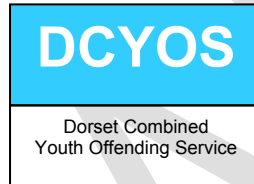


DORSET COMBINED YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE



*Youth
Justice
Plan*

2018/19

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Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service Statement of Purpose

Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service works with young people in the local youth justice system. Our purpose is to help those young people to make positive changes, to keep them safe, to keep other people safe, and to repair the harm caused to victims.

This means we can support the national Youth Justice Board Vision that:

‘Every child should live a safe and crime-free life and make a positive contribution to society’.

Who We Are and What We Do

Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service (DCYOS) is a statutory partnership between Bournemouth Borough Council, the Borough of Poole, Dorset County Council, Dorset Police, National Probation Service Dorset and NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group.

We are a multi-disciplinary team which includes youth justice officers, restorative justice specialists, parenting workers, education and employment workers, police officers, probation officers, nurses, speech and language therapists and a psychologist.

More information about the YOS partnership and the members of the YOS team is provided later in this document.

The team works directly with young people who have committed criminal offences to help them make positive changes and to reduce the risks to them and to other people. We also work directly with parents and carers to help them support their children to make changes.

We make contact with all victims of crimes committed by the young people we work with. We offer those victims the chance to take part in restorative justice processes so we can help to repair the harm they have experienced.

The organisations in the YOS partnership also work together to improve the quality of our local youth justice system, and to ensure that young people who work with the YOS can access the specialist support they need for their care, health and education.

The combination of work to improve our local youth justice and children’s services systems, and direct work with young people, parents and victims, enables us to meet the Youth Justice Board’s ‘System Aims’:

- Reduce the number of children in the youth justice system
- Reduce reoffending by children in the youth justice system
- Improve the safety and well-being of children in the youth justice system
- Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

Introduction

This document is the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service (YOS) for 2018/19. It sets out the key priorities and targets for the service for the next 12 months as required by the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

The Youth Justice Strategic Plan:

- summarises the YOS structure, governance and partnership arrangements
- outlines the resources available to the YOS, the planned use of the Youth Justice Grant and the plan for ensuring value for money
- reviews achievements and developments during 2017-18
- identifies emerging issues and describes the partnership's priorities
- summarises the risks to future delivery of the youth justice outcome measures
- sets out the planned actions to enable delivery of the youth justice outcome measures.

This document sets out the YOS's strategic plan. A delivery plan underpins this document.

Service Targets

The Dorset Combined YOS target for 2018/19 is to outperform regional and national averages for the three national performance indicators for youth offending which are:

- The number of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time ('First Time Entrants')
- The rate of proven re-offending by young people in the youth justice system
- The use of custodial sentences for young people.

Headline Strategic Priorities for 2018/19

- Develop and implement a plan to reduce the number of young people entering the justice system
- Improve the quality of our practice to improve outcomes for children, young people and families
- Work with police, courts and other services to improve the way our local youth justice system works
- Improve our effectiveness and efficiency to make best use of our resources

Actions to achieve these priorities can be found later in this document, on pages 25-26.

Structure and Governance: The YOS Partnership Board

The work of the Dorset Combined YOS is managed strategically by a Partnership Board. The Partnership Board consists of senior representatives of the statutory partner organisations, together with other relevant local partners.

Membership:

- Borough of Poole (current chair)
- Dorset County Council (current vice-chair)
- Bournemouth Borough Council
- Dorset Police
- Dorset Local Delivery Unit Cluster, National Probation Service
- NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group
- Public Health Dorset
- Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust
- Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal service
- Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Ansbury (Connexions Provider)

The Partnership Board oversees the development of the Youth Justice Plan, ensuring its links with other local plans.

The YOS Manager reports quarterly to the Partnership Board on progress against agreed performance targets, leading to clear plans for performance improvement. The Board also requests information in response to specific developments and agendas, and monitors the YOS's compliance with data reporting requirements and grant conditions.

Representation by senior leaders from the key partners enables the YOS Manager to resolve any difficulties in multi-agency working at a senior level, and supports effective links at managerial and operational levels.

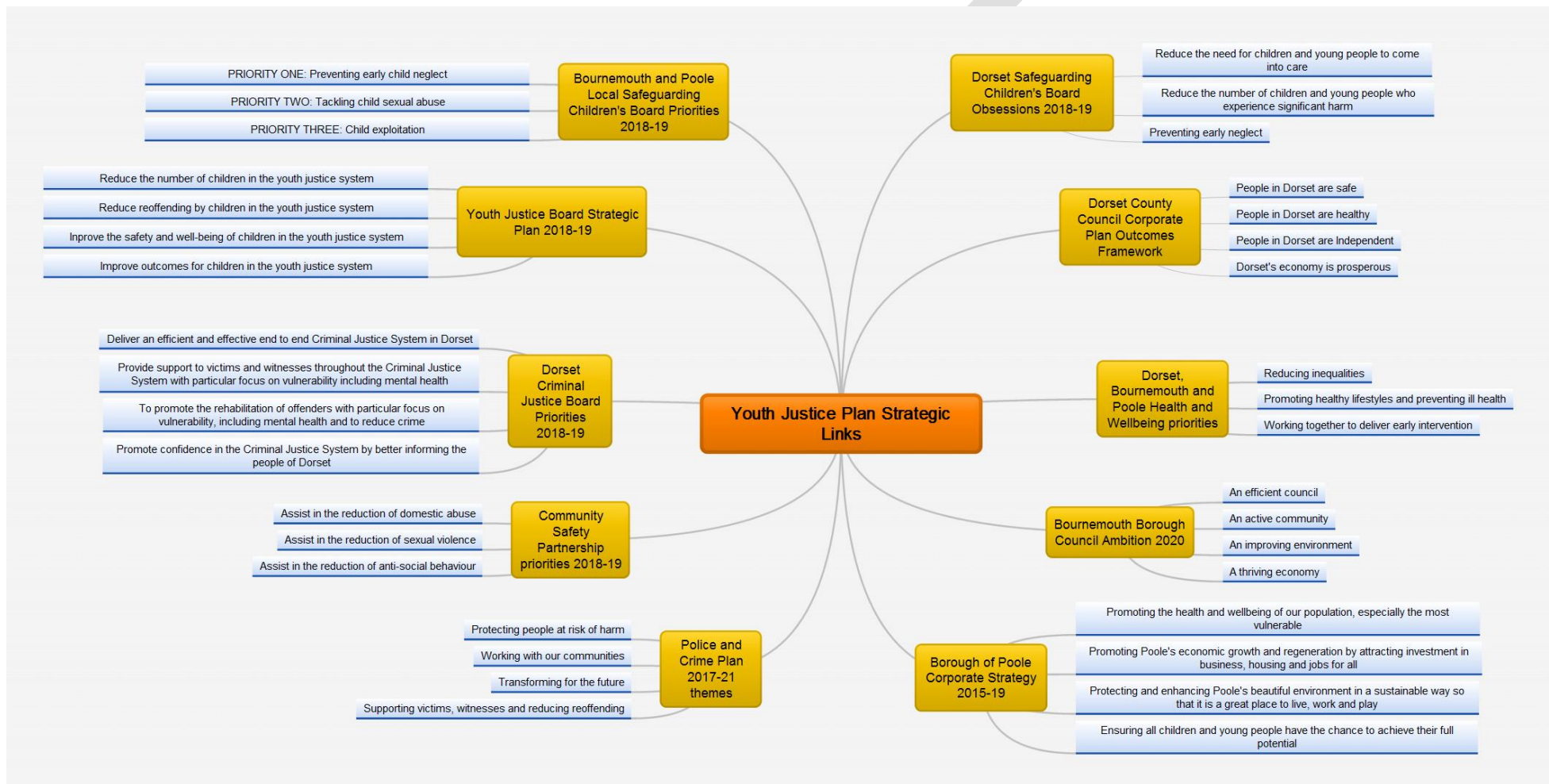
The YOS is party to local multi-agency agreements for information sharing, for safeguarding and for the escalation of concerns.

