

# Youth Justice Plan 2021 - 2022

## City of Wolverhampton

### VERSION 16 (DRAFT)



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## **Introduction, vision, and strategy:**

Wolverhampton Youth Offending Team (YOT) continues to be a forward thinking and ambitious organisation, committed to improving outcomes for young people, their victims and creating a safer community. This reflects the core vision of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) as set out in the YJB Strategic Plan 2021 2024:

***“A youth justice system that sees children as children, treats them fairly and helps them to build on their strengths so they can make a constructive contribution to society. This will prevent offending and create safer communities with fewer victims.”***

The last 12 months has provided an unprecedented challenge and the 2020-2021 YOT Recovery Plan produced for the YJB, captured these in detail. More importantly it highlighted the way Wolverhampton YOT, and the people within it, responded to the need to “re-imagine” service delivery, moving to a range of digital platforms; using new technologies whilst still maintaining face to face contacts with young people and families. Alongside this, the previous investment in developing our trauma informed approaches provided the service with the foundation to continue to meet not only the strategic and operational needs but to genuinely support, build relationships with young people and their families, whilst promoting desistance, keeping young people and others safe in the community. The YOT Recovery Plan evidenced the commitment, adaptability and the team’s operational agility to meet all its statutory and professional obligations. As part of this plan, the team were asked for their reflections and comments included:

***“My initial reaction to the report is how positive it is. Managing COVID has been a challenge that none of us could have foreseen and I think the report demonstrates the creativity, resilience and care that the team has had not only for our young people but for each other.” (AJ)***

At the heart of our future strategy for Wolverhampton YOT will remain Positive Youth Justice, Child First, Offender Second principles which recognises that children’s rights have not always been sufficiently prioritised in the Criminal Justice System (CJS), and in some cases they have been responsibilised beyond their capacities. Our approach will continue to seek to prioritise the best interest of the child, ensure our services are child-focussed and developmentally informed. In addition, our work will promote children’s strengths and capabilities as a means of developing their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance. This plan for Wolverhampton YOT will also be embedded in the City of Wolverhampton Council’s plan of support and recovery “Relighting Our City, Reset, Recovery and Relight”, with the key priority areas of: supporting people who need us most, creating more opportunities for young people, supporting our vital local businesses, generating more jobs and learning opportunities and stimulating vibrant high streets and communities.

Despite the existential challenges faced by the service due to the pandemic there has continued to be a strong culture of quality assurance to confirm that overall operational delivery remains very strong. This has included an internal audit being undertaken in February 2021 based upon the Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) standards. In addition, a rigorous audit against the strategic and operational National Standards to produce self-assessments for Youth Justice Board (YJB) was completed and submitted in July 2020. This focused on 5 areas, Out of Court (OOC), Court, In the Community, In Secure Settings and On transition. All areas were overall self-assessed as good, all with areas of excellence and these judgements were moderated and ratified by the YJB and endorsed by the YOT Management Board (YMB). Action plans in all 5 areas have been completed and are monitored through the YMB. Key areas identified as requiring improvement will be included within the key objectives of this plan.

The YMB has played an instrumental role in guiding and scrutinising the team's work and priorities in the last 12 months. The continued partnership contribution to the YOT shows the genuine local commitment to support a multi-agency response to young people at risk or involved in the CJS in Wolverhampton.

This plan has been developed following a number of consultation events with the strategic members of the YMB. This provided a strategic opportunity to review what had been learnt in the last 12 months, achievements, performance, priorities, and risks going forward. In addition, team members within the YOT; Community panel volunteers and young people were asked to reflect on what had gone well, issues facing young people in Wolverhampton and priorities going forward. This feedback has been incorporated within the plan and the priorities for Wolverhampton going forward.

During 2020-2021, the YOT performance data has been regularly scrutinised, and some key achievements have included:

- (Based on local data) Only six custodial sentences were recorded during the 2020-2021 year; a reduction of five when compared to the previous year, a reduction of 55%
- Only four young people were subject to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) on remand throughout 2020-2021, 50% lower than compared to the previous year
- (Based on local data) The First Time Entrant rate for Wolverhampton has recorded a 31.3% reduction in young people during 2020-2021 and a 37.4% reduction in the number of offences committed amongst FTE when compared to the previous year. YJB available data (January - December 2019) confirms a similar reduction year on year of -26.2%, significantly better than its YOT family Group (made up of comparative YOTs) of -4.9%

- The Wolverhampton Reoffending live tracker toolkit, quarter 4 data in 2019-2020, reported a 17.6% overall binary rate, compared to national rate of 37.9%. Overall reoffence per offender rate was 1.67, compared to 3.30 nationally. The overall reoffences rate across the cohort for Wolverhampton was 0.29, compared to a national rate of 1.25
- The Reoffending live tracker toolkit, quarter 4 data in 2019-2020 for Out of Court disposals, reported an overall binary rate of 11.8% compared to national rate of 37.9%. Overall, reoffences per offender rate for Wolverhampton was 4.00 compared to a national rate of 3.30; and overall reoffences rate across the cohort was 0.47 compared to 1.25 national rate

There was inevitably a focus on the urgent management priorities during the initial stages of the pandemic; however, despite this and as part of the service recovery there has still been a significant amount of progress made against the local priorities in 2020-2021:

- Quality of court provision has been maintained and all back logs within the court system have been cleared
- Internal audits and the National Standards Self-Assessment have evidenced continued high quality of assessments, planning, interventions, and delivery
- Development of a prevention offer – Back on Track project, aimed at supporting young people at risk of exclusion from school and of offending has been positively evaluated. Further funding has been identified to extend the offer into more schools in Wolverhampton during 2021-2022
- Strengthening and developing our youth diversion offer by working in partnership with the Centre for Justice Innovation and Cheshire Youth Offending Service (YOS) as part of the YJB Pathfinder project. Progress has been made to develop a scheme with West Midlands Police to provide a “genuine” diversion scheme for appropriate young people arrested within the city and this will be launched in July 2021
- Embedding trauma informed practice – YOT has continued to ensure a trauma informed approach underpins assessment and interventions
- Recruitment and training of a new, more diverse cohort of Referral Order panel volunteers. The panel volunteers have reported feeling appreciated and valued as integral members of the team
- Victim contact and mediation/restorative justice interventions, including all Referral Order panels, have been delivered with a wide range of victims and young people. The YOT allotment has continued to provide direct opportunities for reparation for young people

- The Integrated Health Team, with the addition of a Speech and Language therapist, has embarked on a new service commitment that “no young person will enter the Criminal Justice System with an unmet health need”
- Developing a whole family approach –The YOT have been able to promote whole family activities, share resources with parents and promote whole family emotional well-being
- Supporting educational engagement – Pre and post 16 education panel have continued to ensure education offers and support has been maintained for YOT young people. The YOT has also supported families to access free school meal vouchers and supported with access to laptops. The YOT Educational Psychologist has played a key role in providing advice and resources to parents
- Developing a multi-agency response to identifying young people at risk of exploitation – the YOT have been integral to the citywide work around developing a partnership approach to contextual safeguarding and has been a key partner in the development of the new Partnership Exploitation and Missing Hub which launched February 2021
- The establishment of a YOT and West Midlands Police led Partnership Gang Forum used to map young people at risk, and within a contextual safeguarding perspective ensuring the co-ordination of a multi-agency response
- Increasing levels of youth participation – Using a range of mediums to collect and analyse experiences of lockdown, e.g. use of questionnaires and Microsoft TEAMS Live Events; and gathering feedback on services delivered
- Development of a YOT Peer Mentoring scheme, due for launch June 2021
- Resettlement Support Panels - The outcomes secured for young people have been positive with collective discussions between the YOT and the secure estate to foster a high level of transparency and efficient information sharing. Significant improvement in safeguarding practice and liaison with Werrington Youth Offender Institute has also been achieved
- Improvement in the Transition to Adulthood (T2A) and the role of the seconded Probation Officer within the YOT has also assisted with the youth to adult transition process
- Disproportionality and response to “Black Lives Matters” on a council; team and YMB partnership level
- Team learning and development audit completed on Survey Monkey with a comprehensive report and training and development plan agreed for 2021-2022. Delivery of key practice-based training, including Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY); Exploitation and County Lines
- Re-location of Wolverhampton YOT from Beckminister House Office to a new office location which young people and YOT staff have been involved in the

design and project management to create a new, bright, and welcoming environment for our young people and families, with improved facilities for all.  
Due to open June 2021

## Voice of our Children and Young People

Child First Offender Second principles at its heart must encourage young people to actively participate, engage and feel supported to co-create their programmes. Wolverhampton YOT has an active Participation Strategy and “Voices from Youth Justice” programme. During 2020- 2021 young people have:

- Completed a questionnaire about YOT sessions and life during and after ‘lockdown’, alongside the ‘My Worries’ questionnaire
- Attended a YMB to share their experiences of working with the YOT
- Participated in Live Broadcasts on Microsoft teams, covering issues such as disproportionality
- Provided feedback on OOCd, Referral Order Panels, Reparation, and overall service quality, which is used to compile evaluation and participation reports
- Development of a Viewpoint Hub: Scan QR code:



- 15 young people participated in a YJB Plan consultation exercise asking the questions below. The responses are a sample that illustrate the themes:

### What do you think the YOT has done well in the last 12 months (if anything?)

- They have helped me mature a lot. I now understand things I didn't understand before. Like other people's viewpoint such as the victims and my family and the impact the offence had on the people around me. (KR)
- Helped me in school because I don't get as much detentions and I haven't been skiving any lessons. (AA)
- Worked with my family and helped the relationship between me and my parents. (AA)
- Taken me on activities to keep me busy and out of trouble. (AA)
- Helped me realise how stupid I was back then. I've cut my cannabis out! I feel loads better. (DA)
- They have helped me get my CSCS card and I have just started working and am loving it. (JB)
- Providing support like food parcels and talking about my feelings. (AC)
- Encouraging my interests like drawing and walking. (AC)
- Made me chat to people (Nurse, W360, SALT) (DW)
- 
- 

### What are the key issues facing young people, like you living in Wolverhampton?

- Education. For me it was school but have improved as I feel college is better now. (KR)
- Peer pressure and learning to not be easily influenced by my friends. (AA)
- Not having anywhere to hang out, which is why we hang around the parks. (AA)
- Kids get wound up about fighting over postcodes. (DA)
- I think schools are an issue for young people. Schools only invest in smart children. (JB)
- Gangs, so many young people are getting involved. If you have nothing to do you can find yourself stuck in a gang because of hanging out with your mates and older. (BB)

**What should be the YOT's focus on/priority in the next 12 months?**

- Get as many young people off the road as soon as possible and that they have things to do such as getting into employment and have interesting things to do. (KR)
- Concerned that young people get drawn into crime for fast money so they can support their families (KR)
- Helping to provide somewhere for us young people to go, like youth clubs. (AA)
- Keeping up the work in schools because I like having my one to one session. (AA)
- More art-based stuff, now coming out of lockdown (AC)
- Stop young people from carrying knives – tell them it's not worth it & peer mentoring. (DW)
- Gangs, more information about risks of gangs and what comes of it. (BB)
- Mental health support – making sure young people have people they can talk to. (SG)

The benefits of participation have been reflected in low breach rates, high levels of compliance with National Standards, motivation to genuinely engage with a range of support available, and low binary reoffending rates. This continues to be a central driver in our relational based Restorative Practice approach and the development and implementation of Trauma Informed Practice through ARC (Attachment, Regulation and Competencies). Our practice uses multi-sensory approaches to support children to build relationships and **attachments** with safe adults; provides an opportunity for young people to participate in activities which support them to learn and practice on how to **self-regulate** and finally develops their social **competency** and self-worth/efficacy through positive activities.

**Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements:**

The work of the YOT is overseen by a well-attended strategic quarterly YOT Management Board (YMB), chaired by a Consultant in Public Health, with the local Police Superintendent as vice chair. It has developed a robust set of Terms of Reference (TOR) which explicitly incorporates the requirements to set the strategic direction of Youth Justice services in Wolverhampton, promote the principles of 'child first offender second'; oversee, support and hold to account the work of the team and ensure services are being delivered in line with the 2019 Standards in Youth Justice. The YMB is a learning meeting where partners can share collective wisdom and experience in order to shape the future of Youth Justice in Wolverhampton. As noted above, the YMB has proactively been involved in the development of this plan and individual Board members were also allocated lead areas for the completion of the National Standards Self-Assessment, and continue to provide the strategic link into operational practice to ensure ongoing accountability and scrutiny.



TOR April 19 v.6  
(Signed).pdf

In order for the Board to effectively undertake these functions it continues to receive regular reports on:

- Resourcing: both finance and staffing including holding partners to account for any proposed changes
- Compliance with YJB grant conditions for example the timely submission of this plan and data returns

- A performance data report which is detailed in respect of key factors such as age, gender, race, offence type, Focus is on the three key national drivers and other local priorities – reducing reoffending; first time entrants to youth justice; custody rates and engagement of young offenders in education training and employment. The re-offending live tracker data is also presented to board along with a specific report on knife crime
- Report and scrutiny over the action plan addressing issues of disproportionality
- National standards Self-Assessments, action plans and reviews
- Safeguarding briefing paper to allow any other Strategic or Operational safeguarding issues to be raised within this forum. Focus on Exploitation; custodial safeguarding practice and responses to serious incidents in order to ensure appropriate opportunities for operational and strategic learning.
- Focus on Practice - Operational practice presentations which bring alive the work of the YOT
- Progress against the key priority areas identified within the YJB plan and outcomes of case audits and quality assurance processes

A key part of the function of Board remains the holding to account its strategic partners in order to drive system improvement for children to achieve better outcomes (YJB Strategic Plan 2021-22024); and providing an escalation forum for any resourcing or operational issues. In addition, the YMB ensures that its members strategically embed the work and priorities of the YOT within their partnership agency, with a specific focus on promoting desistence, keeping young people and others safe and disproportionality. A strategic networking exercise has been completed to map forums and strategic arenas in which the partnership YMB members extend the reach and influence of the work of the YOT. Please see network map below in figure 1.

The YOT is managed by the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) within Children's Services and is well placed to contribute to the wider agenda of CWC and the broader Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP). Reports about the work of the YOT are regularly presented to the CWC Children's Senior Leadership Team (CSLT), the Strategic Executive Board (SEB), the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together partnership (WST) and through Scrutiny and Cabinet. This Youth Justice Plan is approved and endorsed by CWC Cabinet and the SWP.

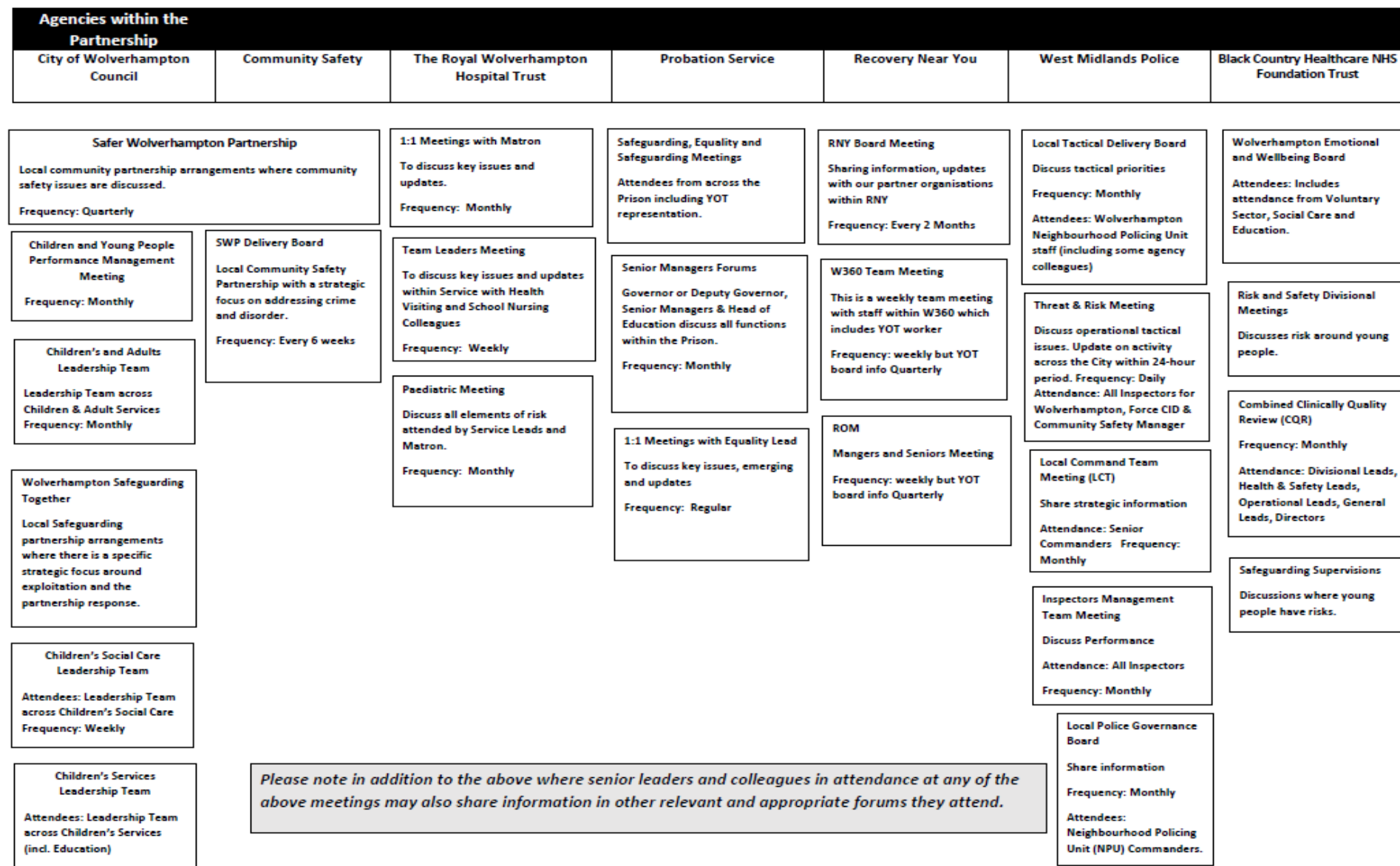
The Youth Offending Team has strong links with key partnerships within the Children's Services and Community Safety areas of work. The YOT Head of Service has a broad portfolio within Children's Services including edge of care support services, residential children's homes, those at risk of exploitation and those going missing from home/ care and specialist support for vulnerable, high risk adolescents. More recently, the development of a Wolverhampton citywide response to exploitation and the launch of the Partnership Exploitation and Missing Hub has been added to this portfolio and has provided an opportunity for the YOT to be centre stage in this work. This broad remit fits well with the work of the YOT and has also assisted in strengthening the working relationship with Social Care. The YOT's key priorities will be identified and included in the Children's and Young People Service Plan 2021 - 2022.

Within the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership, the YOT participates in the Partnership Board and attends the Delivery Board. In addition, the YOT is also represented at a number of other key operational and strategic meetings and boards including the Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group (CEMOG), the Exploitation Priority Group (a sub-group of WST), the Children and Young People Emotional, Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board, Children and Families Together Board and the CCG Risk Register meetings.

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## Strategic Networking within the City of Wolverhampton Youth Offending Partnership

This diagram evidences how key youth offending information (relevant and appropriate information/updates) is shared across the Partnership and within agencies.



## Resources and Services

Wolverhampton YOT partnership receives a variety of resources both financial and in kind from its partners all of which are overseen and understood within the strategic YOT Management Board. The YJB Practice Grant is a main source of financial income that is used to finance staffing to support the wide range of Youth Justice functions undertaken across the partnership. This Practice Grant is supported by the Local Authority contribution which has allowed the continued investment in Social Workers to undertake assessments, reporting and intervention planning and delivery within the Criminal Justice setting, enhancing safeguarding and risk management practice. The Local Authority has also funded the relocation of the YOT into its new purpose developed offices. Due to COVID19 the previous YOT premises were closed at the end of March 2020 and the new offices are due to be operational by June 2021. This investment in the infrastructure of the services will greatly improve the facilities and opportunities for delivery for both young people and staff.

Partner contributions to the youth offending partnership pooled budget 2021-2022 is outlined in table 1. This indicates the finance and in-kind contributions made by local partners. This funding and the in-kind contributions enable the YOT to concentrate on the system aims of reducing the number of children in the system and their reoffending, whilst improving the safety, wellbeing, and outcomes of children in the system. In accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Wolverhampton YOT receives contributions from all statutory partners – Police, Education, Health, Probation and Social Care. Any proposal to change the levels of resourcing are presented at YMB for discussion and ratification.

