation products to better demonstrate the outcomes being achieved.

## Glossary

ETE	Education, Training and Employment
FIP	Family Intervention Project
FTE	First Time Entrants
HO	Home Office
IRS	Intensive Resettlement and Support
ISS	Intensive Supervision and Surveillance
LAC	Looked After Children
LASPO	Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (Act)
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
RJ	Restorative Justice
SALT	Speech and Language Team
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YRO	Youth Rehabilitation Order
YOS	Youth Offending Service
YOT	Youth Offending Team

## How to Contact Us

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If you would like this document in any other format, please do not hesitate to contact the staff base above.

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