**Nottingham City**

**Youth Justice Plan**

**2024 - 2027**

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# 1. Introduction, vision, and strategy

Welcome to Nottingham City’s Youth Justice Plan 2024 – 2027. The Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a multi-agency service focused on Youth Justice and Targeted Youth Support. Our core purpose is to reduce offending by children. This plan reviews the

 work of the YJS over the past year and sets out our agreed partnership priorities for the coming year.

As in previous years the YJS Management Board (YJSMB) has developed this plan after consultation with children, staff, and partners. The YJSMB would like to thank all the YJS staff and partners working with the service, for their dedication to improving the outcomes and life chances for vulnerable children at risk of coming into the youth justice system.

This plan represents a comprehensive assessment of the opportunities and challenges facing the Nottingham City YJS. The plan draws on learning from our national standard self-assessment and our current improvement plan, informed by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) Performance Oversight Framework.

Our service vision is:

* To provide and improve access to services for children to divert them from offending.
* To develop and work in effective partnerships to reduce youth crime and protect the public
* To encourage children to repair the harm to victims and restore relationships with their communities
* To value the diversity and identity of children and help them to achieve

Nottingham is a core City, but it is not a city without challenges and the YJS is not immune to the challenges that the city faces. Nottingham City Council (NCC) is currently operating under the guidance of government appointed commissioners and with strict financial controls in place for all aspects of NCC’s budget and spending for statutory and non-statutory services. This remains a challenge for the YJS and our partners. Our forward planning has taken this into account, and we have reviewed and adjusted our financial management and forecasting to ensure the service continues to develop and improve its service delivery, providing an effective service for children, families, and victims, whilst ensuring we a providing best value for the citizens of Nottingham.

Interim Corporate Director for Children and Education

# 2. Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements

The YJS sits within the Early Help service area as an integral part of Children’s Integrated Services (CIS). Whilst having access to a range of universal, targeted and specialist services, including the Youth Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Education, Supporting Families and Family Hubs, the service maintains its unique identity, clear management structure and governance as outlined in YJB guidance.

The location of the YJS within Early Help, ensures that the service is supported and resourced to provide a child first approach. Children that offend or are deemed at risk of offending are seen as children first and receive support that recognises their vulnerability. It also enables the level of support to be escalated and de-escalated in accordance with their needs.

The work of the YJS is overseen by the YJSMB. The board consists of senior representatives from statutory partner organisations and members from relevant services.

The YJSMB Membership:

* Nottingham City Council (NCC)
* Nottinghamshire Police
* Nottingham City Probation
* Futures
* Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
* His Majesty’s Court and Tribunal service
* The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
* The Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)
* Youth Justice Board (YJB)
* Voluntary Sector (Ending and Youth Violence Forum)

The YJSMB is chaired by NCC’s Interim Corporate Director for Children and Education. The YJSMB provides oversight and strategic direction for the delivery of youth justice services. The board also oversees the development of the Youth Justice Plan, ensuring its links with other local plans. Board members also sit on other strategic partnerships across the city and county, helping to ensure that strategic plans and priorities are integrated and consider the needs of children and victims in the youth justice system.

As well as strategic management oversight and support, the YJS continues to benefit from operational service delivery support from management board partners. Seconded police officers, administrative support, and a police community support officer work with the YJS to ensure relevant information is shared to inform assessment and reports that inform the support packages offered to children. Nottinghamshire police are also working jointly with the city and Nottinghamshire County YJS to ensure a consistent approach to the out of court panel process. There is a dedicated Youth Interventions Sergeant who sits across both City and County Youth Justice police teams to provide this consistency.

There is also a broad offer from health colleagues through the ICB, which ensures access to YJS nurses, specialist substance use provisions, and direct access to specialist child and adolescent mental health services. The ICB are currently working with NCC and Nottinghamshire Council to commission additional services which will see increased support available for children displaying harmful sexual behaviour, additional resources for those with Speech language and communication needs and greater access to support for those children not on statutory orders.

Recently the service has also strengthened its relationship with the voluntary and community sector, who are now represented on the YJSMB and bring a strong focus on serious youth violence and support for victims.

# 3. Progress on the previous year:

Below is an update against the key priorities of Nottingham’s YJS plan 2021 – 2024.

**Update on priorities in previous plan:**

**Childview:**

In December 2022 we moved to a new case management system that provides us with greater insight and analysis capability. Since this date we have reviewed and embedded new data quality and recording principles throughout the service. The introduction of the new key performance indicators (KPI) measures has coincided with this, and we have taken this opportunity to change and improve recording practices within the YJS and with our partners. We are now able to both record, and report from information held about children in relation to a variety of distinct arenas in a way that was not previously possible. We have also used the facility within our case management system to build standardised templates to support case management, management oversight and quality assurance processes; these include referrals to partners, the new Prevention and Diversion assessment, and 8-week case reviews and exit plans.

**Skill Mill:**

The social impact bond that underpinned this social enterprise project which provided employment opportunities for children, ended in April 2024. The Skill Mill were not successful in their application to the Treasury to extend the programme beyond this date. As this coincided with the issuing of a section 114 report in Nottingham, the YJS was unable to continue with the Skill Mill project because of the lack of available funding from either internal or external sources. The final cohort of children completed in April 2024, so full data for this cohort is not yet available, but since August 2020 the Skill Mill Nottingham has work with 30 children over 8 cohorts, developing their skills in relation to a range of ‘soft’ and ‘practical’ skills including self-management, goal setting and job readiness.

**Nottingham Works 4 You:**

The YJS continued to support the Nottingham Works 4 You project, until December 2023, when the project ended due to the end of European Social Funding. This was a pre-employment intervention and support programme for children and young adults aged 16 to 24 who are NEET (not in education, employment, or training). Consequently, the service had to absorb the loss of funding that was provided by this project, which included a seconded Futures Personal Advisor directly delivering this work. However, the YJS continues to work closely with Futures whose specialist Personal Advisors offer Employment, Training and Education career guidance, advice and support to children who are NEET.

**Trauma:**

The YJS is working alongside a range of partners as part of the VRP-led Trauma Informed Cross Organisational Implementation Group. This was created in response to the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Violence Reduction Network Trauma-Informed Strategy 2022-2025 and is comprised of statutory and voluntary sector organisations. The hope for this strategy is to meaningfully engage and bring together local organisations to journey towards becoming trauma-informed on all levels (social/political, organisational leads, workforce, families/patients/communities). The implementation plan includes assessing the training and workforce development needs of partner organisations, to a full self-assessment of readiness to become trauma aware, including development and implementation of internal plans to address governance, leadership, trauma informed environments and spaces and trauma informed screening and care.

