

Somerset Youth Justice Partnership Plan

June 2023 – June 2024

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Somerset
Council

Youth Justice Plan

The purpose of the Somerset Youth Justice Plan 2023/24

Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

- ❖ Duty on Youth Justice Partnership - Somerset YJ Board membership
- ❖ Duty of each local authority, after consultation to formulate an annual youth justice plan sets out:
 - How youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded.
 - How the multidisciplinary Somerset Youth Justice Team (YJT) will be composed and funded.
 - How it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.

Looking back – Headline achievements

Headline achievements for Somerset YJT included in the Somerset Youth Justice Plan 2022/23 include continued success in maintaining good performance in relation to:

- Tenacious “**Child First**” focus leading to **impactful engagement** with children.
- Support for children to remain in **education, training and employment (ETE)**.
- Low **detention rates and high out of court and diversion work**.
- Joint work with all relevant partners to **manage risk within the community**.
- Work to understand the **disproportionate criminal responses to black and ethnic minority children**.
- **Support** to our workforce (open and transparent **learning culture** / commitment to improve).
- Increased **Restorative Justice and reparation** offer.
- Sustained low numbers of **First Time Entrants to the youth justice system**.
- **Good and outstanding** outcomes for individual children and young people.
- Honest self-assessment - know our strengths and areas for improvement.
- Reduction of reoffending