For 2021-2022 the YOT received direct funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) of £66k and this funding is specifically used to support the out of court disposal work. The use of this budget and its aligned performance indicators are reported back to the PCC on a quarterly basis. The OOCd delivery continues to be supported by the police contribution, alongside its work with high risk young people, contribution to the YOT/partnership gang forum, the Deter Young Offender (DYO) scheme and the Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). The National Probation Service (NPS) contributions to all YOT's was revised for 2020- 2021 resulting in a reduction from a full time Probation Officer to a 0.60 Probation Officer (PO) and a 0.2 Probation Support Officer (PSO). The PO role focusses on the transition to adulthood work for 17-year olds and the PSO role has been located within the CWC Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) screening all new referrals and contributing to the daily briefings within the Partnership Exploitation and Missing Hub.

The combined health budget has allowed the YOT to develop a sophisticated health offer within the service, which triages all young people for health issues. The integrated health team consists of a school nurse from Royal Wolverhampton Trust (RWT), a Psychologist from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

(CAMHS), a Substance Misuse from Wolverhampton 360W360) and more recently a Speech and Language therapist from RWT. The aim of the YOT is to ensure that no young person enters the Criminal Justice System with unmet health needs and that health issues that underpin young people's risk of entering and escalating in the CJS are proactively supported and addressed. A performance framework has been established with the health providers and via a quarterly health summit, performance and outcomes are reviewed.

During 2021-2022, the YOT Back on Track on Project was also awarded a £70k from Headstart following a successful pilot funded by Safer Wolverhampton Partnership in 2020-2021. The project is aimed at pupils in year 8 at risk of permanent exclusion and becoming involved in the youth justice system. An outcome and evaluation framework has been agreed and will be reported back to Headstart.

**Table 1 - Partner contributions to the youth offending partnership pooled budget 2021-2022**

Agency	Staffing costs (£)	Payments in kind – revenue (£)	Other delegated funds (£)	Total (£)
<b>Local authority*</b>				
<b>Connexions</b>	<b>£1,089,567</b>	<b>£16,270</b>	<b>£328,032</b>	<b>£1,433,869</b>
<b>Police Service</b>	<b>£27,360</b>	<b>£69,800</b>		<b>£97,160</b>
<b>National Probation Service</b>	<b>£5,000</b>	<b>£31,815</b>		<b>£36,815</b>
<b>Health Service</b> (CAMHS, Nurse, Speech and Language, Substance Misuse Worker)		<b>£141,090</b>		<b>£141,090</b>
<b>Police and crime commissioner**</b>	<b>£66,000</b>			<b>£66,000</b>
<b>YJB Practice Grant</b>	<b>£520,903</b>			<b>£520,903</b>
<b>Other***</b>				
<b>Headstart Grant</b>	<b>£70,000</b>			<b>£70,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,778,830</b>	<b>£258,975</b>	<b>£328,032</b>	<b>£2,365,837</b>

## Performance and Priorities

		Out of Court Disposals						Court Disposals						Combined	
		Community Resolution		Youth Caution		Youth Conditional Caution		First Tier Disposals		Youth Rehabilitation Orders		Custody Disposals		Overall Disposals	
		2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21
Gender	Male	73%	83%	81%	81%	96%	92%	90%	94%	89%	100%	100%	100%	84%	90%
	Female	27%	17%	19%	19%	4%	8%	10%	6%	11%				16%	10%
Ethnicity	White	59%	38%	56%	62%	57%	19%	53%	54%	68%	54%	18%	17%	56%	44%
	Mixed	18%	10%	17%	5%	13%	50%	23%	22%	14%	23%	27%	50%	18%	22%
	Asian	8%	12%	8%		4%	8%	3%		4%				6%	4%
	Black	9%	24%	19%	29%	26%	12%	18%	22%	14%	23%	36%	33%	16%	22%
	Other Ethnic Group	1%	2%				12%	3%	2%			18%		2%	3%
	Unknown	5%	14%		5%									2%	4%
Age	10	1%													
	11	5%	7%	3%	5%									2%	2%
	12	7%	5%		19%		8%	3%						3%	5%
	13	14%	7%	8%	14%		12%	5%	2%	4%				8%	6%
	14	19%	19%	11%	10%	9%	8%	5%	19%	4%				11%	14%
	15	20%	21%	28%	5%	48%	19%	32%	35%	32%	23%	9%	17%	28%	23%
	16	18%	21%	14%	19%	26%	19%	21%	17%	21%	62%	36%	50%	20%	23%
	17	11%	14%	31%	29%	17%	31%	34%	28%	39%	15%	36%		24%	23%
	18	6%	5%	6%			4%					18%	33%	4%	3%
Offence Type	Arson	1%					8%	2%		2%				1%	1%
	Breach of Bail									1%					
	Breach of Conditional Discharge														
	Breach of Statutory Order									2%		6%		1%	
	Criminal Damage	18%	7%	17%	24%	9%		9%	5%	14%	12%	3%		12%	8%
	Death or Injury by Reckless Driving														
	Domestic Burglary					4%		3%	1%	2%		6%		2%	
	Drugs Offences	13%	12%	25%	10%		8%	8%	9%	4%	4%	20%		10%	8%
	Fraud and Forgery														
	Motoring Offences			3%				25%	5%	17%	6%			12%	3%
	Non-Domestic Burglary		5%	3%			4%	2%	3%	1%				1%	2%
	Other	2%	26%	6%		4%	4%		2%	2%	16%	3%	13%	2%	10%
	Public Order	5%	10%	3%	5%		4%	1%		1%	3%	9%	13%	2%	3%
	Racially Aggravated	2%		3%						2%		6%		2%	
	Robbery	5%	2%	3%		4%		4%	3%	4%	6%			4%	3%
	Sexual Offences	1%	5%			4%			3%		4%				3%
	Theft and Handling Stolen Goods	24%	10%	11%	5%	4%	4%	10%	3%	11%	1%			12%	4%
	Vehicle theft/Unauthorised Taking	6%		3%	14%	4%	8%	11%	8%	8%	3%	9%	13%	8%	6%
	Violence against the Person	24%	24%	25%	43%	65%	62%	25%	57%	31%	45%	37%	63%	30%	48%
CYPIC	CYPIC - Wolverhampton	1%	0%	3%	0%	13%	4%	3%	6%	25%	8%	45%	17%	8%	4%
	CYPIC - Caretaking	4%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	6%	4%	32%	57%	0%	0%	8%	6%

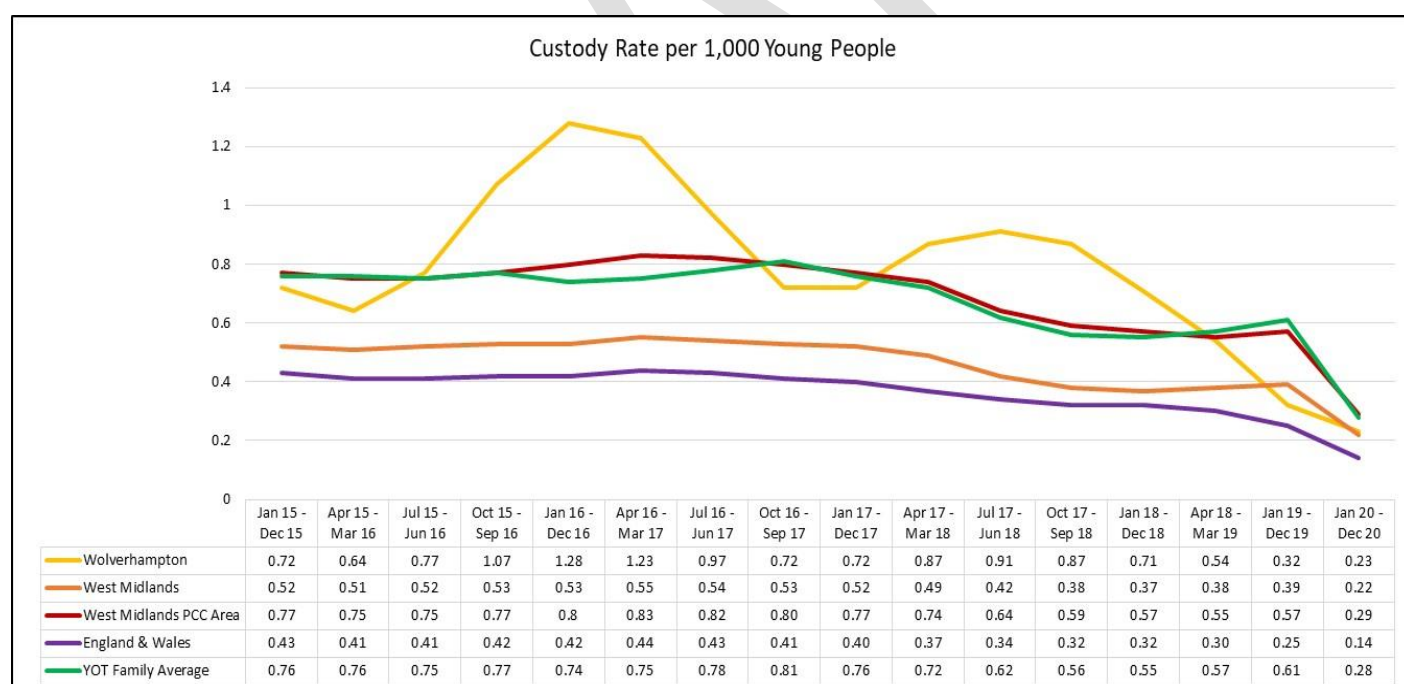
## Demographic and offending Profile:

This plan and the analysis used to inform judgements around performance and priorities are underpinned by an explicit understanding of the YOT's cohort of young people for 2020-2021. To this end, 90% of all disposals and 100% of custodial outcomes relate to young men. 52% of all disposals and 83% of custodial outcomes relate to Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people. Offences of violence against the person accounts for 48% of all offences and 10% of the cohort relate to Children and Young People in Care (CYPIC).

## Summary of Key performance targets:

### Use of custody

(Based on local data) six custodial sentences were recorded during 2020-2021; a reduction of five when compared to the previous year, equating to a reduction of 55%. All sentences were received by males aged between 15 and 18 years, consistent with the previous year. Three mixed ethnicity males (50%), two black males (33%) and one white male (17%) recorded a custodial sentence. During the previous year 18% of sentences were recorded by white males. Violence against the person was the offence type recorded against 63% of custodial sentences.