**JAC:**

Currently attendance and referrals to the JAC are not as strong as the YJS would envisage.

Following a consultation exercise, staff have indicated that they would like to see the JAC more locality based and rotated to different localities around the city. We will be piloting this approach starting in June, with the first venue in the North of the City. The venue offers a range of facilities, including a sports hall, kitchen and various rooms which allows for groupwork or individual one to one activity.

We have continued to develop the range of programmes and activities, with new additions including e-scooters (looking at the law and consequences of owning and using an e-scooter), The Power of Kindness (looking at good citizenship and how to support each other), and social media (the benefits and the consequences if used inappropriately).

We are also delivering AQA accredited programmes, such as food hygiene, social media, bike restoration and will be working with the YJS Targeted Youth Support (TYS) workers and the Youth service to developed additional AQA based programmes.

**Participation:**

In line with the Child First tenet of collaboration with children and their parents/carers, we continue to involve children and families in our recruitment processes, where they lead and conduct separate interviews with the candidates, supported by staff.

We continue to run participation group sessions at our Saturday Attendance Centre which includes giving children the opportunity to provide feedback on interventions and to set the agenda for future work.

****In recent months we have restarted a parent/carer feedback process led by one of our case managers. They are contacting carers at both the six week and end of intervention stage to obtain feedback about the experience of children and families when engaging with the YJS. The feedback provided is anonymised, compiled, and shared across the organisation to enable us to improve the process of incorporating children’s views into our practice improvement and delivery planning at both operational and Board management levels. Some excerpts from this latest exercise, conducted on children subject to Out of Court disposals:

Nottingham City has now entered the delivery stage of its progress towards UNICEF Child Friendly City status, which will run until November 2025. During the development stage feedback was gained from eight thousand children across Nottingham and this has led to children identifying seven priorities areas. A two-year action plan has been implemented in which YJS is an active partner supporting those children we work with to have a voice and be involved. Please see <https://childfriendlynottingham.org.uk/> for more information.

**Performance over the previous year**

This section provides an overview of the data for our KPIs with descriptions of current performance against nationally measured targets. Comparative and local performance data are also presented where relevant in relation to the YJS’s aim to reduce the number of first-time entrants (FTEs), reoffending, and in the use of custody (in both remand and sentencing).

**Local context:**

* The 2021 Census results show that Nottingham City has 65,972 children under the age of 18. The latest population of children aged between 10-17 years old is 28,908. This breaks down by ethnic group as follows: White 51%, Asian 18%, Black 14%, Mixed 12% and other 4%.
* Deprivation affects a significant number of families in Nottingham. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) only supply partial information on deprivation which, in 2019, ranked the city as the 12th most deprived, with 27% of those aged 16 and over and 39% of 0-15-year-olds living in neighbourhoods that fall into the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

**FTEs to the youth justice system**

**Table 1:** FTEs rate per 100,000 of 10-17 population

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Jul 22 - Jun 23 | Oct 22 - Sep 23 | Jan 23 - Dec 23 |
| Nottingham | 527 (158 FTEs) | 484 (145 FTEs) | 434 (130 FTEs) |
| YJS Family | 203 | 197 | 183 |
| Core Cities | 196 | 208 | 194 |
| National | 161 | 171 | 167 |

Nottingham City’s FTE rate continues to present a high level of concern. As such, reducing the number of children who become FTEs and promoting diversion has been and continues to be one of our main strategic priorities. Over the last year we have continued to implement solutions to address these figures and will continue to do so in the coming year as one of our key priorities.

 **Table 2: FTE numbers from local reporting**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Jul 22 – Jun 23 | Oct 22 - Sep 23 | Jan 23 - Dec 23 |
| Nottingham | 151 | 133 | 121 |

Table 2 represents the total FTEs for the same periods published by the YJB.

Due to data latency, delays in data being published and new methodologies being introduced, there are some differences between the numbers reported by the YJB and local reports. Ongoing data checks are being carried out with each submission to ensure good data quality.

 For the full period between Jul 22 – Dec 23, there were a total of 202 FTEs and table 3 represents the outcomes received by them.

**Table 3: Jul 22 – Dec 23 outcomes (Local data)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Outcome | Total FTEs |
| Youth Caution | 71 |
| Referral Order | 55 |
| Youth Conditional Caution | 44 |
| Conditional Discharge | 13 |
| Fine | 8 |
| Youth Rehabilitation Order | 6 |
| Absolute Discharge | 1 |
| Detention + Training Order (Custody) | 1 |
| Section 250 (was Section 91 Order) | 1 |
| Youth Caution + Conditions | 1 |
| Youth Rehabilitation Order ISS Requirement Band 2 | 1 |

By looking at a comparison of the different types of interventions received over the last 2 years, we can see the trend in reduction of the FTE rate can in large part be shown by the increased use of Outcome 22 disposals since July 2023, the reduction in use of Youth Caution and Youth Conditional Cautions since October 2023 and the reduction in use of Referral Orders since April 2023, as shown in chart 1 below.

The number of Out of Court assessments has also been included – all those shown as receiving an OoCD on the chart below will first have been subject to an assessment. Adding this shows that the reduction in the use of some FTE disposals is not due to a drop off in referrals or assessments.

 **Chart 1: Apr 22 – Mar 24 interventions (Local data)**

 Nottingham YJS continues to operate a well-established process where referrals are screened and triaged by the chair of the OoCD panel in conjunction with YJS Police and YJS Prevention Manager and allocated for a comprehensive assessment which is completed for all children prior to the panel. As can be seen in the table above, this has included the cessation of Police facilitated Community Resolutions (which were issued without any interventions being undertaken) since April 2023; all children eligible for such disposals are now referred into the OoCD panel process for a full assessment and intervention delivery. The panel has relevant partners attending to enable robust decisions and best outcomes for children. The panel members include:

* YJS
* Social care
* Police
* Education Welfare services
* CAMHS
* Drug and Alcohol services
* Early Help Services

 As early adopters of the new Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool, our Operational Manager for Performance and Development devised and delivered local training on assessment skills and built this tool in our YJS Case management system. This provides panel members with a holistic view of the child which assists in making decisions that are based on the needs of the child and their family and reinforces opportunities to seek to divert children from becoming FTEs. The OoCD panel meets weekly and is chaired by the YJS. Following triage and assessment, a wide range of support and interventions are offered, on a needs-led basis, for all children subject to the OoCD process.

