

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 76

Subject: **Youth Justice Plan 2025/26**

Date of meeting: **29 January 2026**

Report of: **Cabinet member for Children, Families & Youth**

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Ward(s) affected: **All**

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 Youth Justice Partnerships have a statutory duty to submit a youth justice plan relating to the provision of youth justice services as set out in Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is the duty of each local authority, in consultation with partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual Youth Justice plan, setting out how Youth Justice Services in their area are to be provided and funded, how they operate, and how the functions will be carried out.
- 1.2 The 2025/6 Youth Justice Plan addresses how services work to prevent offending behaviour and reduce reoffending by young people. It delivers on the Council Plan priorities of a fair and inclusive city and a healthy city where people thrive.
- 1.3 The Youth Justice Board are prescriptive on the structure of the plan and what needs to be included – this results in a very detailed document.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Full Council notes the city's Youth Justice Plan and supports the activity detailed therein.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 The local youth justice arrangements are agreed and owned by the Brighton and Hove Adolescent Partnership Board. This partnership fulfils the statutory functions of a youth justice partnership. The statutory partners are Brighton & Hove City Council, Sussex Police, the National Probation Service and NHS Sussex. Voluntary sector and school representative also form part of the Partnership Board.
- 3.2 The city's Youth Justice Team is integrated into the Specialist Adolescent Service. A Complex Adolescent Strategy outlines the work and priorities for this complex cohort of children. The annual Youth Justice Plan sits beneath this strategy.

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4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

4.1 The development and submission of an annual Youth Justice Plan to the national Youth Justice Board is a statutory requirement. There is a prescribed template that all Youth Justice Plans must adhere to.

5. Community engagement and consultation

5.1 One of the key priorities for the Complex Adolescent Strategy is to increase participation and the voice of the child. A participation worker has been appointed to progress this important area of work. There is ongoing work on developing a social media presence to engage with children and young people, with the service Instagram having over 650 followers. Children and young people are involved in the recruitment of staff; meet with regulatory inspectors (Ofsted and HM Inspection of Probation). Their views are sought throughout, and at the end of interventions to inform service delivery. The chair of the Adolescent Partnership Board has met with a group of young people to hear their views about access to services. Young people present to the Adolescent Partnership Board and there is an ambition for a young person to co-chair the Board going forward.

6. Financial implications

6.1 There are no financial implications because of the recommendations of this report

Name of finance officer consulted: David Ellis Date consulted: 15/01/26

7. Legal implications

7.1 Pursuant to Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 it is the duty of each local authority, in consultation with partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual Youth Justice plan, setting out how Youth Justice Services in their area are to be provided and funded, how they operate, and how the functions will be carried out .

Name of lawyer consulted: Natasha Watson

Date consulted: 15/01/2026

8. Risk implications

8.1.1 The activity detailed in this plan has all been budgeted for. A large proportion of the service offer is funded through short term year on year funding, such as the Youth Justice grant, the Violence Reduction Partnership intervention money and Home Office grants. We often do not hear about the future years funding until late in the year or after the next financial year has begun. The majority of this funding is used for staffing cost. This therefore creates a risk as it results in the loss of good staff we have invested in and create issue with recruitment.

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8.1.2 The success of the arrangement relies on strong partnership working. Therefore, change of policy or issues within partner agencies can potentially create a risk. This is mitigated by strong governance arrangements and partnership agreements.

9. Equalities implications

9.1 There is a Children's Safeguarding and Care Anti Racist Action Plan in place, which the Youth Justice Team is part of. The plan has three workstreams - staff support; practice with children and families; the voices of families, children and carers. Staff are becoming more confident about talking about race and significantly more examples of good practice is being seen in quality assurance audits. This is a journey and there is still more work to do.

9.2 Joint training between the Police and the Adolescent Service has supported the difficult conversations required to challenge and address examples of racism and to encourage better joined up work in this area. Performance data is regularly scrutinized by the Brighton and Hove Adolescent Partnership Board. There is disproportionality within the cohort of mixed heritage boys coming to the attention of youth justice professionals and this is an area of focus for the partnership.

10. Sustainability implications

10.1 No implications.

11. Crime & disorder implications:

12.1 The annual Youth Justice Plan outlines the how the youth justice services are delivered in Brighton and Hove City Council. It focuses on preventing youth offending, reducing offending, and ensuring positive outcomes through the partnership arrangements. It is a statutory duty of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

13. Public health implications:

13.1 Having suitable arrangements in place to divert children away from crime and anti-social behaviour and prevent reoffending will likely have a positive impact upon their emotional health and wellbeing. A reduction in youth crime and anti-social behaviour will have a positive impact on community wellbeing.

14. Conclusion

14.1 The 2025/26 youth justice plan has been agreed by the Brighton and Hove Adolescent Partnership Board. The Board fulfills the statutory functions of a Youth Justice Partnership. The plan has been submitted to the Youth Justice Board in line with statutory requirements.

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Supporting Documentation

Appendices

1. Youth Justice Plan 2025/26