The Partnership Board oversees activities by partner agencies which contribute to the key youth justice outcomes, particularly in respect of the prevention of offending.

The YOS Partnership Board also provides oversight and governance for local multi-agency protocols in respect of the criminalisation of children in care and the detention of young people in police custody. The YOS Manager chairs multi-agency operational groups for each protocol and reports on progress to the YOS Partnership Board.

The YOS is a statutory partnership working with children and young people in the criminal justice system and the community safety arena. The map on the next page gives an overview of how the YOS fits with other strategic partnerships and plans.

Linking the Youth Justice System to other Plans and Structures



The membership of the YOS Partnership Board enables the work of the Dorset Combined YOS to be integrated into strategic planning for Safeguarding, Public Protection, Criminal Justice, Community Safety and Health & Well-Being. The YOS Manager sits on the two local Safeguarding Children’s Boards, the Dorset Criminal Justice Board, the three Community Safety Partnerships, the pan-Dorset Community Safety and Criminal Justice Board and on the local MAPPA Strategic Management Board.

Partnership Arrangements

The previous section outlined the strategic links between the YOS and the other strategic groups and partnerships. Similar links exist at operational levels, enabling the YOS to integrate and coordinate its work with the work done by partners such as the three local children's social care services, Special Educational Needs services, other criminal justice agencies, and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services across Dorset.

Safeguarding and Public Protection

As well as participating in Child Protection Conferences and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meetings in respect of specific individuals and families, YOS managers also attend MARAC meetings, local Community Safety Partnership operational meetings, local complex needs panel meetings and meetings in respect of early help and Troubled Families activities in the 3 local authorities.

Reducing Re-Offending

The YOS Manager chairs the pan-Dorset Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group, reporting to the Dorset Community Safety and Criminal Justice Board. Although the group's main focus is on adult offenders, attention is also paid to the youth perspective, particularly for those young people about to transition to adult services, and for the children of adult offenders.

Risk Assessment Panels

The YOS instigates a Risk Assessment Panel process for young people under YOS supervision who have been identified as being at high risk of causing serious harm to others, or of experiencing significant harm themselves. These meetings are attended by workers and managers from the other agencies who are working with the young person. The aim is to agree the risk assessment and devise, implement and review plans to reduce the risks posed by and to the young person.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The YOS works with the three local authorities, and with the Police, to agree the best way to respond to young people who have committed harmful sexual behaviour. Some of these young people are also known to the local authority social care service so it is important that we coordinate our work and, where possible, take a joint approach. The YOS and the local authorities use recognised assessment and intervention approaches for young people who commit harmful sexual behaviour.

Child Exploitation

Young people known to the YOS can also be at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) or child criminal exploitation. The YOS Manager is a member of the pan-Dorset Child Exploitation (including Trafficked and Missing) sub-group of the two Local Safeguarding Children's Boards. A YOS Team Manager has lead responsibility for the team's operational work on CSE, supported by a designated Youth Justice Officer in our Dorchester office. The YOS participates in local multi-agency information sharing arrangements and meetings to identify and protect children at risk of exploitation.

Preventing Violent Extremism

All relevant YOS staff have received training in raising awareness of 'Prevent'. A YOS Team Manager has lead responsibility for this area of work and attends the pan-Dorset Prevent Group to ensure that our work is aligned with local initiatives. The YOS has sight of the local assessment of extremism risks. The seconded YOS police officers act as a link to local police processes for sharing intelligence in respect of possible violent extremism.

Young people convicted of extremism related offences will be managed robustly in line with the YOS Risk Policy, with appropriate referral to the local MAPPA process and clear risk management plans, including paired working arrangements and support from the seconded YOS police officers.