 In addition, we have worked with academic partners to research and better understand the FTE picture in the region. The University of Nottingham have completed a research examination of this topic, and have some preliminary findings and analysis, but we are awaiting publication of the final report this summer. Further to this, the VRP has commissioned Nottingham Trent University to undertake research on the high numbers of FTEs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

 In conjunction with the Nottinghamshire YJS and Nottinghamshire Police, we are in the process of undertaking a review of our Joint OoCD policy. This had been delayed in anticipation of the launch of the new national OoCD framework from the Association of Chief Police Officers and in particular guidance on the use of Outcome 22 disposal, but given the further delays in this, we are continuing with a local review of policy without further delay. It is anticipated that this will support expanded use of Outcome 22 disposals as an alternative to Youth Cautions for higher gravity offences where it can be demonstrated that a non-substantive outcome with intervention delivered by the YJS, and partners can be both sufficient and proportionate in addressing the needs of the child and managing the risk they pose.

**Children sentenced to custody**

The harmful effects of custody are well documented; the default position taken by Nottingham City YJS is that every effort should be made to try to maintain children in the community and custody should be limited to where it is considered the only appropriate option.  Even in these instances, when a custodial outcome has been imposed, a full multi-agency case review is undertaken with a focus on ensuring that:

* unnecessarily negative outcomes for children are avoided.
* local community-based alternatives have been fully explored.
* that there is no discrimination in the presentation of bail packages and sentencing proposals.
* that there is a focus on successful resettlement from the very outset, and consistently

throughout the entirety of the child’s sentence.

 The YJS Operations Manager for Performance and Development and CIS Quality Assurance Manager co-chair a quarterly multi-agency Custodial Outcomes and Serious Incidents evaluation panel where a reflective audit is undertaken on each child.  Opportunities for learning, development and practice improvement are captured and used by core members of the panel to create learning briefing notes or short form training to be disseminated to the wider service and partnership (including the Police, education, Social Care, health, and mental health partners).

 **Table 5: Quarterly data 2021/2022 to 2023/2024 (Local data)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Quarter | Q1 21/22 | Q2 21/22 | Q3 21/22 | Q4 21/22 | Q1 22/23 | Q2 22/23 | Q3 22/23 | Q4 22/23 | Q1 23/24 | Q2 23/24 | Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 |
| Sentences  | 3 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| Year  | 13 | 7 |  | 14 |

Between April 23 – March 24, there have been 14 new custodial outcomes received by 12 children. This is an increase compared to the last 2 years. The latest data published by the YJB is for Jan 23 – Dec 23 and, as shown below, this shows an increase from 0.24 rate to a 0.40 rate. For this period, there were 12 custodial sentences.

 **Table 6: Use of custody rates 2021/2022 to 2023/2024 (YJB published data)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rate per 1000 of 10-17 population | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 |
| Nottingham | 0.48 | 0.24 | 0.40 |
| YJS family | 0.19 | 0.19 | 0.18 |
| Core City | 0.14 | 0.19 | 0.15 |
| National | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.11 |

**Remands**

 In the last 12 months, 10 children have been subject to remand to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) and one child remanded to Local Authority Accommodation (LAA). As with all custodial outcomes and serious incidents, children subject to remand to either LAA or YDA are also reviewed at the Custodial Outcomes and Serious Incidents panel referred to above.

 In addition to this, Nottingham YJS works collaboratively with CIS to ensure that the accommodation (and any other identified) needs of children on remand are addressed proactively prior to, and to facilitate, release.  This includes the early identification of any child who may need accommodation support on release and collaborative work with social care to identify and secure an appropriate resettlement pathway in advance of their release from the secure estate, taking account of the range of needs that may need to be considered.

**Reoffending**

Table 7 provides a summary of the Reoffending Frequency Rate and Binary Rate sourced from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Police National Computer (PNC).

**Table 7: Re-offending after 12 months - 3 months cohort (MOJ data from PNC)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Outcome dates | Reoffences/offender | Reoffences/ reoffender | %Reoffending (reoffenders/offenders) |
| Latest Nottingham  | Jan 22 - Mar 22 | 0.85 | 3.42 | 25% |
| YJS family Average | Jan 22 - Mar 22 | 1.30 | 4.20 | 31% |
| Core City Average | Jan 22 - Mar 22 | 1.43 | 4.06 | 35.4% |
| National average | Jan 22 - Mar 22 | 1.40 | 4.09 | 34.3% |
| Nottingham (2021) | Jan 21 - Mar 21 | 0.65 | 2.17 | 30% |
| Nottingham (2020) | Jan 20 - Mar 20 | 1.17 | 4.36 | 26.9% |

For the latest period available from the YJB (January 2022 – March 2022) the offending cohort consists of 48 children.

Of these 12 children re-offended and committed 41 re-offences, hence the 25% binary and 3.42 frequency rate. For the same period last year, the binary rate was higher due to having a cohort of 60 offenders and 18 re-offenders. The frequency rate was lower due to the lower number of re-offences (39 re-offences).

Although it is difficult to provide a comprehensive explanation for the successes evident in this area, we believe that there are a number of contributory factors to the low re-offending rate for the children we work with. We have a stable staff group who deliver a relationship based, end-to-end holistic model of working which provides continuity of care for both children and families and helps to promote children’s strengths and capacity for change. The comprehensive assessments that inform the work we do with all children, place their needs at the heart of interventions and focus on the range of diverse barriers that impact on the children we work with, including factors relating to SEND and neurodiversity, poverty and social exclusion, and experiences of care and exclusion from education. Our partnership work with statutory, commissioned, and voluntary sector providers enables us to divert children from the justice system and engage them in universal and community-based support in their own neighbourhoods that can provide specialist support and intervention, including mentoring, counselling, education, constructive leisure, and sports-based activities.