The custody rate per 1,000 young people for Wolverhampton has recorded a year on year downward trend since 2017-2018. Throughout 2020 the rate was in line with the West Midlands area after falling below this rate during 2019.

## Youth Detention Accommodation

Four young people were subject to youth detention accommodation throughout 2020-2021, 50% lower than compared to the previous year, however the collective days on remand remained comparable between the two years.

2019/20			2020/21		
Number of young people on remand	Collective days spent on remand	Annual Remand Costs (£)	Number of young people on remand	Collective days spent on remand	Annual Remand Costs (£)
8	366	£121,691	4	347	£97,905

Throughout 2020-2021 the four young people were remanded in a YOI and were aged between 15 and 18 years. All young people on remand throughout 2020-2021 received a custodial sentence with one young person still awaiting sentencing. One young person was remanded for an offence of unauthorised vehicle take; all other young people were remanded for offences of violence against the person.

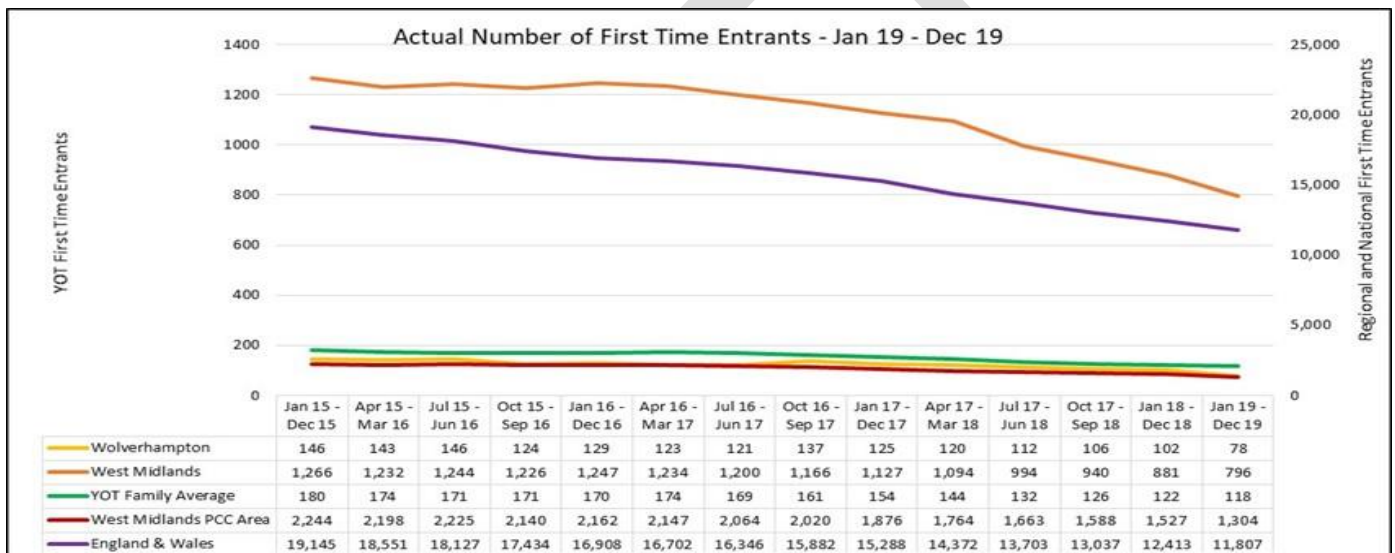
The YOT works to ensure that the ambition to restrict the use of custody for cases where it is truly the only proportionate option by the following:

- Producing quality gatekept reports to the court, supported by proportionate and credible community sentence recommendations
- The maintenance of a robust Intensive Supervision and Surveillance scheme (ISS) offering oversight and creative interventions to address risky offending and offer real alternatives to custody and secure remands
- Provision of high-quality court officers that are responsive and proactive in tailoring bail alternatives for court, including weekends
- Maintaining the confidence of the court in all tiers of interventions and bail options e.g. Referral Order panels by offering shadow visits, presentations to Youth Court Panel meetings etc
- Clear and credible compliance and, where necessary, enforcement procedures
- A clear risk management policy that reviews and maintains management oversight
- Resettlement Support Panels based on the YJB's '7 pathways of resettlement' and embedding trauma-informed approaches to engagement through the implementation of ARC
- Education Training and Employment (ETE) and mentoring support via YOT resettlement support and partnership organisations.
- Werrington YOI operational lead for resettlement is an active YMB member and the YOT are represented on Werrington's Safeguarding board
- Working closely with voluntary and community sector partners to ensure our service is relevant and responsive to all of Wolverhampton's diverse communities
- Developing clear guidance and working protocols with Children's Services in the response and management of remand bail requests to avoid, where appropriate, secure remands

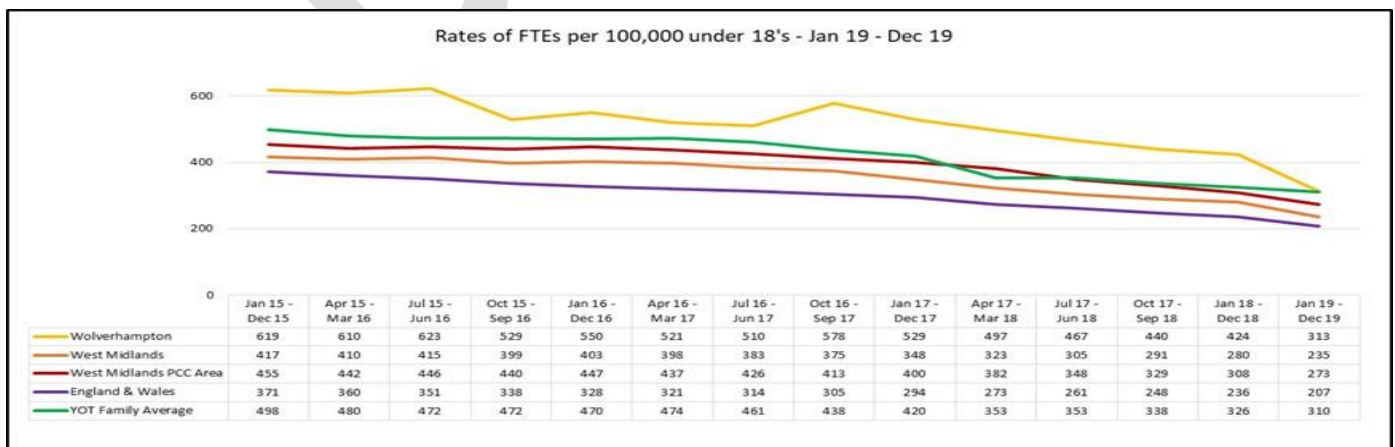
- As outlined in the National standards 'In custody' self-assessment, future priorities will be on ensuring improvement in ASSETPLUS and the use of Youth Justice Application Framework (YJAF); strengthening links with Safeguarding teams in the secure estate, including the use of appropriate escalation measures to address concerns; improving resettlement outcomes; addressing the issue of disproportionality in the use of custody for Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people

### First Time Entrants (FTE) to the Youth Justice system

(Based on local data) The First Time Entrant rate for Wolverhampton has recorded a 31.3% reduction in young people during 2020-2021 and a 37.4% reduction in the number of offences committed amongst FTE when compared to the previous year. YJB available data (January - December 2019) confirms a similar reduction year on year of -26.2%, significantly better than its YOT family Group performance of -4.9%.



The actual number of FTE as displayed in the YJB charts reflects the downward trend within Wolverhampton since 2015 also mirroring the overall downward trend across all regions since this period.



The downward trend is further reflected in the rate per 100,000 for under 18 year olds. In 2015, the rate within Wolverhampton was much higher than the region, the YOT

family and in England and Wales. Notable reductions since 2018 in the number of FTEs in Wolverhampton has brought the FTE rate in line with the YOT family average. All YOTs within the same YOT family are grouped based on comparable factors in each local area, e.g. level of deprivation, size etc. Therefore, it is positive that Wolverhampton YOT is performing in line with its YOT family for FTE rates, although further work needs to continue to bring Wolverhampton YOT in line with the national rates of FTEs.

The YOT performance report year to date identified that offences of violence against the person (58%), criminal damage (10%) and vehicle theft/unauthorised taking (10%) are the most common for FTEs. The rate of violence against the person has recorded a notable increase after recording 32% amongst FTE during the previous year.

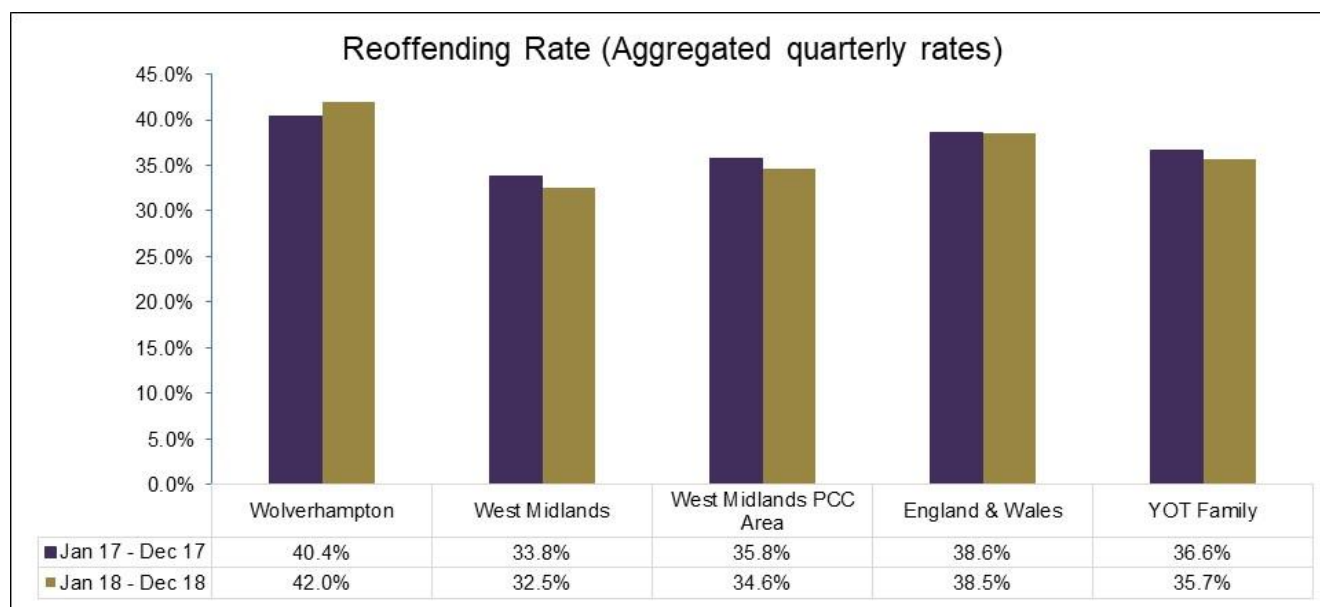
**Key initiatives to further reduce FTE include:**