Safe Schools and Communities Team

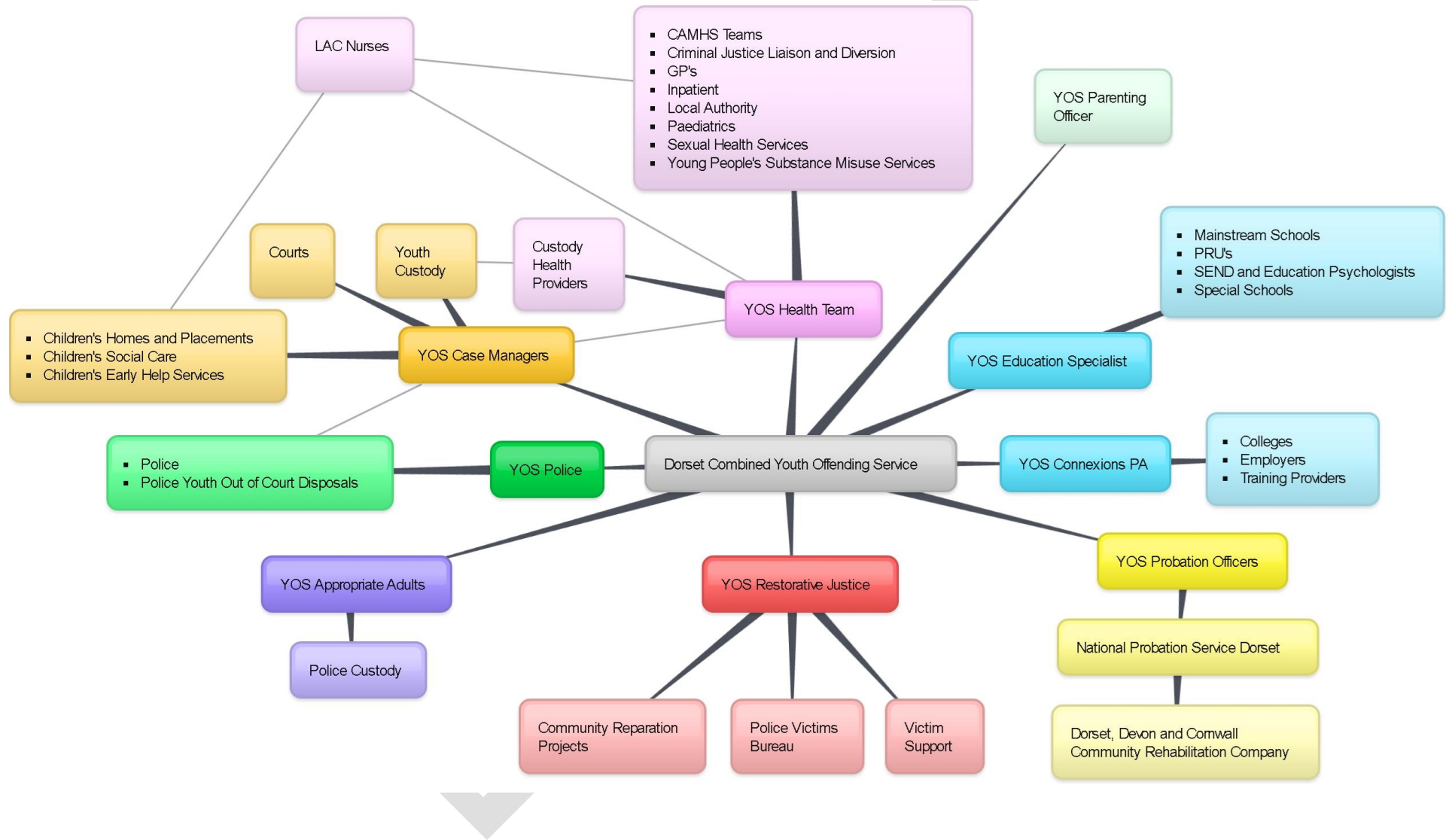
The Safe Schools and Communities Team (SSCT) is a partnership between Dorset Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Dorset Combined YOS. The SSCT plays an important role in preventing offending by young people across Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. The team provide education, awareness and advice to students, schools and parents. The work of the team is reported to the YOS Partnership Board as an important element of the YOS Partnership's work to prevent youth offending. The SSCT is particularly effective at supporting schools to manage incidents without the need for a criminal outcome, and at supporting internet safety for young people across the Dorset area.

Restorative Justice and Support for Victims

The YOS Victim Liaison Officers provide Restorative Justice activities and support for victims of offences committed by young people. The YOS also links with other agencies through the Victims and Witnesses Sub-Group of the Dorset Criminal Justice Board. The YOS plays an important part in delivering the Police and Crime Commissioner's Restorative Justice Strategy for Dorset, taking the lead on offences committed by young people and supporting the development of good practice with other Restorative Justice providers.

In addition to the team's involvement in these different partnership groups, there is ongoing daily interaction with other local services. These links are illustrated on the following page:

Operational Links between YOS and Partner Agencies



Resources and value for money

The YOS is funded by the statutory partners, by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and a grant from the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. Local authority staff are employed by Bournemouth Borough Council. Other staff are seconded from Dorset Police, the National Probation Service Dorset and Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust. Revenue contributions and the YJB Grant form a Partnership budget.

Like all public services, the YOS operates in a context of reducing resources. Ensuring value for money and making best use of resources is a high priority for the service.

Partner Agency	17/18 Revenue excluding recharges	Movement 14/15 to 17/18	Staff
Dorset County Council	£531,900	£0	1 Nurse (substance misuse) and 0.3 Psychologist
Bournemouth Borough Council	£257,100	£0	
Poole Borough Council	£244,000	-£13,030	
Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset	£75,301	-£78,149	2.0 Police Officers. Funding reduction from 14/15 to 15/16 reflects funding of SSCT directly by the OPCC to the Police, no longer via the YOS
Dorset Probation Trust	£10,000	£6,826	1.5 Probation Officers (reduction from 2.6 up to March 2015, and from 2.0 up to March 2018, with adjusted funding contribution, after national review)
Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group	£22,487	£0	2.8 FTE Nurses
Youth Justice Board Good Practice Grant	£594,304	-£196,110	
Total	£1,735,092	-£280,463	

The YOS has also obtained funding from the NHS England Health and Justice funding stream to support the appointment of 1.0 Speech and Language Therapist, 0.2 Psychologist and 0.4 YOS Nurse. The funding for these posts is routed through the NHS Dorset CCG to Dorset HealthCare University Foundation Trust, which is the employer for these post holders.

Use of the Annual Youth Justice Grant 2018/19

The annual Youth Justice Board grant to Youth Offending Teams is provided for ‘the delivery of youth justice services’. A number of conditions are attached to the grant. The YOS Partnership Board receives quarterly finance reports from the senior accountant in Bournemouth Borough Council who oversees the YOS budget. These reports enable the Board to be satisfied that YOS resources are being used for their intended purpose and achieving value for money. This reporting mechanism also enables the Board to be assured that the YOS complies with the YJB Conditions of Grant.

The following table sets out how the YOS uses the Youth Justice Board grant for the delivery of youth justice services:

Activity	Cost
Staff training	£10,200
Appropriate Adult provision and Referral Order panel members	£40,000
ICT licences and maintenance	£26,500
Interpreter Fees	£2,000
Restorative Justice activities	£181,453
Performance and Information Management	£65,000
Court work, Pre-Sentence Reports and Supervision of statutory youth justice outcomes	£194,151
Intensive Surveillance and Supervision	£75,000
Total	£594,304

The table below shows the number of staff and volunteers in the service, by gender and ethnicity.