**Table 8: Re-offending/re-referral after 12 months – 3 months cohort (Local data)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Outcome dates | Reoffences/offender | Reoffences/reoffender | %Reoffending(reoffender/ offenders) |
| Nottingham (local) | Jan 23 - Mar 23 | 1.08 | 3.35 | 32.00% |
| Nottingham (local) | Jan 22 - Mar 22 | 1.03 | 3.41 | 30.30% |
| Nottingham (local) | Jan 21 - Mar 21 | 0.84 | 3 | 28% |

Table 8 presents the binary and frequency rate calculated using local data sourced from the YJS’s case management system.

The original cohort are the children who received a substantive outcome between the 3 months period and the cohort is then tracked for 12 months. Any further offences committed where an outcome has been received (either substantive or non-substantive) were taken into consideration, therefore these local measures would rather reflect any further contact with YJS/re-referral rather than the usual Re-offending KPI published by the YJB.

**Disproportionality**

 For the period ending March 2023, Table 9, and chart 10 show that the mixed ethnicity group is over-represented in the Nottingham City youth offending cohort. Mixed children account for 21% of the offending cohort, but only 12% of the 10–17-year-old population.

**Table 9:** **Over-represented ethnic groups in local YJS offending population, year ending March 2023 (YJAF)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ethnic group | 2022/23 Offending Population | Share of total  | 2021 Census 10-17 population by ethnic group | Share of total % | % Point Difference | Over-represented, offending pop >10 and statistically Significant |
| Asian | 8 | 4% | 5,240 | 18% | -14% | No |
| Black | 29 | 15% | 4,010 | 14% | 1% | No |
| Mixed | 41 | 21% | 3,599 | 12% | 9% | Yes |
| Other | 2 | 1% | 1,254 | 4% | -3% | No |
| Ethnic minority groups | 80 | 42% | 14,103 | 49% | -7% | No |
| White | 112 | 58% | 14,805 | 51% | 7% | No |



 Over-representation is also demonstrated in the proportion of serious violence offences committed by children identifying as mixed ethnicity, and in relation to the custodial terms they receive. Children from the mixed heritage group are also 1.5 times more likely to be cautioned or sentenced than White children.



*(Using the Relative Rate Index (RRI), rates for each ethnic group relative to the White ethnic group are compared. An RRI value of 1 indicates no disparity, whereas an RRI greater than 1 means the group had a greater likelihood of experiencing the particular outcome compared to White ethnic group. Other groups have been excluded due to low numbers.)*

**New Key Performance Indicators**

 Following YJB changes to the Key Performance Indicators, the YJS has implemented new recording procedures and data capture for these. We have implemented data solutions to address the operational need for better information sharing across the partnership in education, Police, health, and substance use. As noted above, the introduction of the new KPI measures has coincided with our adoption of a new case management system which has given us the opportunity to change and improve recording practices within the service and with partners. We now have administrative processes in place to obtain key information about children referred to the YJS shortly after the referral is received, including in relation to the child’s experience of Early Help and CIS, and in relation to identified needs in relation to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), Education provision, attendance and Education and Health Care plans (EHCP), substance use, and health provision.

 There remain some challenges in these areas, as the commissioning arrangements with many of these partners was not undertaken with knowledge of these new KPIs, and some partners do not record, or are unable to easily extract, the datasets required to inform some of the KPI measures. This means that obtaining the relevant data from some partners is both resource intensive, and problematic.

 Whilst we await the YJB’s development of a series of Tableau dashboards, to provide cross-region comparative analysis of the data supplied to the YJB by YJSs, we have developed our own local analysis of the Nottingham City YJS cohort using our data and available business intelligence tools. The following is an extract from this, which shows the data for the children open to Nottingham City YJS between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.



Between April 2023 and March 2024, the YJS worked with 543 unique children. Of these, 09 (57%) were White, 125 (23%) Mixed Heritage, 73 (13%) Black/Black British, and 22 children were (4%) Asian/Asian British. This compares to the Nottingham 10–17-year-old population of 51% White, 12% Mixed, 14% Black and 18% Asian, and indicates the over-representation of children of mixed ethnicity.

Of the 543 children open during this period, 82 (15%) had an open child protection plan, and 84 (15%) were looked after. There were 127 children (23%) aged under 14 at the time of their YJS intervention.

66 children (12%) had identified SEN, of which 41 (7.5%) had an EHCP. This compares to 2% of Nottingham pupils who have a statement of SEN or an EHCP, and 3.7% nationally. 163 children (30%) were identified as NEET at the start of their intervention. Of these, 40 (25%) were looked after children, 44 (27%) were open with either child protection or child in need plans, and 17 (10%) had an EHCP.

**Standards for children**

**Findings from most recent standards for children in justice self-assessments**

 All YJS are expected to comply with the requirements of ‘National standards for Children in Youth Justice Services’ published in 2019. There is also a requirement to undertake periodic self-assessments to evidence the YJS is compliant with national standards. Nottingham’s last self-assessment was in 2023 against National Standard 2: Work in Court.

 This provided a qualitative assessment of strategic performance, and an assessment of practice with a sample of 20 cases going through Court between 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023. In all the cases audited, it was evident that the pre-sentence report (PSR) had been through a quality assurance exercise, including completion of a PSR monitoring form. In 18 of 20 cases audited, an Assetplus had been completed in preparation for the PSR hearing, and directly informed the PSR. In 2 cases, the Assetplus was in progress and had been submitted for countersignature, and there was clear evidence that this informed the PSR. All reports were child focussed, supported desistance, contained the child’s views, and evidenced engagement with parents and carers.

 In the same self-assessment exercise, it was identified that in 15 of 20 cases audited, reports took account of impact on victims. However, in many cases victim impact statements were not available. In some cases, this was due to offences being considered Regina offences and there being no direct victim, but in others impact statements had not been provided by the Crown Prosecution Service. Work around this area is addressed in service priority 4 below.

**Internal audits**

 Over the last year the YJS has undertaken audits spanning the range of Out-of-Court and post Court interventions, and a thematic audit on children identified as high risk and those subject to custodial terms in the last year. A process audit was also completed in relation to the high-risk panel. As noted above, a quarterly multi-agency panel also completes reflective learning audits on children in custody and subject to serious incidents.

 Case audits showed that cases were generally well assessed, with strong evidence that assessments sufficiently analyse how to support the child’s desistance and safety, safeguarding concerns were fully addressed, and any barriers to this were identified. There was strong evidence of good partnership working in intervention planning and delivery.