- Diversion at the point of arrest scheme due to launch in July 2021 in partnership with West Midlands Police. There is an agreed new criteria for young people to be referred to the out of court Joint Decision Panel (JDP) to reduce the criminalisation of young people using Outcome 22 (deferred prosecutions) through the use of support packages to avoid young people formally entering the CJS
- Exploitation and Missing Hub and the Partnership gang's forum providing a vehicle for earlier identification of young people at risk of exploitation and offering early intervention packages of support to prevent young people entering the CJS
- Use of the Early Help assessment to identify upstream children and young people at risk of offending and offer preventative interventions to identified young people
- Expansion and implementation of the Back on Track Project to provide early intervention for year 8 pupils at risk of school exclusion due to criminogenic related behaviours i.e. knife and/or drug possession at school
- Embedding of Restorative Practice within identified Residential Units to promote the "making it right" programme to mediate and prevent criminalisation in residential settings
- Co-work Harmful Sexual Behaviour programmes, using AIM3 to support Children Services to avoid the criminalisation of young people
- Continued work with schools and other education providers to ensure young people are accessing education, training, or employment up to the age of 18, suitable to their level of need
- As outlined in the National standard 'Out of Court' self-assessment, future focus will be further decriminalisation of CYPIC; revision of OOCJ Joint Working protocol; embedding trauma informed practice; ensuring experience & outcomes of Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people are equitable to others; delivering prompt, proportionate and effective interventions

## Reducing Reoffending

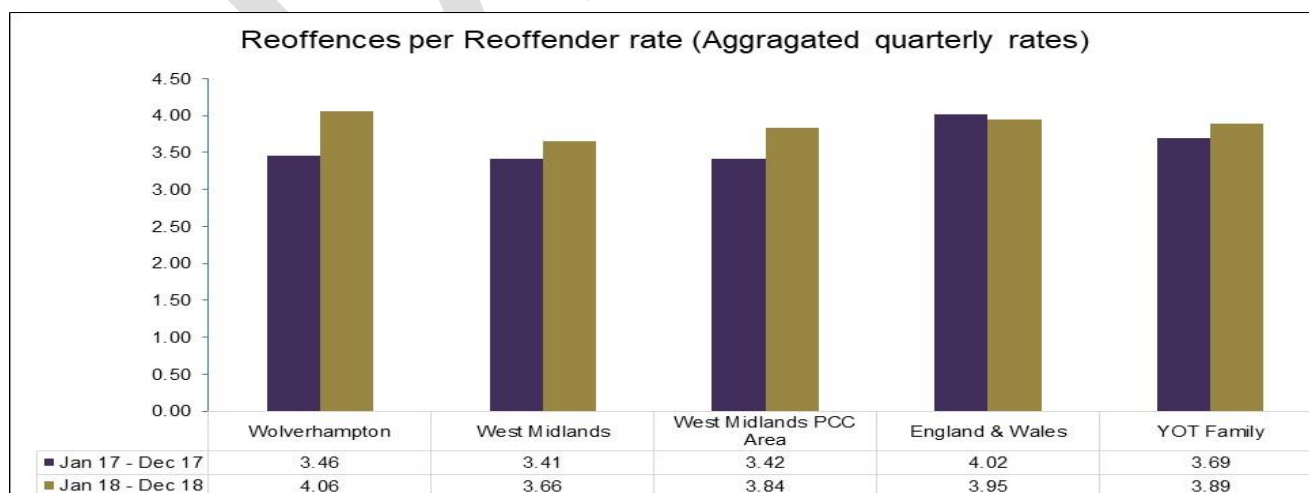
### Binary rates of reoffending (YJB Data January 2018 – December 2018)

During 2018 Wolverhampton recorded an increase in the reoffending rate from 40.4% to 42.0%. All other areas regionally and nationally recorded slight reductions in the aggregated quarterly rates.



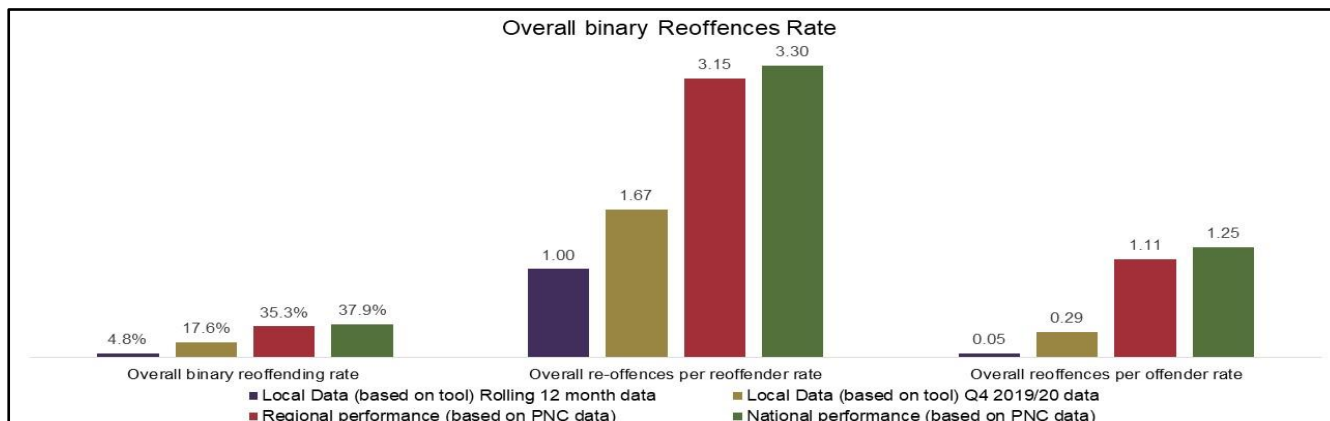
### Reoffences per reoffender (YJB Data January 2018 – December 2018)

In line with a slight increase in the reoffending rate for Wolverhampton, the reoffences rate per reoffender also increased from 3.46 to 4.06. Only England and Wales recorded a slight reduction between the two years, with all comparator regions recording an increase.



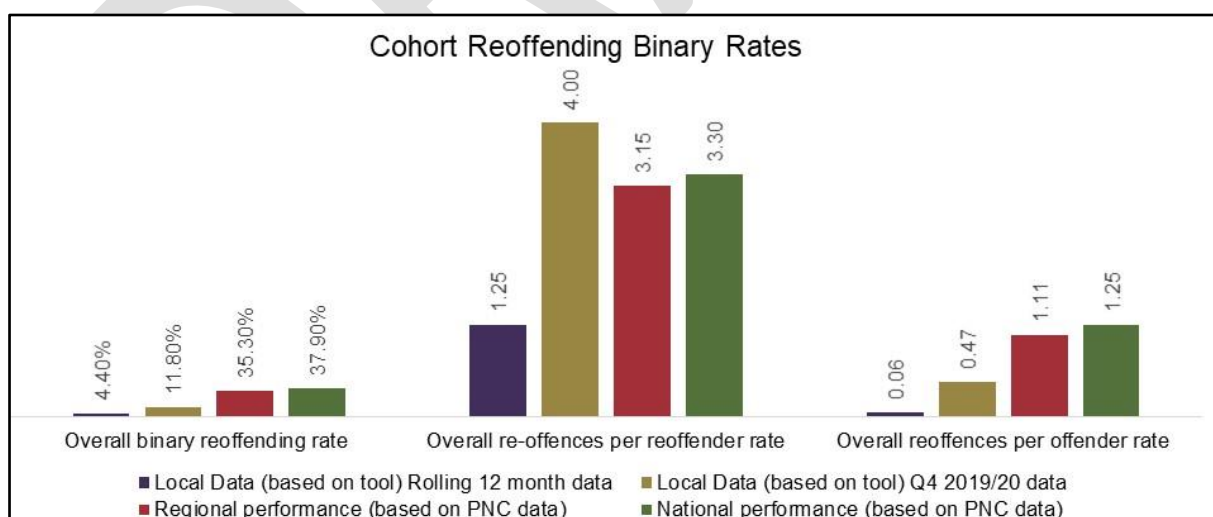
## Reoffending Live Tracker Tool (local data)

The use of the 'Reoffending Live Tracker Toolkit' has provided an opportunity to track the most up-to-date cohort over a 12-month period and has ensured that 18 year olds leaving the service continue to be tracked using Police National Computer data (PNC).



Tracking in quarter 4 during 2019-2020 recorded a 17.6% overall binary rate, with 1.67 reoffences per reoffender rate. The overall reoffences rate across the cohort was at a rate of 0.29. All rates fall below both the regional and national performance for reoffending.

Within Wolverhampton YOT the 'Reoffending Tracker tool' is also used to track young people who receive an OOCd. This tracks the reoffending rates of young people who receive Community Resolutions, Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions and all young people are tracked for a 12-month period.



The data shows that for quarter for in 2019-2020, the overall binary rate for OOCd was 11.8% compared to national rate of 37.9%. Overall re-offences per re-offender for Wolverhampton was 4.00 compared to national 3.30, and the overall reoffences rate across the cohort was 0.47 compared to 1.25 national rate.