YOS Staff

	Male	Female
White British	12	42
White Irish	1	0
White Other	0	1
	13	43

YOS Volunteers

	Male	Female
White British	9	27

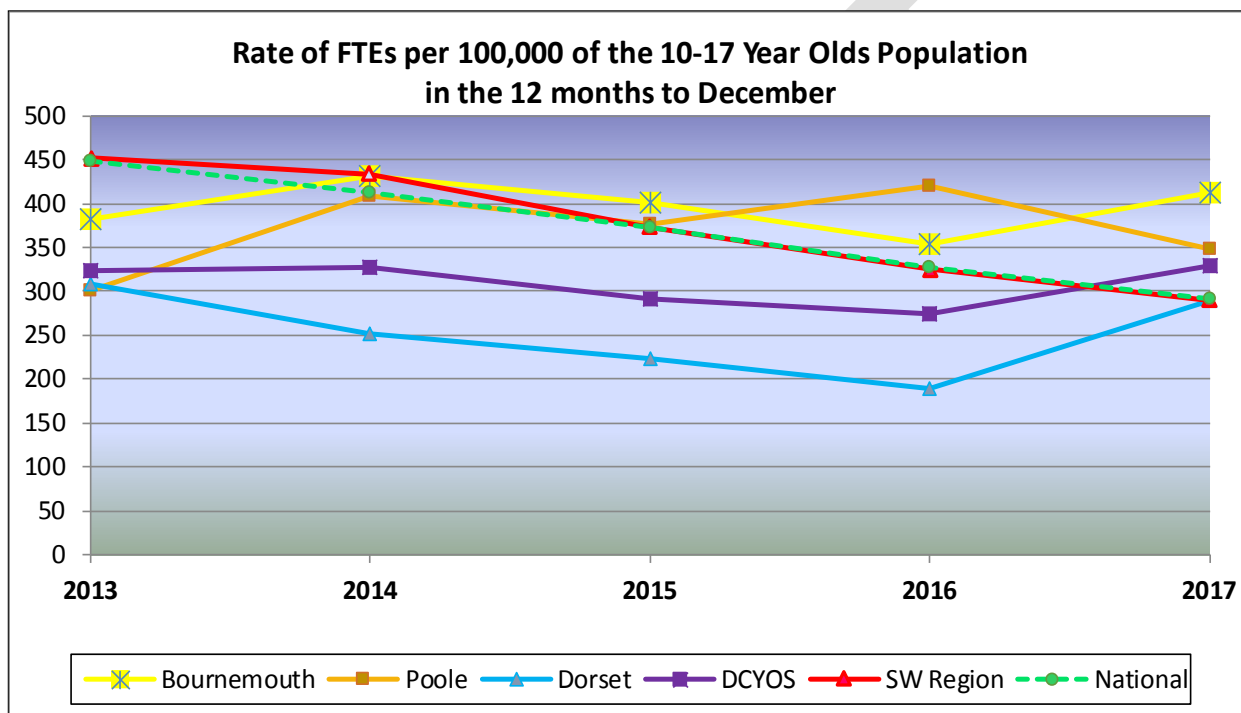
We recognise that our workforce is predominantly white and female, which does not fully reflect the ethnic and gender characteristics of our service users. One of our priority actions for this year is to diversify our staff and volunteer group.

Key Performance Information

Youth Offending Teams continue to be judged against 3 key performance indicators:

- Reducing First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System;
- Reducing Re-Offending by young people in the Youth Justice System;
- Appropriately Minimising the use of Custodial Sentences.

First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System



Over the last ten years there has been a sustained local reduction in the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system. This year we have seen the rate of first time entrants start to rise, so that the local rate now exceeds the regional and national average. Across our area, the rate of first time entrants has been higher in the conurbation of Bournemouth and Poole, and this continues to be the case. The increase in our rate of first time entrants will be addressed in our priorities for this year.

Fluctuations in the stated rate per 100,000 young people can overstate the actual changes. In real terms, there were 12 more young people in Bournemouth who entered the justice system for the first time in the year to December 2017, compared to the previous year; there were 9 fewer young people who entered the justice system in Poole; and 35 more in Dorset, compared to the previous year. The first time entrants rate in Dorset County is now aligned with the regional and national averages.