 Audits of those children in, or being resettled from, custody showed that multi-agency partnership work (with health, education, and social care amongst others) was underway to support the child’s resettlement back into the community.  Where necessary this included active collaboration and planning with children’s social care who were providing accommodation suitable to the child’s risk and safety and wellbeing needs. In each case this was identified in advance of their release via a collaborative placement search process undertaken by their social workers in full collaboration with both Nottingham YJS and secure estate staff. All children audited had planned resettlement packages of support that involved health, mental health, ETE, mentoring and constructive leisure, as well as appropriate licence conditions and targeted intervention support to be delivered by YJS.

 Learning from the above have been shared at: service-wide meetings, incorporated into the YJS case management guidance, included in the provision of targeted thinking tools, utilised to inform a revised National Probation Service/YJS Transitions protocol, adopted in a service wide standard contact recording practice (Aims, Methods, Outcomes, and Next Steps’ recording model), introduced in an 8-week review plan process for all OoCDs.

Following the findings of audits into assessments the YJS in conjunction with NCC’s workforce development team, devised and delivered a training package on assessment skills, attended by managers and frontline practitioners. This was timed to coincide with the launch of the YJB’s new assessment tool for Prevention and Diversion assessment tool, which we have integrated into our case management system.

In addition, in the last year, all case managers had Assetplus training delivered by an externally commissioned provider. Following this further guidance and a risk management toolkit has been devised and shared by the Operations Manager for Performance and Development, to assist with the implementation and embedding of this training, and to disseminate the learning from the high-risk and risk panel audits.

**Risks and Issues**

Our greatest challenge in Nottingham remains the numbers of children being drawn into the criminal justice system. Addressing this effectively requires a partnership approach. We are working closely with our partners and our YJB rep to consistently build on our understanding of the needs of the children with the aim of improving service performance in this area. We are making use of the data and as referred to above we are involved in extensive research with the VRP and Nottingham University to find solutions to this area of concern.

We are also seeing a consistent rise in the numbers of referrals that require early intervention work to stop them escalating into the criminal justice system. Whilst we are currently able to address this with additional funding from the Turnaround programme and from the YEF for our Another Way programme, funding for both these programmes will cease at the end of this financial year, which presents an additional risk for the YJS.

Due to the shift of work towards more early intervention and out of court work, and the future reduction in specific funding for early intervention and prevention work, the service is currently reviewing its staffing structure and collaborating closely with the city’s youth service and wider early help service to strengthen its targeted approach to children in need of early intervention and support.

There are financial challenges for the service. Whilst we have acknowledged the support provided by partners and recognise partners are also under various constraints and scrutiny, partnership financial contributions for the YJS have remained at the same level for over five years. The service has also had to find budgetary savings for the coming financial year, as would be expected given the current difficult financial position in NCC. This has been addressed by deleting some vacant posts. Going forward the service is planning ahead to ensure it can evidence best value and minimise delays in finance or procurement activities, due to the strict spending controls that is in place for all departments across NCC.

# 4. Plans for the coming year:

**Child first**

In Nottingham we continue to follow the four tenets of the Child First principles: to see children as children, develop pro-social identities for positive child outcomes, collaboration with children and to promote diversion.

Staff at the YJS are aware of the need to build trusted working relationships with the children and families they are supporting. YJS staff are sighted on trauma awareness, restorative practice, neurodiversity, and the complex issue of identity. YJS staff are also mindful of the prevailing issue of children’s mental health and emotional well-being. They strive to engage and empower children, ensuring their experiences and views are considered and their wishes and aspirations are informing their assessments, reports, and intervention plans. We support a relational model where staff are recognised as the expert of the child and are given the space to build a relationship that will facilitate long-term, sustainable change. Our strength-based approach to assessments aim to strengthen what is working well and to tailor intervention to areas that support desistance. All staff have recently completed restorative practice training as part of multi-disciplinary roll-out across Children’s Integrated Services, to equip staff to engage with children in accordance with their own developmental stages, life experiences, and in a strength-based and empowering restorative approach.

We are also committed to supporting NCC and partners to achieve UNICEF Child Friendly City Status. Nottingham City has now entered the delivery stage of its and has identified the seven badges it aims to achieve: Safe and Secure, Healthy, Education and Learning, Cooperation and Leadership, and Culture and Communities. The golden thread badge is Equality and Include. The YJS are actively ensuring the children we work with have a voice and a place on the journey.

The work of our early intervention team, Targeted Youth Support, supported in recent years with additional funding from Turnaround, has enabled us to continue to work with a range of partners to promote diversion including community safety, the Violence Reduction Partnership, Children’s services, and Education providers. In addition to working with the Police, Court and Police custody suites, this has included working in education provisions to deliver both 1-1 and groupwork sessions and working the National Justice Museum’s award winning ‘Choices and Consequences’ anti-knife crime prevention workshops for key stage 2 upwards, specifically aimed at children who are unlikely to have considered carrying a knife.

**Resources and services**

Nottingham City YJS is compliant with the YJB requirement to meet their grant conditions. To enable the YJS to balance its budget, the financial contributions to the service comprise of local authority core funding and the MoJ/YJB grant. This is supplemented by partner contributions in kind or cash in accordance with their statutory responsibility, as outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The contributions reflect the commitment from partners to the YJS. The YJS also seeks additional grant funding opportunities through collaborative working with relevant partners. All funds are used to deliver Youth Justice Services.

**Financial contributions of YJS partners as of 1st April 2024 (£)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Partner** | **20/21** | **21/22** | **22/23** | **23/24** | **24/25** |
| **Notts Police** | 53,180 | 53,180 | 53,180 | 53,180 | 53,180 |
| **Notts ICB**  | 32,225 | 32,225 | 32,225 | 32,225 | 32,225 |
| **National Probation**  | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 |
| **Youth Justice Board** | 849,077 | 917,447 | 1,016,783 | 1,016,783 | \* |
| **Nottm. City Council** | 837,957 | 956,958 | 1,178,000 | 1,043,024 | 1,080,271 |
| **Recoup from Notts CC** | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **1,784,939** | **1,972,230** | **2,119,027** | **2,152,712** | **1,178.176** |

*\* At the time of writing this Youth Justice Plan, YJB grant contributions for 24/25 had not yet been confirmed.*

The Local Authority contributes approximately half of the overall cost of the delivery of Youth Justice Services in Nottingham. Contributions in kind from partner agencies and external funding provided by the YEF has allowed for additional services and initiatives in our TYS team.