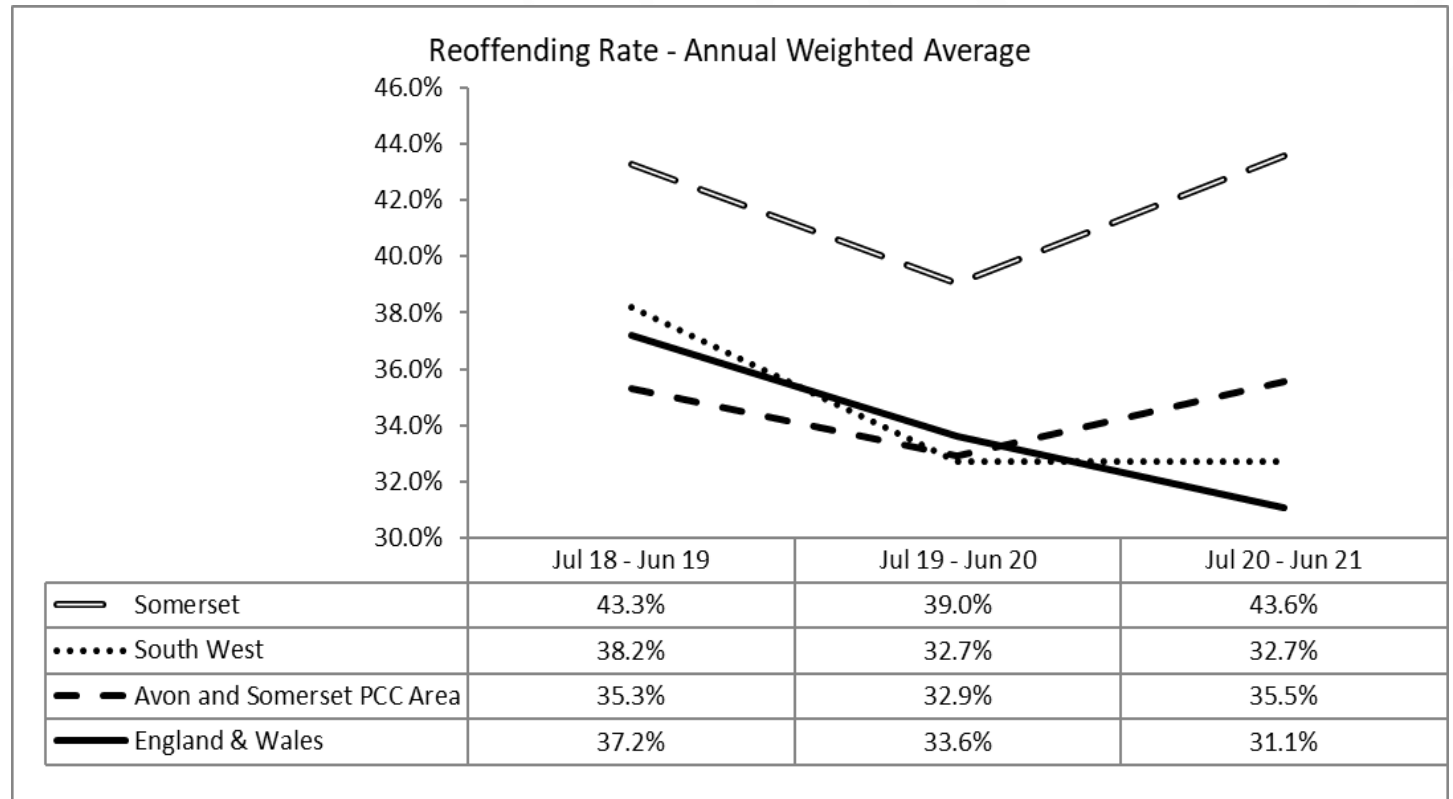
Strategic Priorities

- Robust multi agency **interventions to prevent escalation** (serious youth violence and criminal exploitation).
- Build on the **Teachable Moment and Turnaround programmes**, raise aspirations and reduce more serious offending.
- **New Case Management System** - improve knowledge of those most at risk, amplify Voice of Child / Parent / Carer, intervene earlier.
- **Screening of health vulnerabilities** – to identify health issues and ensure intervention to reduce the risks.
- **Parental factors which may impact on offending behaviour** and provide support and **effective interventions**.
- **Understand Impact of Covid 19** - educational, domestic abuse (including child to parent violence) and hidden impact.

Reoffending

Reoffending in Somerset is 43.6% - July 2020 to June 2021

- Reduction in cohort size from **194** in 2018/19 to **101** in 2020/21
- Hypothesis - have a very small, complex, and challenging cohort
- Majority of YJ children receive preventative v criminal outcomes
- Number of reoffences committed - reduced in Somerset past 3 years
- Remaining critical few, more likely at higher risk of reoffending
- Ongoing partnership concern - focused attention, continued targeted & individualised support
- Focused ETE which has a critical role in desistance



Prevention & Diversion

Diversion work to avoid escalation - April 2022 to March 2023

Choices and Consequences

- 376 children referred and attended.
- 10 have gone on to become suspects but none charged.

Youth Alcohol and Drug Diversion (YADD)

- 57 children referred and attended.
- 1 child progressed to show as a suspect.
- Out of court panel – full breadth of options, outcomes and methods – reports in development
- Education, training and employment data and progress over recent years (since Sept 2020)

Education – Impact on NEET

ETE data – Impact and progress over recent years (since Sept 2020)

Metric (%)	Jun 2023	Apr 2023	Sep 2022	Jun 2022	Mar 2022	Jan 2022	Sep 2021	Jun 2021	Mar 2021	Dec 2020
School Age Full Time	20.8%	13.3%	52.9%	70.6%	70%	73%	36.4%	61%	54%	49%
School Age Part Time	70.9%	80%	41.4%	29.4%	30%	18%	45.5%	39%	43%	43%
School Age not in ETE	8.3%	6.7%	5.9%	0%	0%	9%	18.2%	0%	2.7%	8%
Post-16 Full Time	65%	50%	68%	69.6%	62.5%	58%	63.9%	54%	47%	53%
Post-16 Part Time	30%	22.2%	12%	17.4%	20.8%	23%	16.7%	20%	25%	3.9%
Post-16 not in ETE	5%	27.8%	20%	13.0%	16.7%	19%	19.4%	26%	28%	43.1%

We can see that the majority of school aged children attend a part-time provision, and the proportion who are in full time education has dropped since the beginning of the school year (Sep 22), although there has been a small increase since the last reported figure in April 2023. The percentage of young people above school age who are NEET has reduced since April, with a higher proportion in full-time ETE.

Serious Youth Violence (SYV)

Progress and Concerns

Previous reporting year - 2021 - reduction in SYV offences

Increase in the gravity and frequency of serious violence offences in 2022/23

YJT central to developments

- Multi-agency partnership and strategic approaches (including courts & community)
- Strong local partnership response to determine local plans / interventions (individuals, families, communities)
- Audit and learning from other Local Authorities (Southampton, Newcastle, Dorset – increasing SYV is a national concern)

Custody

Custodial sentences

- Historically very low
- 4 custodial outcomes in the past financial year, increased from zero in April 2021/22 (0.08)
- Still below the England and Wales custody rate of 0.11, but higher than the South-West average of 0.05 and the Avon and Somerset PCC Area 0.04.
- The numbers are very small – a few children will have an impact on our rates
- Custody is used as a last resort by the court when all options considered are deemed unsuitable for the young person to be managed safely in the community

Remand to custody

- There have been 3 secure remands since the start of 2023 and 4 for the whole of 2022
- Remands were highest in Somerset in 2018 due to serious offences being committed

Challenges & Risks

- **Inspection** (under His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation) overdue.
- **Demand** – The team is well resourced.
Appropriate Adult *demand needs to be reviewed.
- Small but **increasing number of children assessed as High** or Very High risk due to County Lines, exploitation, serious youth violence (often all linked).
- **Rurality** – Lack of public transport for children to attend appointments, access activities and work etc
- Changes in workforce

Questions