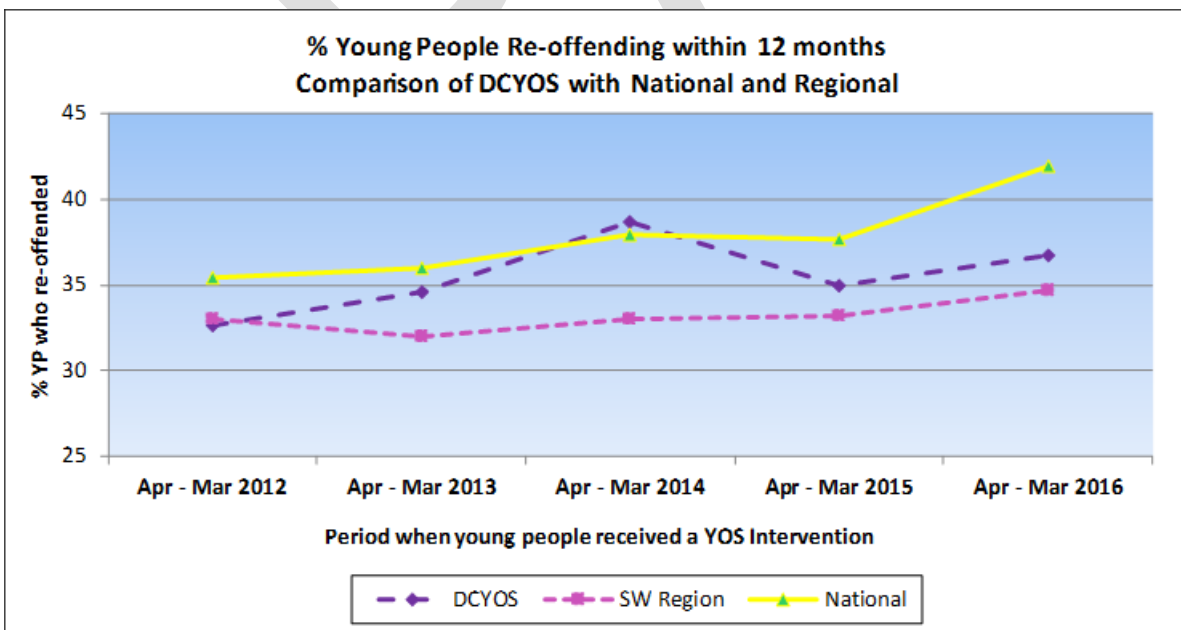
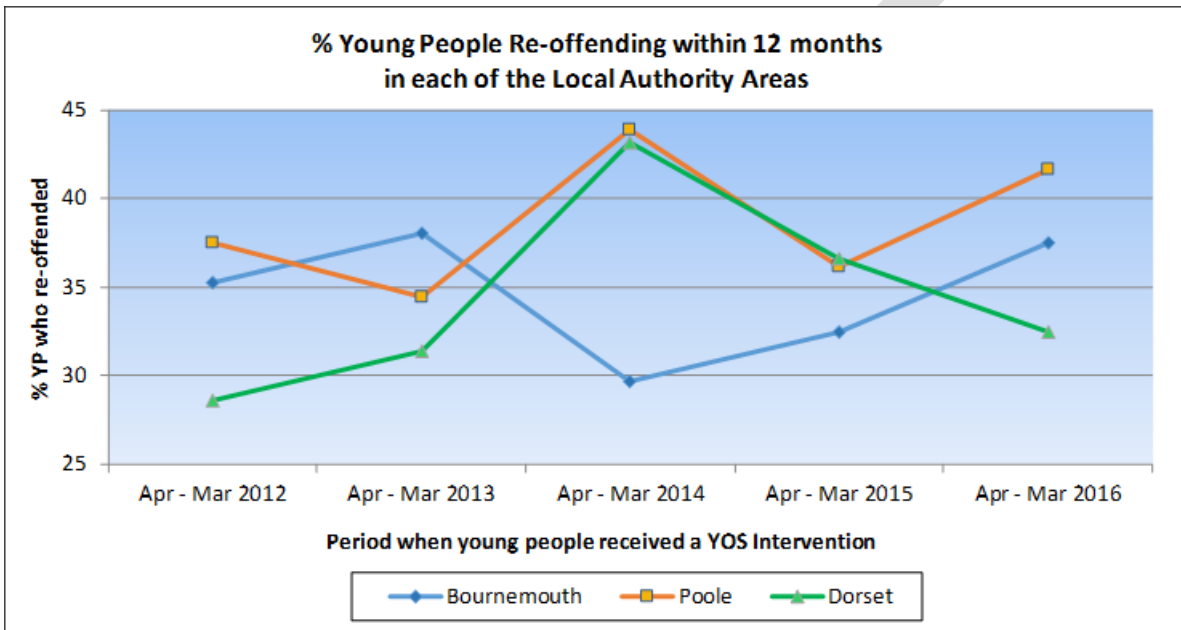
All three local authorities have continued to develop their Early Help arrangements during the past year, to help prevent young people being drawn into offending behaviour.

A coordinated, multi-agency approach was developed across the whole area to reduce the use of justice responses for behaviour by children in care. This led to the launch in

January 2017 of a 'Protocol to Reduce the Criminalisation of Children in Care'. Evidence during the year has shown a 50% reduction in police call-outs to children's homes as a result of this Protocol, and most of those call-outs do not lead to a justice outcome.

When a young person does commit an offence, Dorset Police work closely with Dorset Combined YOS to identify the best way to respond. Low level offending is assessed so that suitable cases can be dealt with through restorative justice approaches, avoiding the need for a formal outcome. More serious offences, or repeat offending, leads to a formal disposal and therefore to the young person entering the youth justice system.

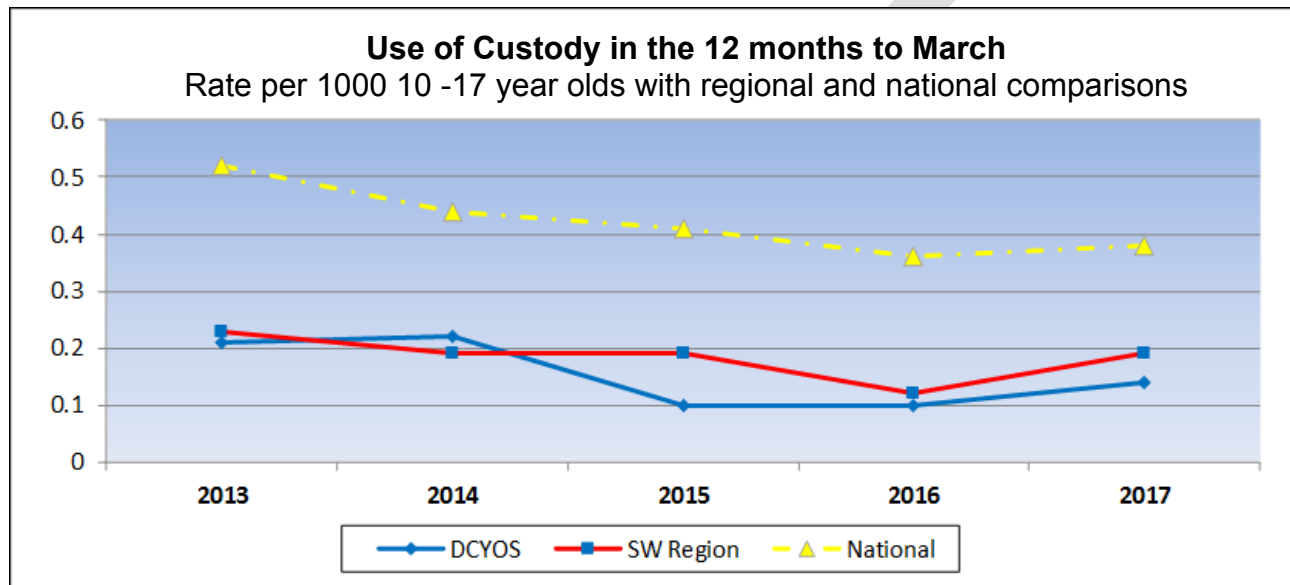
Reducing Re-Offending



The information on re-offending relates to young people known to the YOS two years ago. This is because time needs to elapse to see whether young people go on to re-offend, after their contact with us, and for the new offending to be processed and recorded.

During the past year there has been a change to the reporting arrangements for re-offending, tracking quarterly cohorts of young people instead of annual cohorts. This leads to more fluctuation in the figures, and the recurrence of young people who receive new disposals several times during a year. It is encouraging that the overall performance of the Dorset Combined YOS areas is better than the national average. Performance slightly exceeds the regional average, reflecting a period when we performed below the regional rate for first-time entrants, meaning that young people in the DCYOS cohort at that time had a higher proportion of more complex needs than elsewhere in the region.