The YJS is working closely with partners and internally with finance to minimise any pressures arising from the Councils budgetary position and operating criteria as set out by the commissioners. Our focus remains on always ensuring that children and families and in particular the disadvantaged will not experience any further disadvantages.

**Board development**

Recently we have seen changes in the YJSMB personnel that represent our key partners. The YJSMB remains well represented at the appropriate level of seniority, but we recognise the need to ensure YJSMB members are effectively inducted into the world of Youth Justice. To facilitate this, all members receive an Induction Pack and Terms of Reference to ensure they are informed of and supported into the requirements of the role. New board members are also required to meet with the chair of the YJSMB to get a strategic understanding of the YJS and expectation of partners. They also meet with the YJS operational manager for performance and development to get an understanding of YJS and partners data and how that informs service delivery and development.

To increase board members’ understanding of the YJS, opportunities to shadow or observe panels, groupwork, youth court or 1 to 1 with staff are facilitated. Board members are expected to take part in this activity to enable them to develop the relevant understanding to champion the service externally, but also to challenge and be a critical friend of the service.

The YJS will also continue to facilitate development workshop days for Board members focused on board governance, purpose, and direction. This also provides an opportunity for the workforce to meet strategic partnership and provides the YJSMB members with an opportunity to get closer to the work force, which supports informed system leadership.

With the introduction of the additional KPIs, this has afforded us the opportunity to allocate Board members a KPI of interest or linked to their area of expertise. For example, the VRP representative is leading on serious violence, the Futures representative is leading on education training and employment and the Education and ICB representatives are leading on SEND. Board members also support subgroups or task and finish groups to oversee specific pieces of work or development.

**Workforce development**

Over the past year, there has been a focus on additional Assetplus training, to refresh and enhance staffs’ skills in Assetplus to take advantage of opportunities available on Childview, the services new our online case management system.

The staff has also benefitted from Restorative practice training, which is currently being rolled out to all staff across CIS. The aim is to create a psychologically safe workplaces which aims to support constructive challenge and good communication between practitioners, but also strengthen staff’s ability to engage with children and families. The service wide training also enables YJS staff to train with and strengthen working relationships with teams across CIS, which supports a better understanding of wider service provision whilst sharing insight into the YJS.

During the coming year, there will be an increased focus on early intervention and prevention work in the service. Embedding the new prevention and diversion assessment tool will be a key element of that process. The service has been pro-active in this area and has worked closely with the city’s workforce development team to develop bespoke assessment training for YJS colleagues to support the implementation of the assessment tool within the service.

To support the delivery of early intervention and prevention work, and to demonstrate our commitment to working with our voluntary and community partners, we are also providing access to some inhouse training programmes for our voluntary and community partners who are supporting our work with Nottingham’s diverse communities. We are also delivering a girls and gangs group and have ongoing work with the VRP to develop specialist girls and gang work training.

We have had several staff undertake AIM 3 assessment and intervention training, and two operational managers complete the supervision and oversight AIM training. We are committed over the next three years to continue to develop our staff to assess and manage children who display sexual harmful behaviour, this will also provide additional resilience alongside the development with the ICB to commission additional services for this area of work.

**Evidence Based Practice and Innovation**

Divert Plus was a police custody intervention project which sought to provide children in custody with a teachable moment which included speech and language assessment and intervention. It also provided access to a range of mentoring interventions. Due to the impact of the required randomised control trial element, the numbers of children in the project were insufficient for the work to progress to an efficacy study. However, we intend to incorporate elements of significant learning from this work, and a review of the evidence supporting the pilot trial has informed plans for the development of direct work in custody including working directly with children in custody, and the provision of speech and language therapeutic intervention.

In the last year we worked with the Early Help Partnership to assist in the development of an Early Help strategy and website and have developed our own YJS website. These aim to provide information, advice and guidance to children and families, to help them, to access the right support at the right time, without having to wait until children enter the justice system. Alongside this we have worked with the OPCC in the development of some SEN-adapted educational short films for children in relation to their rights when faced with arrest and introducing them to the Police custody and Court process.

**Education**

The YJSMB representative for education services has been working with the YJS to improve data sharing between education services and the YJS. Work is ongoing to cross reference the full YJS cohort with education data relating to permanent exclusions, elective home education and those on a part-time timetable. The YJS also attend the monthly Children at Risk of Permanent Exclusion panel meetings where children who are at risk of exclusion are discussed by multi agency teams. We also attend the Fair Access Panel, which places children who don’t have a school place on roll with a school.

The Operational Manager for Performance and Development works closely with the VRP’s Education Project Support Officer and the Schools and Education Safeguarding Coordinator for the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership to review the experiences of children who are at risk of being impacted by exploitation and serious youth violence and to mitigate the risk of any children being adversely or disproportionately impacted by education providers due to Police/YJS involvement.

YJS TYS workers, supported by the Youth service deliver a range of one to one, groupwork and large assembly-based programmes and activities in schools across the city. This includes a range of presentations and activities including offence focused work such as knife crime, criminal exploitation, and informative presentations like the risk of grooming, consequences of offending and healthy relationships.

Our work with the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST) attached to a local Pupil Referral Unit highlights the importance of this partnership work. The Academy has 318 pupils on roll. At the time of writing, the Taskforce team have worked with 149 pupils since the project commenced. The seconded staff from the YJS have worked with 35% of these children, either providing diversionary or preventative support where concerns in relation to offending were identified. The Academy has recently reported the following information regarding outcomes for children who have been supported by the APST:

* Attendance rates improved for 31% of pupils receiving APST intervention
* The number of suspensions decreased for 64% of pupils receiving APST intervention
* 86% achieved at least one qualification (higher % when compared to the cohort without APST intervention)
* 79% of children who were open to the APST intervention who left school at the end of last year secured a positive destination (higher compared to the whole school rate)

The Academy has also noted a reduction in the number of external referrals they have needed to make as they are now able to put in place the necessary intervention.

**Serious Youth Violence**

The VRP are now delivering year three of their 2022-25 Response Strategy which outlines how the VRP will work with partners, including the YJS, to prevent and reduce the impact of serious violence locally, with a particular focus on children and young people under the age of 25 years. The Strategy draws on findings and recommendations from the recently published Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA), which provides a comprehensive analysis of serious violence, and the context and complexity in which violence arises across Nottinghamshire.