Operational initiatives to reduce reoffending in the YOT are central to our work and include:

- Continued use of the Reoffending Live Tracker information to target our resources on the areas of most significant reoffending
- Continued training and investment in improving the quality of assessments, planning, delivery and reviewing with regard to desistance, keeping young people and others safe.
- Further embedding trauma informed practice and the development of the ARC framework to target and develop interventions designed to adapt a more Public Health and systemic approach to reducing reoffending
- Development of bespoke projects and programmes designed to engage young people into activities to build attachments, learn to self-regulate and develop their own social competencies
- Specific focus and resources to improve Education, Training and Employment opportunities and support
- Integrated health team, offering a range of therapeutic support and interventions.
- Extending the YOT offer of support following the end of an OOC or statutory intervention.
- Maintaining scaled approach contact levels to ensure intensity of interventions match assessed risks and needs, to allow greater scope for non-statutory engagement.
- Seven day per week services for our most challenging and risky service users
- Compliance meetings with young people and their carers to ensure that any deterioration in their response to YOT programmes of intervention is quickly understood, addressed, and improved
- Resettlement Support Panels to co-ordinate and deliver effective provision to reduce risks of reoffending on release from custody
- Ensure appropriate pre-planning and preparation for all young people on transition into Probation and in line with the National Standard 'On transition and Resettlement' at any point of significant transition.
- Working with the Voluntary Sector to ensure services are diverse and relevant to all our young people e.g. Catch 22 , Kitchen Table Talks
- YOT led partnership 6 -weekly gang forum to identify and map young people most at risk of exploitation and gang involvement to promote a multi-agency response to managing risks.
- Proactive Police/YOT offender management for young people identified as part of the Deter Young Offenders (DYO) scheme
- Work with families and parents to ensure the 'whole family' approach is embedded with a focus on an understanding of therapeutic approaches to parenting to support developmentally informed intervention for sustainable desistance
- In line with the national standard 'In the Community' self-assessment, future focus will be on improving casework planning practice – reducing barriers to engagement; effective use of young person and parent/carer feedback; activities and interventions explicitly linked to desistance & trauma informed

practice; improved assessment practice through embedding the use of other tools, such as chronologies and genograms; improved quality of intervention plans; whole family approaches; relaunch of a core intervention offer, with specific focus on weapons; offences of violence, including programmes and specialist assessment, Structured Assessment Risk of Violence in Youth (SAVRY) and exploitation/ gang risks.

## Local Performance targets

### Engagement in Education Training and Employment (ETE)

This is no longer a nationally collected indicator, but the local YOT partnership has recognised that engagement in ETE is a key protective factor against offending. During the last year there have been very focussed and strategic efforts to improve this previously stubborn area of underperformance.

	2019/20					2020/21				
	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20	FY 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Q2 2020/21	Q3 2020/21	Q4 2020/21	FY 2020/21
% Overall Performance	75%	80%	54%	78%	72%	60%	63%	40%	40%	54%
% School Age met 25 hours target	92%	88%	50%	100%	83%	80%	50%	50%	100%	70%
% Over School Age met 16 hours target	50%	75%	55%	60%	60%	40%	67%	33%	25%	44%

Between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 there has been a reduction in overall ETE performance to 54% after recording 72% during the previous year. The performance within both age groups also recorded reductions. 2020-2021 did however record a smaller cohort of young people with 28 completing their orders; against 73 young people during the previous year, resulting in more “sensitive” statistical reaction to small changes in ETE performance. Despite this caveat, improving ETE engagement rates for pre and post 16 year olds remains a major priority for 2021-2022. Within this local priority, there will be a focus on the identification of young people with Special Education Needs (SEN) and Education & Health Care Plans (EHCP)

Future improvement will be driven by:

- Continued data analysis to identify trends and patterns in ETE engagement to inform practice priorities
- Roll out of the Back on Track programme providing support to Year 8 pupils at risk of exclusion
- YOT representation on the CWC Secondary School Inclusion Support and Alternative Provision Panel (ISAP) to provide bespoke support to young people at risk of exclusion
- YOT attendance at the CWC Culture of Belonging Steering group and project groups to influence and set the direction of future education practice
- Attendance at the Police and Schools Panel to establish closer working relationships with schools
- New Assessment and Development Officer post to oversee all ETE referrals for support at YOT to co-ordinate provision and support



- Monthly YOT multi-agency pre-16 and post-16 panels to plan and identify resources to support young people to maintain ETE and/or identify a placement
- The Education lead in Children and young people in Care (CYPIC) to attend the YOT monthly multi-agency meetings to ensure there is a clear pathway for accessing additional support for CYPIC
- Escalation pathways to virtual headteacher for vulnerable learners not in education, training, or employment
- Educational Psychologist (EP) support to provide support, advice & guidance on SEN and EHCP processes
- Pathway established for Educational Psychologist assessments to be completed by “in-house” EP based within YOT
- Speech and Language therapist to assess and support young people in ETE
- Partnership secondment of post 16 Connexions Advisor within the YOT to provide bespoke support to young people. Dedicated YOT officer providing further post-16 support
- Dedicated YOT Officers to provide school age ETE support
- Embed and encourage the YOT’s trauma-informed, developmental approaches to engagement within learning environments
- Work in partnership with Robaston College to engage young people in weekly sessions as a “taster” to returning to a learning and employment environment
- Development of partnerships with local post-16 ETE provision
- Roll out of ASDAN to support pathways back into mainstream learning

## **Disproportionality**

Issues of disproportionality has always been a priority for Wolverhampton YOT, but the “Black Lives Matter” movement has once again brought into sharp focus the continued disproportionality experienced by many Black, Asian, Ethnic Minority young people in the CJS. To this end, Wolverhampton YOT has continued to build upon a piece of work completed in 2020-2021 and produced a detailed and far reaching analysis of the experience of Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people in Wolverhampton.

Based on 2011 census baseline data for Wolverhampton, 61% of the 10-17 population are white and 39% Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic: 20% Asian, 7% Black, 10% mixed and 2% other ethnic groups. A summary of the key headlines from the YOTs disproportionality analysis (December 2020) is detailed below:

**Table 2 - Key headlines from the December 2020 disproportionality report**

	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>97% of Black young, 74% Mixed and 100% of Asian young people successfully completed their interventions, compared to 84% of white young people.</li> <li>Analysis of interventions indicate a high engagement rate for Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people in boxing, gym, knife angel, let's get cooking, music, Street Doctors and the theatre project.</li> <li>Only 17% of recorded breaches during 2019-2020 related to Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people (6:1)</li> <li>OOCD feedback from young people across different ethnic groups – 91% felt processes explained well by YOT, 100% felt they were listened to during the CR process</li> <li>Factors for desistence by category strength indicates that 64% of those identified as strong related to Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people</li> <li>East Park, Ettingshall and Heath Town showing a reduction in young people receiving orders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrest to disposal figures continue to suggest that once arrested females are more likely to receive a disposal than males.</li> <li>The 10-17 offending population are 56% white and 42% Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic: 6% Asian, 16% Black , 18% mixed, and 2% other ethnic group.</li> <li>78% of young people who were remanded into Youth Detention Accommodation in 2019-2020 were Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic. (9/11)</li> <li>53% of first-time entrants were Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic; an increase of 4% in comparison to 2018-2019. Overall, 24% reduction in FTE</li> <li>Factors against desistence average number by ethnicity, 3.6 across whole cohort and 4.3 for Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people</li> <li>Of those not achieving their Post 16 ETE hours, 63% were Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people.</li> <li>Young people who offend are most likely to live in the most deprived wards of the city.</li> </ul>
<p><b>YOT Staffing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25% of YOT staff team males, compared to 83% of open caseload</li> <li>39% of YOT staff from a Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic background, compared to 49% of open caseload.</li> <li>28% of Referral Order Panel volunteers members are from a Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic background compared to 44% of YP on referral orders.</li> </ul>	

The Lammy review was undertaken in 2017 by David Lammy and the focus was on the discrimination within policing and criminal justice systems in the UK. The review found significant racial bias in the UK justice system.

During 2020-2021, Wolverhampton YOT considered the findings of the national Lammy review in order to ascertain whether the same areas are a cause for concern locally. An overview of the findings are outlined in table 3.

**Table 3 – Lammy Review Findings Vs the Wolverhampton Findings**

## Lammy Review – “Journey of the Child”

<b>Black children are over 4 times more likely to be arrested than White children</b>	<p>Wolverhampton – 3 times in 2019-2020 (2018-2019 = 2.5 times)</p> <p>45% of arrests involve Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic YP in 2019-2020 (2018 -2019 = 41%)</p> <p>21% arrests involved Black YP in 2019-2020 (2018-2019 =18%)</p>	<p>West Midlands – 6 times in 2019-2020 (2018-2019 = 5 times)</p> <p>52% of arrest involve Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic YP in 2019-2021 (2018-2019 = 50%)</p> <p>24% arrests involved Black YP in 2019-2020 (2018-2019 = 20%)</p>
<b>Of all children arrested, white children are more than twice as likely to get a caution than Black children</b>	<p>YC received by white YP in 2018-2019 was 67% and reduced to 56% in 2019-2020</p> <p>Increase of 11% Youth Cautions being received by Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people and an increase of 19% of YC being given to Black young people. Gap is reducing but still indicating white young people more than twice as likely to receive a YC</p> <p>Youth Conditional Caution (YCC) – 57% received by white young people and 43% Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic YP (2019-2020) Black YP have historically received YCC for knife related offences</p>	
<b>Of all children convicted Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic children are twice as likely to be sentenced to custody</b>	<p>82% of custody disposals related to Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people supporting the hypothesis that they are more than twice as likely to receive a custody sentence. 2019-2020 data relates to 9 young people .</p>	
<b>Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic children are more likely than white children to reoffend</b>	<p>The rolling 12-month and Q4 2018-2019 cohort local data - the binary reoffending rates indicate that Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people have a lower rate of reoffending than white young people. The 12 month rolling period shows reoffending rate for white young people 16.2% and Black young people 7.7% and mixed young people 9.1%. No Asian young people reoffended during this period.</p>	
<b><i>Although Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic children are more likely to reoffend but white children commit more reoffences when they do reoffend<sup>1</sup>.</i></b>	<p>12 month rolling cohort does not support this hypothesis, with Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people committing slightly higher reoffences rate.</p>	
<b>Black young people have a higher representation within the more serious groups. They account for 41% of all robbery offences, 30% of all drugs offences and 26% of weapon possession offences but only account for 19% of all offences committed.</b>	<p>2019-2020 data shows 47% of robbery offences committed by Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people , Black young people accounted for 35% of these offences. 74% of robbery offences were committed by Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people, 49% of all drug offences committed by Black young people. 67% of knife possession committed by Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people, 38% Mixed and 20% Black young people.</p>	

Wolverhampton YOT has developed a detailed and comprehensive action plan to address its issues of disproportionality, focussed this year primarily on Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people; whilst not dismissing the experiences of other young people with protective characteristics. The YMB has become the centre for a further piece of partnership work, supported by our colleagues in Public Health to produce a partnership analysis to map the key partnership issues of disproportionality which have an impact on young people “upstream” before they enter the CJS. For example, stop and search rates; school exclusion rates; SEN support; Social care engagement; young people’s early access to CAMHS and Substance misuse services; accommodation support/evictions. All YMB members have committed to providing data, which will be analysed by Public Health with a view of creating and agreeing a partnership and integrated action plan to address disproportionality wherever it exists within the system. This approach ensures that the YOT is at the heart of a systematic response to disproportionality not only once a child enters the CJS but at the touch points prior to entry.