Custodial Sentences



This chart shows the latest available confirmed information, due to problems with verification of national custody data for 2017/18. In the year recorded above, to March 2017, there were 7 custodial sentences for local young people. This number reduced in the year to March 2018, when there were 5 custodial sentences (for 4 young people).

Although the YOS works with some complex and risky young people, the use of custodial sentences remains low. The YOS works hard to maintain the confidence of local magistrates and judges in our ability to provide robust and demanding community sentences for those young people who may be at risk of custody. In some circumstances a custodial sentence is the appropriate response to serious or persistent offending. Each time a custodial sentence is passed, the YOS reviews the case in a team meeting to identify any learning points and to check whether any opportunities for a different outcome were missed.

Like other youth justice services in the south-west, we face a problem with the distance to the secure establishments where young people are held in custody. Young people from our area have been detained this year at Parc, near Bridgend, at Feltham in north-west London, at Medway in Kent and at Oakhill, in Milton Keynes. The YOS assists family members to visit when possible, but the long distances present a challenge for family contacts, for YOS resources and for planning effective resettlement on release.

Achievements and Developments during 2017/18:

Our Youth Justice Plan for 2017/18 set out our strategic priorities, which were designed to address the three main performance measures for youth justice, to respond to national initiatives and to align with other local strategic priorities.

Preventing Offending

Children in Care: in January 2017 we implemented a new multi-agency protocol to reduce the criminalisation of children in care. The focus is on avoiding a police or justice response to behaviour by the child in their place of residence. We have continued to monitor and adjust the implementation of this protocol, which has led to a 50% reduction in police call-outs to children's homes across Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole.

Adolescent Parental Violence: the YOS Manager chaired a multi-agency group to review the local approaches to 'Adolescent Parental Violence'. Consistent principles for local interventions have been identified, and good practice shared. The next steps are to consider a possible diversion option to avoid justice outcomes, and to develop a shared risk assessment and management process for teenagers who are known to multiple services and who show risky behaviours.

Adverse Childhood Experiences: Dorset Police have been working with local authority colleagues in Bournemouth to develop early identification and responses for children who have experienced adverse events in childhood. Research shows that such children have an increased risk of later offending, anti-social behaviour and other poor outcomes.

School Incidents Policy: the Dorset Police 'Safe Schools and Communities Team' work with schools to ensure that behaviour issues in school are dealt with through the school's behaviour management policy, with youth justice responses being a last resort.

Improving the Quality and Impact of YOS practice

Speech and Language: a new post, YOS Speech and Language Therapist, was created this year, with two job share post holders starting work in March 2018. Their role is to undertake assessments of children with the most complex communication needs, to provide consultation to other team members, and to strengthen links with community speech and language services. This new initiative is a response to the research evidence which shows that approximately 65% of young people known to youth justice services have speech, language and communication needs.

Education, Training and Employment: short-term funding was agreed to enable a fixed-term appointment of another YOS Education Officer to review the effectiveness of our work to support young people into education, training or employment. As well as reviewing our approach to this work, the post holder has worked with a colleague to commence an 'ASDAN' short course to prepare young people for employment or training and has undertaken one to one work with young people who are not attending education, to help identify and overcome the obstacles to their attendance.

Parenting support: a Parenting Worker was appointed to our Bournemouth office to strengthen our resources for supporting the parents of young people in the youth justice system. Our parenting workers now run a Parents Forum, which acts as a support group for parents and provides information and advice, as well as their regular one to one work with parents.

Intensive Surveillance and Supervision (ISS): ISS is an intensive intervention which can be provided as an alternative to custody, or to provide robust oversight and support for young people coming out of custody. During 2017 we developed a new enhanced grade of Youth Justice Worker whose responsibilities include taking the lead role in coordinating ISS programmes for individual young people.

Use of Information

Information Reports: our Performance and Information Manager has written new information reports which help managers monitor caseloads, timeliness and risk cases.

Disproportionality: tracking caseload information has helped us identify that we have a higher ratio of females on our caseload than the national average. We are working to understand the reasons for this and to develop a differentiated response for girls.

Re-offending information: in the past, we have relied on national data which is out of date by the time it is published. We are now able to collect more current local data, which can also provide more nuanced information about re-offending by justice disposal type, by age, by gender and potentially by young person characteristics.

Service User Feedback: we developed and implemented a new format and process for obtaining service user views on their experience of our work with them.

Staff training records: we have integrated our staff training records with our case management system to enable comprehensive recording and reporting of staff training. This means we are better able to ensure that all staff remain up to date with the training required for their role.

Partnership Information Sharing Agreement: a new single document for the YOS partnership has been agreed, which sets out the principles and processes by which personal information will be shared between the YOS and its partners.

Workforce Development

Assessment skills: a new assessment tool for youth justice, AssetPlus, was implemented nationally in 2016. During the last year we have built on the initial training for this tool by commissioning further, enhanced training for all relevant staff, followed up by local good practice sessions.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour: a number of practitioners and managers have specialist expertise in working with young people who show harmful sexual behaviour. In November 2017 these team members revisited their assessment and intervention training for the 'AIM2' model of working, and also undertook training in the new area of 'Technology-Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviour'.

Trauma: it is increasingly recognised that young people with problematic behaviour may well be responding to traumatic experiences from their childhood. One of the YOS nurses is now an accredited practitioner in an evidence-based approach to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, known as Eye Movement Desensitisation and Re-Processing (EMDR). She is now working towards Consultant Practitioner status. Two other YOS nurses have completed an initial EMDR training course this year to help us build our capacity to work with young people who are struggling with earlier traumatic experiences.

Motivational Interviewing: this is an evidence-based approach to helping people make behaviour change, and is a core part of our work with young people. YOS case holders

attended Motivational Interviewing training, and are able to attend regular development groups to enhance their use of Motivational Interviewing in their day to day work.

Continuing Professional Development: a number of team members have been supported to undertake professional qualifications in social work, youth justice effective practice and business administration.

Inspection reports and learning reviews in 2017/18

Youth Offending Teams are inspected by HMI Probation. During 2017/18 HMI Probation worked on developing a new inspection framework for youth justice, which will be applied from June 2018. The criteria for these new inspections have now been published. We plan to use these criteria as part of our ongoing quality assurance self-assessments.

Thematic HMI Probation Inspection reports

One thematic inspection report relating to youth justice was published in 2017/18, focusing on public protection work by youth offending teams. All thematic inspection reports are considered by YOS managers and shared with the rest of the team to identify learning opportunities.