Most significantly, on 31st January 2023, the Serious Violence Duty came into effect and the VRP are leading the implementation of the Duty on behalf of the specified authorities to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. Arrangements are now in place, governed by the Strategic Violence Reduction Board, which is attended by the Chair of the YJSMB. The YJS is working with other specified authorities in the city to further develop and implement the city's Serious Violence Local Response Plan during 2024/25, ensuring the plan is responsive to the local context. Oversight for delivery of the plan is governed by the city's Strategic Serious Violence Group which is attended by the YJS Service Manager.

The VRP are focussed on delivering the following key workstreams during 2024/25:

* Developing and implementing the Trauma-informed Strategy and associated plan to embed trauma-informed approaches within services across the partnership.
* Co-designing and deliver a Youth Work Strategy to ensure consistently high-quality youth services for children and young people who may be impacted by serious violence.
* Supporting systems change opportunities in collaboration with the education sector to enable early identification of young people at risk of being impacted by serious violence.
* Improving and the quality and accessibility of data across the partnership to improve our understanding of the nature of violence, including the development of a Common Data Platform, which will enable agencies across the partnership to access shared data to inform strategic, tactical, and operational approaches to reducing and preventing serious violence.

In order to gain further insight into serious violence locally, the VRP have commissioned the following research which is expected to deliver outcomes during 2024/25:

* Work with academic partners to develop PhD opportunities to ensure a higher-level research agenda locally, with a focus on local priority topics of disproportionality, and of community understanding of the use of big data, artificial intelligence and predictive modelling.
* Explore the comparatively high rate of first-time entrants into the criminal justice system for children (aged 10 to 17), including factors such as societal, policy or practice drivers.
* Deliver a profile for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to better understand any disproportionality in serious violence and compare with most similar police forces to better understand nuances and inform partnership solutions.
* Undertake research to gain insight into adultification in the online space, and how this may affect patterns of risk and harm around young people, particularly with sexual exploitation, county lines and consent between children.

The VRP also continues to commission evidence informed interventions to support children and young people aged up to 25 years, who are impacted by serious violence. This includes diversionary sports programmes with mentoring, therapeutic trauma informed counselling, educational interventions, detached youth outreach across the city and conurbation and the Another Way Programme, a focused deterrence model aimed at supporting children and young people who are involved in group offending.

# 5. Service development priorities

Learning from ongoing service audits in relation to good practice and areas for improvement, the National Standards quality assurance audit completed in 2023 and the service improvement plan submitted to the YJB in February 2024 are the main drivers which have helped inform and shape our plans for ongoing improvement and development of the service.

Our performance against FTEs and disproportionality is not where the YJS requires it to be to enable the service to demonstrate the good work it provides to children and families.

We recognise there is no guaranteed funding for early intervention/prevention beyond the end of this financial year, hence our plan to strengthen this area of work by working with our youth workers, the wider early help system and with community partners.

How we intend to address these areas is laid out in our 5 key priority areas below.

**Key Priorities for the coming year**

**Priority 1 - First time entrants / Diversion**

As noted above, FTEs remain a strategic priority for the YJS. Over the previous year we have worked extensively to improve our diversionary and OoCD process. We have undertaken a robust set of actions to support this priority, laid out in an action plan submitted to the YJB in February 2024.

The YJSMB recognise that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by the whole partnership. As such, we have improved information sharing and have increased our work in partnership settings.

As an example, we are working with our education board member and the Safeguarding Partnership Education lead to develop guidance on enabling education provisions to support children at risk of offending or who have offended to remain in education. Part of this will be to ensure that education providers have awareness of our early intervention and out of court panel process and offers. We have also worked in partnership with the Police, Nottinghamshire YJS, Education, VRP and community organisation representatives to refresh the education weapons and knife guidance, relaunched in October 2023.

We also support the Alternative Provision Taskforce strategy, by providing a seconded TYS worker and a case manager. This has enabled our service to build better relationships with alternative provision providers and given us an understanding of the fair access to education process and policies.

Over the coming year we intend to continue to develop our work around FTEs and strengthen our diversionary options.

**To achieve this, we will:**

* Continue to work with the YJB to address the actions in our YJS improvement plan.
* Review the findings from the University of Nottingham research on FTE to inform service development.
* Work with the VRP and Nottingham Trent University to undertake support research on the high numbers of FTEs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.
* Work with Nottinghamshire Police and Nottinghamshire YJS to complete a review of the Joint OoCD policy.
* Continue to implement local policy for the use of Outcome 22 disposals as an alternative to Youth Cautions.
* Strengthen our links and referral pathways to statutory and community partners who support children at risk as an alternative to bringing the child into the Youth Justice System.
* Develop better data sharing protocols with Education services.

**Required outcome:**

* Continued reduction in FTEs.
* Increased use of diversionary outcomes with the relevant assessed level of support.
* Increase use of RJ between children and victims.

**Priority 2 - Children from groups which are over-represented**

The disproportionate treatment of black, mixed heritage and minority ethnic groups continues to be of concern across the Youth justice system. In Nottingham this is particularly so with mixed heritage children. Nottingham City YJS contributed to the 2021 HMIP Thematic Inspection into the experiences of Black and Mixed Heritage boys in the youth justice system. The learning from this has informed the service’s engagement and delivery with black and mixed heritage boys and children from other marginalised or disadvantaged groups. Since the thematic inspection, we have:

* Implemented a Disproportionality working group to develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan.
* Worked with the VRP to develop a cross-authority joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
* Delivered further training to all staff on Unconscious Bias and Cultural Competency.
* Gathered feedback from children regarding their experiences of the YJS and wider system.
* Worked with community and voluntary groups to work with children within their community settings.
* Reviewed and implemented changes to Pre-Sentence and Out of Court Disposal Reports ensuring that all reports appropriately address diversity and experiences of discrimination.
* Updated the quality assurance processes that support the completion of these reports and assessments.

Despite this, the YJS recognise that there is still a lot of work to do to address this issue.