Other initiatives and headlines from the Disproportionality Action plan 2021-2022:

- Continue to track and review YOT data to establish patterns and review action plan via YMB.
- YOT Equality Forum established, task & finish groups for practice in assessments and interventions; report writing, changing the narrative and participation
- Team training on cultural competency
- YOT representation at CWC Forum of Race & Culture which specific focus on education, curriculum, belonging & aspiration task & finish group and cultural needs of CYPIC
- Back on Track programme working with specific groups at risk of exclusion (Timpson report 2019)
- YOT peer mentoring programme
- Diversion at the point of arrest scheme and new criteria to support Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people to engage with support without formal entry into CJS
- Diversionary pathways – Wolverhampton YOT is a pilot for the YJB Levelling the Playing Field, which will use local community organisations with trained mentors to provide programmes of positive activities
- Review YOT Intervention offer for offences of robbery, drugs, and weapons
- Continue to embed trauma informed practice and ARC in the work with Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people
- Collaborative work with Werrington to provide YMB with scrutiny on Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people’s experience in custody
- Exploring and hearing the voice of the child from a Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic perspective
- Kitchen Table Talk – Parenting support programme

- Using Exploitation and Missing hub and gang forums to identify Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people at risk of exploitation and provide appropriate range of support
- Regional project for girls in CJS to establish a standard of practice

## **Responding to the pandemic and recovery from COVID19**

### *Summary of ongoing challenges and service design going forward*

Although the response to COVID19 in Wolverhampton YOT has been overwhelmingly positive, there remains ongoing challenges, including:

- Reengagement of young people back into education/training and the establishment of the routine of daily attendance
- Lost learning opportunities disproportionately impacting on YOT young people, especially those with SEN and EHCP and those without access to digital platforms
- Loss of family income and increase in financial hardship for many families, creating additional strain within households and parental relationships
- Impact of lockdown on young people's emotional health and wellbeing. Alongside this, the impact on social development, including speech and language; emotional intelligence and resilience
- Increase and changing risks associated with exploitation and gang involvement. This includes online methods of grooming and targeting local young people, rather than recruitment of them to go "out of town" for county drug lines
- Increased risk of gang and public place violence, due to "pent up" aggression, digital provocation, and competition for drug supply both geographically within Wolverhampton, and in relation to county line routes
- Delays in the progression of Crown Court cases, impacting on young people and families, with young people on extended periods of bail
- YOT office and partnership offices being closed for significant periods of time has impacted on the delivery of therapeutic support sessions
- It has been more challenging to provide high intensity interventions, such as Intensive Support and Surveillance Programmes which requires 25 hours contact time per week due to a limitation of services and the ability of the YOT to delivery community-based activities

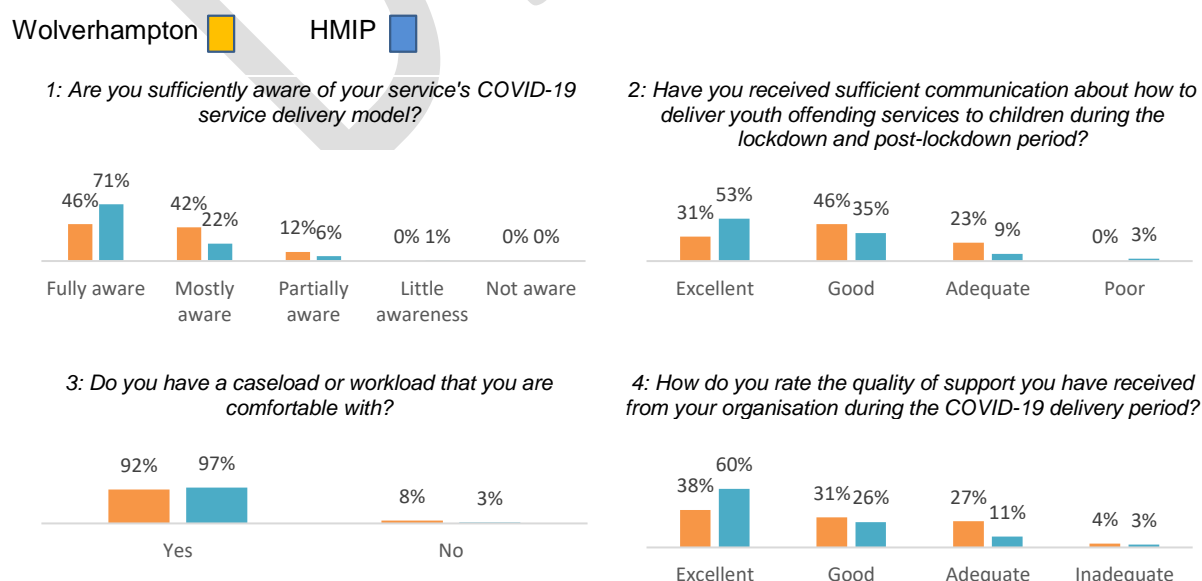
Service design going forward will include a more blended approach to work with young people, families, and victims. The use of digital platforms to develop interventions and support young people on media platforms has provided the opportunity to connect with

a generation. OOCR panels and referral order panels have been delivered virtually and have been fully evaluated with some young people feeding back that they preferred them, whilst others struggled with the virtual interactions. Victim contact has continued, and the restorative justice offer has included a range of home-based activity for reparation and completing face to face apologies virtually. In addition, the YOT has embraced other media and as mentioned previously has worked to develop the Viewpoint hub; Microsoft TEAMS live events and is developing a web-based intervention site that young people will be able to access to complete a range of offence related programme activities. It is however the intention of the YOT to move OOCR and Referral Order Panels; victim and restorative justice interventions back to face to face delivery as soon as its practicable to do so.

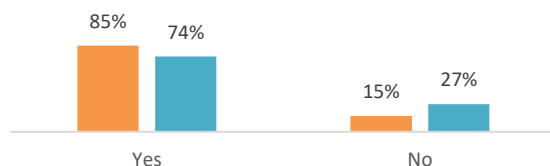
Throughout all the lockdowns face to face contacts have been maintained and the use of outdoor spaces maximized with a programme of family assistance initiated. During the period of 04.05.20 – 06.07.20 a total of 687 face to face contacts were completed and 200 food parcels delivered to families. This has allowed relationships to be maintained and risks and safeguarding concerns to be managed appropriately. It also further embedded the whole family model of service delivery with extended contacts within family households. As a trauma informed team, relationship remains at the centre of our work, so the opening of the new YOT offices in June 2021 will ensure that face to face interventions can be expanded. In addition, the wide range of activity-based projects like, boxing, music, creative arts, sport, and fitness; let's get cooking, will begin to be delivered again within COVID safe working practices. The staff team will have a blended model of working with office, community and homebased working supported by an excellent CWC technological offer.

### *Lesson learned (Specific response to HMIP Covid19 thematic)*

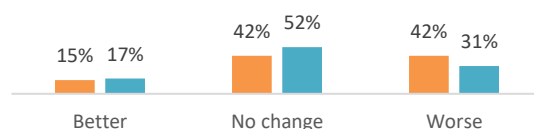
Wolverhampton YOT replicated the survey completed by HMIP as part the thematic inspections by using an anonymous survey monkey



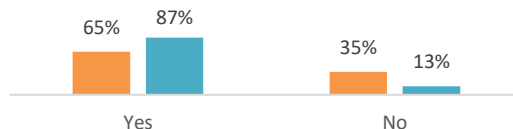
5: Were you required to use new technology during the COVID-19 period?



6: Is accessing resources better or worse than it was before the COVID-19 restrictions?



7: In the COVID-19 period, have you had access to sufficient services, interventions, and partnership resources that you need to work with the children on your caseload?



The outcome of this survey broadly reflected the findings of the HMIP survey with the majority of staff feeling supported; informed and working with a manageable workload. Of note is that the reported levels of staff feeling access to resources had deteriorated was lower for Wolverhampton than in the thematic survey.

Wolverhampton YOT's initial response to the pandemic highlighted the importance for clear, pragmatic and decisive leadership and guidance given the scale of the challenge. Within a working week we had moved from an office-based team to working remotely, and all staff having full access at home to Childview, Microsoft Outlook and using TEAMS as the primary platform for team communication. The importance of maintaining team contact, cohesiveness to prevent isolation and provide both professional and personal support to team members has been at the centre of our response and will continue to be our focus going forward as we reopen our offices and continue to embrace many of the new ways of working.