Headlines from the thematic inspection on public protection included the prevalence of trauma as an influencing factor on the young person's risky behaviour. Amongst the 115 young people whose behaviour was considered, the inspectors found that 'more than three in four had experienced emotional trauma or other deeply distressing or disturbing things in their lives'. We have taken steps, mentioned above, to increase the expertise of our seconded nurses to respond to unresolved trauma.

Inspectors also noticed the increasing role of social media in risky behaviours by young people. This is an area of work which youth offending teams need to understand better. The inspection report recommended that youth offending teams should '*make sure local practice guidance and resources available for responding to social media related offending reflects current behaviour of young people*'.

Learning Reviews

The YOS undertakes a learning review following significant incidents, such as completed or attempted suicide, young people being the victim of serious offences, or young people committing serious offences. Learning reviews were undertaken this year in respect of one serious further offence, two incidents of child sexual exploitation and four attempted suicides. Each learning review leads to agreed improvement actions. A common theme from these learning reviews was the need for coordinated and integrated multi-agency working. Actions for the YOS included some adjustments to risk assessment practice, changes to templates for YOS Risk Assessment Panel meetings, and clarification of processes for local children in care who are placed out of our area.

During this year, a Serious Case Review was published following the completed suicide of a 16 year old girl in 2016. YOS practitioners and managers contributed to the Serious Case Review, and have played an active role in developing and implementing the action plan from this review. The YOS Manager is leading a Task and Finish group on behalf of the two Local Safeguarding Children's Boards to agree a shared multi-agency approach to risk assessment and management for young people with the most complex and risky behaviours.

The Lammy Report

In September 2017 David Lammy, MP, published his report into the over-representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals in the criminal justice system. His report included a number of findings and recommendations regarding young people. The Dorset Criminal Justice Board has set up a multi-agency group, including the YOS, to review and act on David Lammy's report.

One of the specific issues identified by David Lammy was that BAME young people may be less likely to admit guilt for offences, which means they are not eligible for the 'Out of Court' options for dealing with an offence, and therefore they are escalated more quickly through the youth justice system. The YOS Manager is working with the Head of Youth Services for Dorset Police to develop more flexibility around the Out of Court Disposal route for BAME young people.

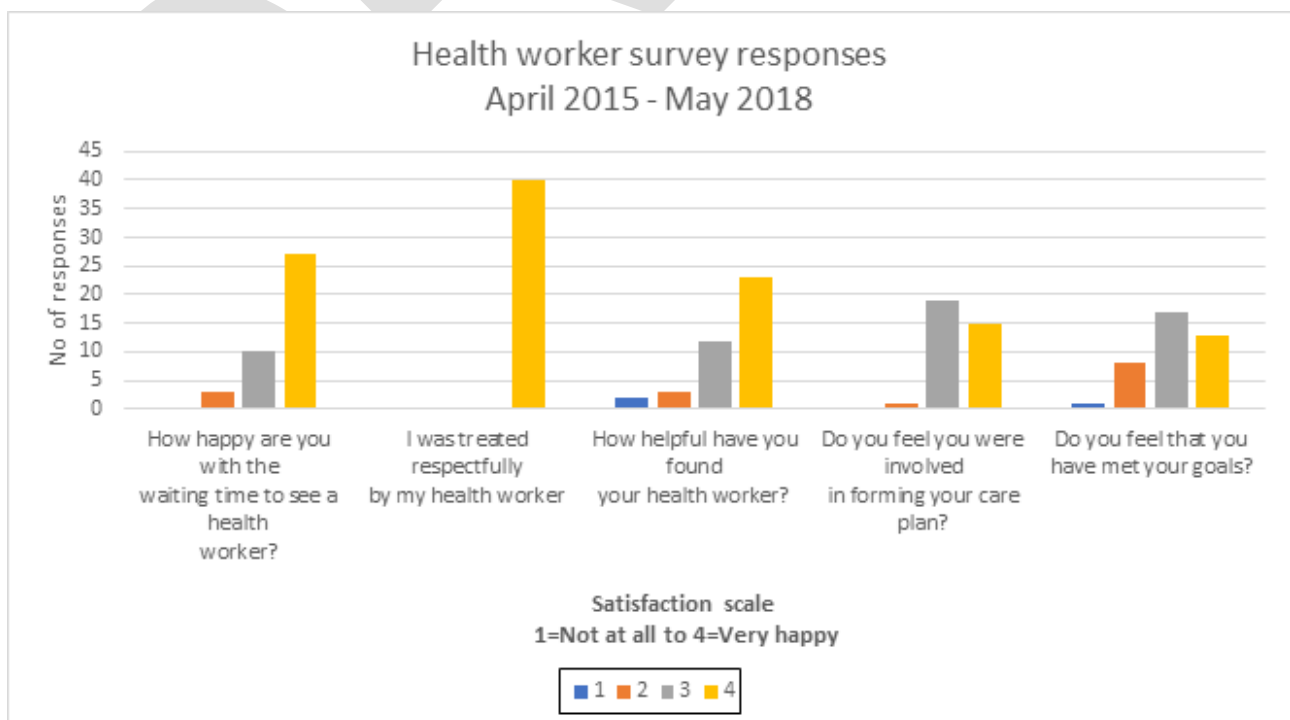
Service User Feedback

Feedback from the young people working with DCYOS has been positive. 23 young people have completed the feedback questionnaire. All 23 said they felt listened to, and they understood what was required of them for their Out of Court Disposals or Court Orders.

100% answered Yes to the question about being helped to realise that they could make changes in their lives.

All the respondents rated the YOS service as Good or Outstanding.

A separate service user feedback form is offered to young people when they complete their work with the YOS Health team. The following table summarises the responses that have been received:



Research has shown that the quality of the relationship between the worker and the young person is of primary importance in helping the young person to make positive changes. Young people known to the YOS have often had negative experiences with adults and can be wary of professionals. It is therefore pleasing to note their positive responses to the questions about feeling listened to and being respected by their YOS case managers and health workers.

The YOS parenting specialists undertake one to one work with parents of young people known to the YOS, following referrals from the young person's YOS worker. A feedback form is offered to these parents at the end of the work, to get their views on the service they have received and its impact. The following table shows the responses from parents to some of the questions on the form, covering the period from June 2016 to May 2018.

Parenting feedback questions	Responses			
	No	Yes	Unsure	N/A
Was our support helpful?	0	31	0	0
Do you now spend more time with your son/daughter?	4	22	3	1
Are you getting on better and communicating more?	3	25	2	1

Emerging issues, and risks to achievement of YOS priorities in 2018-19

National Context

Changes have been made during the past year to the structure and work plans of the Youth Justice Board. Responsibility for the commissioning of youth custody has passed to the new Youth Custody Service, within the Ministry of Justice. Plans are being developed for the piloting of two 'secure schools' to provide a different approach to youth custody, focused more explicitly on education.