**To achieve this, we will:**

* Evidence how we are capturing and using the voice of the child to inform service delivery.
* Ensure our workforce is diverse, including volunteers and sessional workers.
* Ensure ongoing workforce development and training to empower staff to discuss/challenge/address racial bias.
* Promote access to preventative and diversionary programmes.
* Ensure effective and appropriate bail packages including Bail Intensive Supervision and Surveillance are available for those at risk of custodial remand.
* Continue to ensure assessments, Pre-sentence reports, Referral Order reports and Out-of-Court Disposal reports are effectively quality assured.
* Work with the youth and magistrates court to ensure YJS engagement with the judiciary is effectively supporting children going through the court system.
* Strengthen data collection on Childview and data sharing with partners and make effective use of the disproportionality toolkit to support the YJS to address racial disparity.
* Ensure we are using data and relevant multi agency panels to maintain checks and balances in the system (Out of court scrutiny panel, Risk of Permanent Exclusion panel meetings, Neighbourhood Safeguarding Disruption meetings)
* Monitor and review congruence of OoCD decisions.

**Required outcome:**

* Increased numbers of black, mixed heritage and minority ethnic groups sign-posted to diversionary and preventative activities.
* Reduction in numbers of black, mixed heritage and minority ethnic groups receiving statutory outcomes.

**Priority 3 - Strengthening Early Intervention / Prevention**

We are conscious of the growing numbers of referrals coming into the YJS that require early intervention work. We recognise that it is important that these children are supported at the earliest opportunity to prevent escalation into more formal support and services. Strengthening this area of work is also intrinsically linked to reducing FTEs and disproportionality.

**To achieve this, we will:**

* Implement an effective tiered approach to early intervention/prevention.
* Link the YJS TYS workers with the Youth work team to strengthen the targeted youth support offer.
* Develop a youth hub to manage referrals and ensure children are getting the right level/tier of support at the right time.
* Work with partners to ensure children can engage in their own communities.
* Work with partners to identify opportunities for funding/joint projects to provide sustainability of intervention.
* Work with schools to ensure children at risk are given access to early intervention opportunities.

**Required outcome:**

* Increased offer in targeted intervention.
* All interventions tailored to level of need.
* Increased access to partnership engagement with children in the YJS.
* Increased access to mentoring and peer support.

**Priority 4 - Restorative approaches and victims**

Over the past year, we have reviewed our arrangements for victim contact and the delivery of restorative services following the findings from our self-assessment. We were also mindful that the contract for delivering victim services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was out to tender. Previously, victim services were provided externally to the YJS via an OPCC awarded contract, but this did not meet the full needs of the YJS. We have been exploring our options, including recruiting a Victim and Restorative Justice practitioner and a Referral Order and Reparation Co-ordinator, to lead on all victim contact and delivery of restorative justice.

Recently, the OPCC has awarded the contract for the delivery of victim services and has led on the development of ‘Restorative Nottinghamshire’ and developed a framework to commission restorative services. The contracts for victim services and for Restorative Nottinghamshire have both been awarded to Remedi. Considering this development, and to enable the YJS to make the most of this opportunity, we are working with our commissioning team to undergo the process of commissioning an external provider to provide these services.

**To achieve this, we will:**

* Conclude the tendering process.
* Embed commissioned service for Referral Order Community Panel delivery, Victims and RJ.
* Ensure best value service for children and victims.

**Required outcome:**

* Increased access to restorative justice/practice for children.
* Ensure restorative justice is made available to all victims.
* Increased victim contact.
* Increased access to/use of victim impact statements.
* Increase use of RJ between children and victims.
* Increased access to volunteers for Referral Order panels and reparation activities.
* Compliance with the victim’s code of practice.
* Compliance with Referral Order case management guidance.

**Priority 5 - Detention in police and youth custody**

We are all aware that children and children who are held in police custody may be vulnerable for a variety of reasons. The adverse impacts are particularly felt by those least able to represent their own best interests, control their emotions or communicate their needs. Following the Divert Plus pilot trial, we are working with Nottinghamshire police to embed YJS staff in police custody to improve partnership working and swift intervention for children. We are also working with the Police to support the use of electronic information and intervention devices in police custody cells and are publicizing two short films developed by Divert Plus project which inform children, families and the wider community about the process of police custody and the process at court for children.

To manage children’s detention in police custody, and to endure compliance with the [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/police-and-criminal-evidence-act-1984-pace-codes-of-practice), we have had a joint protocol with Nottinghamshire Police and Nottinghamshire YJS since 2014 which is periodically reviewed and updated. The aim of the protocol is to clarify the duties and responsibilities of the police, children’s services, the YJS and the local secure children’s home and to ensure all parties are working together to safeguard the well–being of children and where it is practicable avoid their detention in police cells. Where detention cannot be avoided, to ensure they are detained for as short a period as possible.

To ensure children are supported whilst in police cells, we also jointly commission The Appropriate Adult Service (TASS) with Nottinghamshire YJS. We are currently working with our partners to review our joint protocol and commissioning arrangements.

With regards to the use of custody, the service has introduced and used a system wide review process of all custodial cases, including remands, to identify involved agencies, opportunities for improved practice, and areas for learning and development. We are also seeking to identify a pathway which will enable City and County YJS services to work more closely with Police Custody with an aim of offering bail assessments at the custody stage to prevent children being held for court.

As noted above Nottingham YJS works collaboratively with CIS to ensure that children who may need alternative accommodation in order to support their prospects of being released on bail. This close working has recently been extended to include EDT workers contacting the YJS On-call manager outside of usual office hours to ensure that all options are fully explored to maximise the possibility for safe and appropriate release on bail, including the identification of alternative family or care accommodation arrangements, and the YJS offering bail support monitoring and control measures.

**To achieve this, we will:**

* Review and update PACE protocol alongside Nottinghamshire YJS and Nottinghamshire Police.
* Review and update the commissioning arrangements with Nottinghamshire YJS and TASS.
* Contribute, alongside the Police and CIS, to the monthly review of all children who spend a night in Police custody to identify any opportunities to avoid unnecessary detention.
* Implement our programme of YJS workers in Police cells.
* Work in partnership with Nottinghamshire’s Integrated Care Board to have a speech and language therapist as an integral part of the YJS offer.

**Required outcome:**

* Reduction in the numbers of children held in police cells longer than necessary.
* Evidence of increased sign posting to relevant support services.
* Early identification of speech, language and communication needs that may act a barrier to children achieving positive outcomes.

# 6. Appendix

## Appendix 1 & 1a

