

Briefing to: Sefton Community Safety Partnership
Briefing from: Simon Burnett, Head of Communities
Date: July 2022
Subject: Youth Justice Service Update
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1 **Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing document is to highlight the performance and key issues for the Youth Justice Service

2 **Performance**

- 2.1 The Youth Justice National Performance Indicators are

- Reoffending – children who commit an offence across the period of 1 year are then tracked for a full year. This causes a time lapse due to the nature of tracking. This data is captured from the Police National Computer.
- First Time Entrants – those children who enter the statutory cohort for the first time
- Custody – those sentenced to a custodial sentence within the secure estate

2.2 **Sefton's Reoffending Rate**

Sefton's latest data relates to April 2018 to March 2019, in comparison to April 2019 to March 2020. Performance is good with a reduction of 8.1%. Compared to our YOT family, Sefton has the second highest reduction rate as shown in fig1.

Figure 1 – Sefton’s Latest Reoffending Data

Proportion of offenders who reoffend (%)	Apr 2018 to Mar 2019	Apr 2019 to Mar 2020	Change
Lancashire	38.7	35.8	- 2.9
Swansea	42.3	34.9	- 7.4
Wirral	40.0	42.5	+ 2.5
Stockton-on-Tees	36.8	36.7	- 0.2
Nottinghamshire	33.7	31.8	- 1.9
Bridgend	58.2	54.0	- 4.2
Darlington	41.7	45.5	+ 3.8
Sefton	44.8	36.7	- 8.1
North Tyneside	41.4	32.0	- 9.4
Wigan	25.0	37.5	+ 12.5
Calderdale	35.5	39.4	+ 3.9

In the same time period, there was a reduction in the number of children in the annual cohort from 125 to 90, as shown in fig 2

Figure 2 – Cohort Numbers

Number of offenders in cohort	Apr 2018 to Mar 2019	Apr 2019 to Mar 2020	Change
Lancashire	421.0	282.0	- 139.0
Swansea	156.0	129.0	- 27.0
Wirral	115.0	113.0	- 2.0
Stockton-on-Tees	95.0	60.0	- 35.0
Nottinghamshire	288.0	176.0	- 112.0
Bridgend	165.0	150.0	- 15.0
Darlington	72.0	44.0	- 28.0
Sefton	125.0	90.0	- 35.0
North Tyneside	128.0	97.0	- 31.0
Wigan	80.0	56.0	- 24.0
Calderdale	107.0	109.0	+ 2.0

2.3 First Time Entrants (FTE)

Sefton continues to be proactive through prevention strategies, particularly with out of court disposals and the use of Community Resolutions. Fig 3 below shows the local tracking for past three years, with a reduction of 40% in the number of FTE’s in total in the years 2019/20 and 2020/21. The most recent dataset shows an increase of 9 over the period 2020/21 up to year end of 31/03/2022.

Figure 3 – FTE Local Tracking

First Time Entrants	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	All Quarters
FTEs 2019-20	8	14	16	13	51
FTEs 2020-21	7	8	9	6	30
FTEs 2021-22	13	12	7	7	39

The seven most recent offences committed during Q4 2021/22 consist of:

- **Four** offences of possess knife blade or sharply pointed article by 4 males, of which three were 16-year-olds and one 17-year-old.
- **Two** Assault a person thereby occasioning them actual bodily harm by two 15-year-old males.
- **One** Common assault by a 14-year-old male.

All seven FTEs main substantive outcome was a Referral Order. Six of the seven FTEs had an offence type of violence against the person.

2.4 **Custody**

Sefton's custody rate remains at zero. There were two cases heard at court within the last week in April and first week in May which could have resulted in custodial sentencing due to their serious nature. Youth Justice staff completed robust pre-sentence assessments and associated reports that supported the Judge's decision to award community sentences and prevent two vulnerable young people from entering custody.

3. **Current Cohort**

3.1 **Cohort Profile**

The headlines are:

- The percentage of young people living in areas of deprivation has increased. 42% of the cohort live in South Sefton.
- Possession of weapons has increased as an offence reason and features in the top 3 offences for the first time.
- 52% of the cohort are being supported by Children Social Care.
- 24% have been referred to Early Help in the last 12 months.
- The cohort shows an increase in high-risk safety & wellbeing & risk of re-offending.
- NEET figures have increased within the cohort and attendance figures are
- It is positive to see 7 of the young people are in employment
- Mental health needs across the cohort remain a concern

4 Changes to Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

4.1 The Youth Justice Board (YJB) have proposed changes and an increase in the data that Youth Justice Services submit. This is so the YJB achieves a deeper level of insight of the work undertaken, to encourage partners being held to account and to enable themes to emerge that may require escalation to the Ministry of Justice. The reporting against the new KPI's will commence in October 2022. The KPI's relate to the areas listed below.

- Suitable accommodation
- Suitability of ETE, school attendance, % of children with SEND and EHCP plus information on those receiving SEND / EHCP support
- Mental health need (diagnosed and undiagnosed) plus information on those that are being supported
- Out of court disposals including successful outcomes
- Management Board attendance
- Children accessing wider service involvement such as Early Help and Children Social Care
- Concordat of YJS recommendations at court and final court decisions
- Rates of serious youth violence
- Rates of racial disparity

Whilst some data sets are not easily linked and will require some manual cross matching, there should be no issues in providing this data from October.

5 Youth Justice Service Funding Increase

5.1 The YJB have announced that Youth Justice Services will receive an increase in funding, following a decision to invest £3million over the next three years in early intervention and prevention activities for children at risk of entering the criminal justice system. The actual figures have yet to be confirmed as is the case with guidance for how the funding can be spent. It is anticipated that core funding allocations will remain unchanged, and any uplift will be subject to conditions for new areas of intervention and prevention work.

6 Legislative Changes – Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Court Act

- 6.1 From 28th June 2022, new legislation provides greater flexibility for courts and strengthens community sentencing options, which further reduces the risk of children being sentenced to custody. This relates to increasing curfew periods for children sentenced to a Youth Rehabilitation Orders (YRO's). Also, YOTs will now be responsible for decision making for electronic monitoring system (tag) breaches. These changes will commence 28th June. A further measure will be introduced for Intensive YRO's relating to 'trail monitoring' also known as whereabouts monitoring, albeit it is not live time. This is being piloted and there is no expected date for implementation as yet.
- 6.2 Further changes relate to sentencing which increases the tariff for older children who commit an offence that receives a custodial sentence of 7years or more, but less than a life sentence. The closer a child is to 18yrs old, the longer the sentence is likely to be. Furthermore, automatic release dates from custody will change from halfway through the sentence to two thirds the way through. This means that when children are sentenced to custody, they will spend longer in the secure estate and the sentencing length will increase with age. This may give rise to challenge where children are chronologically a particular age but have a learning age of much younger.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 There are no recommendations, however it is requested that the SST acknowledges the contents of this report.

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