The Youth Justice Board has refocused on its core principles as a provider of expert, independent advice to ministers and to support outstanding practice in the youth justice sector. More information can be found in the [Youth Justice Board for England and Wales Strategic Plan for 2018-2021](#).

During 2017/18 HMI Probation consulted on and finalised a new youth justice inspection framework. Their inspections will now include work done on youth Out of Court Disposals. The new framework provides a helpful benchmark for high quality youth offending services, which we will incorporate into our quality assurance processes.

Local Context

The current context for youth justice work across Dorset includes possible increases in the levels of crime, pressure on YOS resources and pressure on other public services. The rate of first-time entrants has started to rise, after falling significantly over the last 10 years, and there are signs of an increase in the YOS caseload. As well as fluctuations in the numbers of active cases, the young people appear to have increasing levels of risk and need which require skilled and intensive responses.

Concerns have been identified locally about delays in our youth justice system, which means it can take too long for offences by young people to be resolved, either through the court system or through Out of Court Disposals.

Research evidence has helped develop a better national understanding of the specific needs of young people who have contact with the youth justice system. The prevalence of prior trauma and of speech, language and communication needs among the YOS caseload is now recognised. Work on 'desistance', i.e. the reasons why some young people stop offending, has identified the benefits of a positive relationship with a trusted adult, and the need to build on the young person's strengths as well as their deficits.

Child sexual exploitation remains a significant concern for young people in contact with youth justice services, but there is also growing recognition of the prevalence of child criminal exploitation. This takes the form both of local interactions between adults and children, and of children being sent into this area by adults in urban areas to commit offences such as the supply of drugs.

Local authority boundaries and structures in the Dorset area are changing in April 2019 to form two new unitary authorities for the current Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole areas. The YOS is involved in the preparation for Local Government Reorganisation, including work on resourcing, governance and integration into the new local government service structures. All parties remain committed to a pan-Dorset Youth Offending Service.

Concerns about anti-social behaviour by young people, particularly in groups, have emerged at various locations across our area this year. These young people often have

needs relating to social care, education, emotional health and substance use, which mean they are also vulnerable to exploitation.

Particular risks to achieving YOS priorities include:

- A combination of increasing demand and the reduction in resources could make it hard to provide the necessary depth and breadth of support for young people with complex needs
- Increased demand in the justice system could have a negative impact on work to prevent offending and to build resilience
- Access to suitable education, training or employment provision for young people with complex needs and risks can be difficult to achieve in the current education environment
- Coercion and exploitation of young people by adults in this area and elsewhere, creating new challenges for the YOS and other local services.

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Strategic Priorities for 2018-19

The strategic priorities for the Dorset Combined YOS align with:

- our 3 main performance indicators
- the strategic priorities of other local partnerships (such as the Safeguarding Children's Boards, Community Safety Partnerships and the Criminal Justice Board)
- relevant local initiatives to reduce offending, protect the public and safeguard young people
- areas identified for YOS improvement
- the emerging issues and risks summarised on the previous page.

The following priority areas will be supported by a more detailed action plan used by the YOS team.

Develop and implement a plan to reduce the numbers of young people entering the justice system

- Work with Dorset Police to increase the options for diversion from the justice system, using the YOS expertise in Restorative Justice
- Refresh the protocol between DCYOS and Dorset Police for Out of Court Disposals, with a focus on improving timeliness and identifying the right support for young people at risk of offending, particularly among groups which are over-represented in our local youth justice system
- Work with Dorset Police, local authorities and other partners to provide effective and holistic support for young people who show anti-social behaviour and vulnerability to exploitation.

Improve the quality of our practice to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families

- Develop access to a range of positive activities for YOS young people and embed this approach in the intervention plans which we agree with young people
- Build the team's expertise in identifying and responding to young people's speech, language and communication needs, using the new YOS Speech and Language Therapists
- Develop the team's understanding and response to Child Exploitation, in conjunction with other local criminal justice and children's services
- Increase the team's access to evidence-based resources for working with young people to change their behaviour
- Develop a differentiated response for our work with young females in the youth justice system
- Lead multi-agency work to develop a shared local approach to risk assessment and management for young people with the most complex and risky behaviours so that our responses are coordinated, responsive and effective.

Work with police, courts and other services to improve the way our local youth justice system works

- Work with local authority and police partners to minimise the numbers of young people detained in police custody and the duration of custody detentions
- Ensure that young people being interviewed by police under 'Voluntary Attendance' access the same support services and legal support as young people being interviewed in custody
- Work with the Dorset Criminal Justice Board to improve the timeliness of local youth court processes
- Work with Dorset Police to improve the timeliness of out of court processes for offences by young people
- Share the specialist expertise of the YOS Speech and Language Therapists to help ensure improved communications with young people throughout our local youth justice system

Improve our effectiveness and efficiency to make best use of our resources

- Review and adapt YOS processes and procedures to ensure that staff time is used to achieve our core purpose
- The YOS Board to review the current and future resourcing of the YOS to fit with agreed future priorities and in the context of Local Government Reorganisation
- Participate actively in preparations for Local Government Reorganisation to ensure best use of YOS expertise and resources in the new service structures
- Promote the use of restorative approaches within our organisation, as well as with our service users, to prepare an application next year for the Restorative Justice Council's 'Restorative Service Quality Mark'.
- Take action to diversify the staff and volunteers working with the YOS, to reflect the characteristics of our service users
- Embed revisions to our Quality Assurance processes to reflect the new youth justice inspection criteria and standards

Approval

Signatures of Board Chair and YOS Manager

Jan Thurgood

Strategic Director, People Theme (Chair)

The Borough of Poole

Signed: _____

Date:

David Webb

Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service Manager

Bournemouth Borough Council

Signed: _____

David Webb

Date:

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

AssetPlus	Nationally Accredited Assessment Tool
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
ETE	Education Training and Employment
FTE	First Time Entrant into the Youth Justice System
ISS	Intensive Supervision and Surveillance
IT	Information Technology
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
OOCD	Out Of Court Disposals
PCC	Police & Crime Commissioner
RJ	Restorative Justice
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SSCT	Safe Schools and Communities Team
VLO	Victim Liaison Officer
YJ	Youth Justice
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOS/YOT	Youth Offending Service/Team
YRD	Youth Restorative Disposal
YRO	Youth Rehabilitation Order