

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 27

Subject: Youth Justice Plan 2026-29

Date of meeting: 23 July 2026

Report of: Cabinet Member, Children, Families & Youth

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Ward(s) affected: All

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 2026/29 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. It has been agreed with the YJB (Youth Justice Board) that the city's Adolescent Partnership Board can submit a 3-year plan.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Full Council notes and endorses 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 Surrey & 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. An Adolescent Strategy outlines the work and priorities for adolescents in the city. It covers the full spectrum of support from universal and prevention to targeted and the more intensive complex offer. The annual Youth Justice Plan sits beneath this strategy.

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.
- 4.2 The Youth Justice Partnership arrangements are well established and the YJB grant is now three-year funding. Given this a three-year Youth Justice Plan has been developed.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 There was a local review of the youth service landscape commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as part of the Young Futures developments. This was undertaken by the National Youth Agency (NYA) in November 2025. It found the following:

5.2 Overview of Findings

Youth participation is a rights-based approach that ensures young people influence decisions affecting lives and communities and is essential to meaningful youth provision design.

Brighton & Hove has a developing but increasingly clear understanding of the needs of its young people.

Young people consistently value trusted adults, safe spaces, creative outlets, social connection, and practical support with financial literacy and life skills. There is good collaboration with Voluntary, Community, and Faith Sector (VCFS) partners to deliver a comprehensive and diverse youth offer.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The Youth Justice plan is fully funded within the agreed Youth Offending Service budget which includes grant funding of £0.33m in 26/27 from the Youth Justice Board (YJB)

Name of finance officer consulted: David Ellis Date consulted (19/06/26):

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 Local authorities have a legal duty to produce and publish an annual youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services (YJSs) under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is the duty of each local authority, in consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out how YJSs in their area are to be provided and funded, how they will operate, and what functions will be carried out. The plan should address the functions assigned to a YJS, including how services will prevent offending behaviour and reduce reoffending, and set out the direction and strategy of youth justice services (YJSs), describing how in particular, quality services will be provided to ensure positive outcomes for children and improvements in performance. The scope of the plan must follow the *Youth justice plans: guidance for youth services* (Updated 19 march 2026).
- 7.2 The plan must be submitted to the YJB by 30 June each year to ensure timely payment of your Youth Justice Grant. Youth Justice Plans, in England only, must be signed off by the full council in accordance with Regulation 4 of the

'Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000'.

Name of lawyer consulted: Natasha Watson. Date consulted: (19/06/26)

8. Risk implications

- 8.1 The activity detailed in the Youth Justice plan falls within allocated budgets. A proportion of the service offer is funded through short term year on year funding, such as the Violence Reduction Partnership intervention money and Home Office grants. Details of future years funding is often received 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.
- 8.2 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. Other implications

Crime & disorder implications:

- 11.1 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

12. Public health implications

- 12.1 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.

13. Conclusion

- 13.1 The 2026/29 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. There is a statutory requirement to submit the plan to the Youth Justice Board and for this to be presented to Full Council.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices
- 1.1 Brighton and Hove Youth Justice Plan 2026-29