#### *Lessons that have been learnt*

- Ability of a team to embrace new technology and find ways of delivering key services, such as OOCd and Referral Panels on virtual platforms to ensure that there were no longstanding backlogs
- Examples of creative ways of engaging young people and their families, for example online art competitions, providing families with ingredients and facilitating a family cooking session via video call, safely working with young people in the community on a graffiti project, using outdoor locations such as parks to complete sessions
- The time saving elements of holding virtual meetings, increasing attendance at multi-agency meetings. These included risk and safety meetings, Safeguarding Strategy meeting, Exploitation and Missing hubs daily briefings and the YMB
- Limitations of virtual team-based meeting, especially for larger meetings usually designed for team building, and professional support, such as full team meetings

- Impact of the “digital divide” not only for young people but for other partnership and professional organisations
- Importance of maintaining face to face contact with young people particularly those suffering from the impact of lockdown on their emotional and mental health
- Commitment of the YOT staff at the height of the pandemic to continue this engagement work in the community, despite the risks, which were being mitigated with our COVID19 risk assessments and practices
- Ensuring our trauma informed approaches remained active, by further embracing the SENSE Model (Stabilisation, Education, Normalisation, Social Support & Engagement) to promote trauma informed approaches to engagement when working remotely



making-sense-of-covid-19-guidelines-docu

- The importance of responding to basic need (stabilisation phase), so the establishment of a Family Assistance Programme was quickly established to offer additional support to families in crisis
- Impact of young people not accessing and maintaining education for significant periods of time has had on their reintroduction back into school and the additional support required to facilitate this with both the young person and family
- Changing profile of some forms of offending with an increase in social media, threats, and harassment; concerns about other forms of exploitation being driven down even more covert routes and a shift in dealing with offences pre-court, given the restrictions of courts
- Excellent response from partners in ensuring the needs of young people are met. For example, Health colleagues in the YOT have been able to see young people face to face (where required) and although there is a current CAMHS worker vacancy in YOT, the wider CAMHS provision has worked closely with the YOT to address the needs of YOT young people
- Working with the secure estate and an improvement in the safeguarding practices and communication with Werrington YOI. The technology embraced by the secure estate including “pin codes” for young people to call their YOT workers and “purple” virtual visits for families will remain and complement our engagement with young people going forward

## *Review of 2020 Recovery Plan*



Wolves YOT - YJB  
Recovery Plan Sept 2

The recovery plan for 2020-2021 provided a framework to not only reflect on performance for 2019-2020 but also provided an opportunity to acknowledge the successes and the challenges that had been faced. The priority areas identified within the recovery plan related to Out of Court work; In the Community; At Court; Secure Settings and Transitions; replicating the National Standards self-assessment areas, with the addition of a focus on health and interventions.

The summary of the aforementioned key performance targets reflects the progress and continued areas of focus in relation to the recommendations and actions identified within the Recovery Plan 2020-2021. Work around OOCd is captured within the FTE section; the Reoffending section captures support in the community; and the areas of focus in relation to secure settings and work around transitions is referenced within the use of custody performance update.

The remaining sections in the Recovery Plan 2020-2021, not specifically covered in the aforementioned performance updates, are health, interventions and court work. From a health perspective the recommendation and actions focussed on the recruitment of a Clinical psychologist, which has been achieved and improving the integration of the joint health offer. A joint health handbook has been produced which clearly outlines all the triage processes and pathways to support. As previously mentioned, the health offer will be further refined at the OOCd stage.

In relation to the recommendations and actions for interventions, the Recovery Plan focussed on increasing the use of accreditation and improving the evaluation framework. To this end, a new Assessment and Development Officer post has been created with a central task of reviewing the YOT intervention core offer, to identify gaps and resources to fill these gaps; to develop an outcome framework aligned with the trauma informed ARC model and to further enhance the YOT evaluation of interventions combining this with the work around participation. This review, with its recommendations, is due to be completed in June 2021.

Finally, for work in the court arena, recommendations and actions were focused on the role the court team will play in the development of the diversion at the point of arrest. Specifically, this was in relation to proactively screening young people against the new criteria for an OOCd and establishing a pathway to refer back into the OOCd system from court. This work has been included in the development work with the Centre for Justice Innovation and the YJB pathfinder project with Cheshire YOS. This new way of working to prevent the criminalisation of young people will be included in the new practice guidance.

## Challenges, Risks, and Issues

The summary of the ongoing challenges and lesson learned during COVID19 above provides an outline of the current risks and issues being faced within Wolverhampton. The YMB within its consultation exercise identified:

- A third wave in the pandemic
- Challenge of having partnership and consistent staffing available and maintaining sufficient funding
- Addressing the mental health needs of young people and families
- Closing the education attainment gap
- Risks to social cohesion and the long-term behavioural impact of COVID

In addition, the HMIP Thematic review (2020) as outlined above has reflected many of the challenges, risks and issues identified at Wolverhampton. The YOT is now working within a changing political and legislative framework with the enactment of the Sentencing Act 2020 with changes relating to areas including Detention & Training Orders; moving the release point for the most serious violent and sexual offence and the concept of “tougher community sentences”. In addition, the recent publication of the “Case For Change: The Independent review of Children Social Care” (2021) recognises the growing numbers of teenagers entering the social care system, with contextualised safeguarding concerns and the need for child protection responses to reflect this shift of risk outside of the family home. Alongside this, the recognition of parenting in adversity and the impact deprivation on increasing the likelihood of state intervention, provides a timely reminder of the importance for this service to continue on its path in focussing on relational based, trauma informed practices, with a clear emphasis on contextualised safeguarding and public protection.

On a more local level a recent serious incident at the YOT and its subsequent Extended Learning Review highlighted the challenges of young people accessing appropriate educational and mental health support prior to them entering the criminal justice system. The action plan to improve these systemic issues is currently being monitored through the YMB and the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Partnership.

Finally, the challenge and issue that was strongly emphasised by young people and YOT staff during the consultation exercise, was the risk and challenge regarding exploitation and gang issues. Children and young people involved within the CJS appear to be more vulnerable to this type of abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including: exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Increasingly

young people are becoming both perpetrator and victim of offending, especially around youth and gang violence. To this end the CWC response to Exploitation, with the new single point exploitation screening tool; changes in Social Care threshold practice around contextual safeguarding and the creation of a child and adult Partnership Exploitation and Missing hub, provides a new, innovative and comprehensive systemic response to exploitation, in which the YOT is a genuine partner. Alongside this, the narrative of young people's childhood experiences, and the developmental impact of trauma and attachment continues to undoubtedly influence behaviours and risk, whilst impacting on an individual's ability to respond to traditional youth justice intervention to achieve positive outcomes and sustainable desistance from offending. In addition, the continued evidence of disproportionality and the differential life opportunities and outcomes for Black Asian and other Minority Ethnic young people must be considered a serious risk going forward. Wolverhampton YOT has acknowledged this challenge and understands the importance of continuing to invest and reshape practice, not only in line with the child first and offender second agenda, but with a trauma informed approach that has a clear practice framework in which to assess and understand the lives of the young people the YOT is working to support.

### **Service business and improvement Plan**

The YOT partnership is aware of the need to continue to innovate further to reduce Wolverhampton's first-time entrant rate and extend its prevention and diversionary offer to young people. In addition to this overarching plan with its continued focus on reducing reoffending, use of custody and ETE, a detailed action plan will be formulated to provide key areas of priority and delivery for the next year. This plan has been also been informed by the priorities identified in the consultations completed with young people, YMB, YOT practitioners and volunteers.

Within this plan the key areas that will be given significant priority will be:

- Reshaping and incorporating lessons learnt from the pandemic into the delivery model of the YOT going forward, including methods of working; staff care and young people and family engagement.
- Reviewing the terms of reference for YMB in light of the draft YJB "Practice Guidance for Youth Offending Teams Management Boards in England and Wales" April 2021
- Ensuring all partnership Service Level Working Together Arrangements are fit for purpose and ensure that they provide the required resources to support the partnership work around desistance, keeping children and others safe within the community

- Continuing to produce high quality performance management data to ensure that YMB and operational services respond and address the presenting risks and issues identified within the cohort. Alongside this, that there continues to be a robust Quality Assurance Framework to ensure National Standards and practice levels remain high and responsive to feedback and change
- Embedding diversion at the point of arrest – launching a new criteria for police referral to the OOCJ Joint Decision Panel (JDP) and the use of Outcome 22 to divert young people from court, whilst providing the support programmes to appropriately manage risk and safety and wellbeing within the community
- Aligning the triage health offer earlier into the system to ensure health issues are not the basis for entry into the CJS and all unmet health needs identified and addressed
- Focusing the victim and restorative justice offer at the earliest stage of involvement with the YOT, in order to ensure that restorative justice interventions are at the heart of the JDP and outcome 22 programmes
- Engaging with voluntary sector providers, such as Catch22, Impower, RG Boxfit; Park Village Football via the Violent Reduction Unit and the YJB Levelling the Playing Field to support the early intervention offers of the YOT
- Extending the YOT activity offer to young people in Wolverhampton and the identification of local provision and community resources through the CWC Youth Engagement Strategy
- Reviewing the YOT intervention offer to fully align with the ARC trauma informed framework, with a specific focus on offences of violence, weapon related offending and gang/exploitation support
- Launching the YOT Peer mentoring Programme
- Continuing to support, invest and work with our Community Panel volunteers to further increase their skills and confidence in engaging with young people. This will ensure volunteers continue to make valuable contributions to the work of the YOT
- Continuing to embed the work of the Partnership Exploitation and Missing Hub and the Partnership Gang Forum to identify at the earliest opportunity young people at risk and work as part of the multi-agency response
- Building upon the work with Children and Young People in Care (CYPIC) to further reduce their risks of criminalisation

- Continuing to embed all aspects of trauma informed practice with a refresher training session to include the Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (TSCC) and the use of Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY) supported by the YOT clinical psychologist
- Extension of the whole family / carer offer within the service to ensure active participation from families/carers in the programmes of interventions being provided for their young people.
- Consolidating the mental and emotional health offer within the YOT and its pathways to support to address the increasing presentations of young people with mental and emotional health issues following the pandemic
- Refreshing the intervention, risk, safety and well-being planning to fully embed case formulation, trauma informed practice and desistence case management
- Ensuring the voice of the child and young people proactively engage with their service to influence and shape delivery
- Improving the educational engagement and outcomes for young people at the YOT including the appointment of an additional dedicated worker to focus on this
- Continuing to promote Resettlement Support Panels and the proactive engagement of young people within the secure estate to improve safeguarding practice and life chances on release
- Continuing to improve the Transition to Adulthood (T2A) and other points of transition, including within the secure estate; and transition into adult based services such as mental health
- Addressing areas of disproportionality and promoting wider partnership engagement to reduce areas of significant disproportionality. As identified in this plan, this will include work with Public Health and the YMB to analyse and agree an integrated action plan to start to tackle issues further “upstream” which impact on risks associated with a young person’s involvement in the CJS
- Ensuring the delivery of the Training and Development plan for 2021-2022 to ensure that YOT staff are appropriately trained and equipped to deliver the quality of assessments and interventions required to achieve the outcomes for young people

## **Approval**

Wolverhampton's Youth Justice Plan has been approved by the YOT Management Board Members:

It is also subject to Cabinet approval within CWC. Plan subject to review 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**Public Health (chair): Neeraj Malhotra** \_\_\_\_\_

**Service Manager: Celia Payne** \_\_\_\_\_

**Police Superintendent: Simon Inglis** \_\_\_\_\_

**Head of Service, Specialist Support: Rachel King** \_\_\_\_\_

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